

SUMMER 2023

the SHAD Connection

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

Vol. 45 No. 4

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Larchmere Sidewalk Sale

Saturday, May 27

Kick off your summer at Larchmere's Memorial Day Weekend Sale for merchants' special deals and a Community Yard Sale. Stop by and say "hi" at the SHAD booth. More at larchmere.com.



Rock the Blocks

Sunday, June 11

Join Larchmere merchants as they present a day of fun with a focus on healthy activities and personal challenges throughout the day. There will be a community workout, a fruit and veggie giveaway presented by the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, a parade, free ice cream from Mitchell's and more. See page 10 for more details.



Larchmere

PorchFest

Saturday, June 24

This family-friendly music event is back! Musicians from a variety of genres will perform on 30 porches throughout the Larchmere neighborhood. See page 10 for more details.

Cleveland Garlic Festival

Saturday, August 26 &

Sunday, August 27

It's going to be pretty smelly on Shaker Square as this beloved food festival is back again. There will be food competitions, garlic fries, vendors, Miss Garlic 2023, live music, kid activities and more. More information at clevelandgarlicfestival.org.

Cleveland Takes Owners of Residences at Shaker Square to Court Over Conditions for Apartment Tenants

By Thomas Jewell

The legal fight over deplorable conditions for tenants in The Residences at Shaker Square apartment complex continues on multiple fronts, after the City of Cleveland took the owners to Housing Court earlier this year.

City attorneys filed a civil complaint March 6 seeking a public nuisance abatement of more than 100 city code violations and calling for injunctions and possible receivership of the deteriorating buildings at 12500, 12600 and 12701 Shaker Boulevard.

Then some of the out-of-state owners followed suit in federal court on March 23, saying they wanted the case to be heard there instead.

In one of the more timely responses to date from the owners, "eight of the original 21 defendants improperly sought removal (of the case) less than 24 hours prior to the first hearing in this matter" from municipal to U.S. District Court, outside attorneys for the city argued.

City officials remained confident they would get the case "remanded," or sent back to local housing court.

In its federal court filing opposing the jurisdictional transfer from municipal housing court, the city called it "an attempt to cause unnecessary delay and prevent further action to competently correct long-neglected and urgently needed repairs" to The Residences at Shaker Square.

In the meantime, the work of Ward 4 Councilwoman Deborah Gray, Council President Blaine Griffin and last but not least, the Morelands Group, a nonprofit residents' advocacy organization, all got a shout-out - and a round of applause - during Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb's first State of the City Address on April 19.

Calling for more aggressive housing and code enforcement, Bibb said his administration will continue to go after "predatory property managers and reckless out-of-state investors."

Bibb said tenants should not have to live with "leaking pipes, dangerous mold, constant water damage,

elevators that don't work, and worst of all, no heat for months on end during the frigid Cleveland winter."

These conditions were among those noted in the initial lawsuit filed by the city, as well as the laundry list of concerns cited at an earlier press conference called outside The Residences at Shaker Square.

"And I just want to applaud the efforts of Councilwoman Gray, Council President Griffin and the Morelands Group to keep this issue at the forefront," Bibb added.

Bibb spoke of creating additional mechanisms to abate nuisance properties and stiffen civil penalties to drive owner accountability.

See Cleveland Takes Owners of Residences at Shaker Square to Court Over Conditions for Apartment Tenants, page 9

Drexmore Sidewalk a Hard-Won Victory For SHAD

By Jason Novak

The Morelands Project, the unofficial name of the improvements project running along North and South Moreland from Griffing Avenue to Larchmere Boulevard, has finalized its contract with Terrace Construction. Work will begin at Griffing Avenue and will proceed in three phases.

According to Merle Gordon, Chair of the N/S Moreland Infrastructure Committee of the Morelands Group, phase three, which covers improvements to Shaker Square and Drexmore Road, is scheduled to begin in the late fall or early winter. This portion of the project will replace water lines, repave the road, and build a new sidewalk from the Drexmore/South Moreland intersection to Dave's Market. For some, the sidewalk has been a long time coming.



See Drexmore Sidewalk a Hard-Won Victory For SHAD page 6

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Ken Kovach Wins Prestigious Award



Ken Kovach on the left, with "Ellis Island: The Dream of America" composer Peter Boyer at Severance Hall.

On May 11, 2013, **Ken Kovach**, Ludlow resident (and husband to SHAD Board President Mary Ann Kovach), received the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor at the annual Ellis Island Honors Society in New York. Kovach was among medalists from across the country to be recognized for their leadership and service either professionally, culturally or civically and exemplifying the values of the American way of life. He and other Cleveland-area medal recipients were honored this year at a special

Cleveland Orchestra concert Tuesday, April 18. At the performance, Ellis Island: The Dream of America, actors read from journal entries of immigrants who came through Ellis Island.

Job Description, Editor, SHAD Connection, Shaker Square's community newspaper

This is a contract position to produce a high-quality quarterly community newspaper, The SHAD Connection.

Responsibilities include:

- Must be a self-starter, able to work independently and meet deadlines.
- Develop editorial content
- Assign articles to writers
- Coordinate photography needs/assign photographer for photo shoots
- Write articles and additional content as needed
- Edit and proofread all content
- Proof PDFs provided by the graphic designer
- Work collaboratively with graphic designer, ad sales representative, SHAD leadership to produce the publication and generate content to increase readership and revenue
- Interface with printer as needed
- Overall project coordination
- Report to SHAD Board of Trustees
- Project Estimate: 20 hours per issue.

Apply - info@shad.org

Advertise!

The SHAD Connection Deadlines Summer Issue

For advertising rate and ad size information and media kit go to shad.org or call us at 216.421.2100.

Reserve ad space for *the SHAD Connection* Fall issue covering September, October and November by **July 13**. Ad artwork is due no later than: **August 3**.

Send artwork to Jim at jgdalessandro@gmail.com.

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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.

NEIGHBORHOODS

- Apartment Corridor
- CHALK
- Drexmore/Chadbourne
- Historic Shaker Square
- Larchmere
- Ludlow

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

- Shaker Square
- Larchmere Blvd.
- Van Aken Plaza
- Shaker Boulevard West

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Emma Visnic

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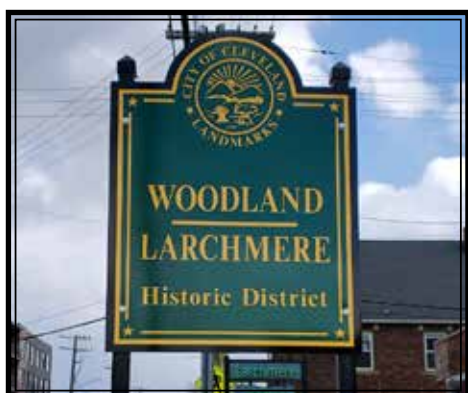
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Larchmere Historical Marker Finally Placed



The Larchmere neighborhood has finally received its historic district designation sign after almost 10 years since the State of Ohio and the federal government approved the signage. Throughout 2012, Shaker Square Area Development Corp. worked with a graduate student and hired consultants to apply for the historic designation. It took many years to get the signage made, but with the coordination from Shaker Square Alliance and SHAD, the City of Cleveland finally got it done.

According to SHAD board member, George Palda, "The designation means that visitors will be more likely to visit because the Larchmere commercial district has historical significance. The designation could also help commercial property owners in gaining financing for repairs to buildings."

Cleveland Delta Foundation Helping Families in Need



Photography Courtesy of Cleveland Delta Foundation



The Greater Cleveland Delta Foundation is once again hosting its mobile food pantry. Free, fresh produce and shelf-sustainable food is available every third Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. now through September at The Delta Center (11955 Shaker Blvd.).

- June 17
- July 15
- August 19
- September 16



For more information :
at 216.250.1009

clevelanddeltafoundation.org

On April 15, the Greater Cleveland Foundation served 108 families through its mobile pantry.

OLP Run for Peace

This year's Our Lady of Peace "Run for Peace" included a 5k, 1-mile walk and a virtual race for those who couldn't join in person. Winners for this year's 5k race were: Owen Price (First Place Men); Susanna Henry (First Place Women); Tom Cullen (Second Place Men); and Erin Grohe (Second Place Women).

On race day, the Clean For Peace crew from OLP collected twelve bags of trash from Shaker Boulevard between the church and E. 116th Street. Longtime OLP parishioner Jim Cullen served as the race chairperson.



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Heard Around the Square

by Margaret Simon

Playhouse Square honored **Dick Pogue** for his life-long civic leadership and philanthropy with a special benefit and roast. In honor of Dick and the late Pat Pogue's love of ballet and Dick's tireless efforts as Chairman of the Cleveland Ballet Board, proceeds of this event inaugurated The Richard W. and Patricia R. Pogue Cleveland Ballet Endowment Fund.



More honorees! **Gary Williams** was inducted into the CSU Law School Hall of Fame. Williams was the first African American

to serve as chief prosecutor, then chief counsel, for the City of Shaker Heights, Ohio. After retiring from Cleveland-Marshall, Williams served on the Board of ACLU of Ohio and as executive director of Sankofa Fine Art Plus, a small non-profit whose mission is to revitalize distressed communities with public art. A man of many talents, Williams' Tishauna 7.1 was the first Barbara Luton Art Competition winner in 2000, and his work hangs in the Shaker Library.



Rajani Tendulkar, Administrative Director of Translational Research at the Cleveland Clinic

and active community volunteer, is a new Shaker Library trustee. Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and best-selling author **Wesley Lowery** returns to Shaker Heights High School 15

years after he graduated to give the commencement address to the Class of 2023 on Tuesday, June 6.

Washington Post reporter **Laura Meckler** will return to her hometown of Shaker Heights to discuss her new book, "**Dream Town: Shaker Heights and the Quest for Racial Equity.**" Meet her at 2 p.m. Saturday, August 26 at Shaker Library where she will be joined in conversation with friend and fellow journalist **Paul Mason**, son of Ludlow Community Association pioneer **Beverly Mason**.

Chris Butler, owner of Academy Tavern, and **Will Simon** showed up at Loganberry Books on April 5 for their mutual friend, Shaker's own **Carter Bays**, co-creator of the Emmy-winning series, "**How I Met Your Mother.**"

Bays read from his novel "**The Mutual Friend**" and then joined local novelist, Susan Petrone, in conversation. Bays' clever book reflects on how our lives today are half lived in real life and half lived on the internet. Buy the book from Loganberry Books, or borrow it from the library.



Don your garden party attire and get ready for the Shaker Historical Society's Second Annual Saturday Soiree on July 8 on the museum's grounds. To get your tickets, go to <http://ticketstripe.com/events/1032962>.

For a casual afternoon on a nice summer day, meet at the Shaker Library and share a picnic with friends at **The Phoenix** picnic table located on the grassy area near the library's east entrance between the walkway and the parking lot. The colorful picnic

table was created by teaching artist and Shaker resident, **Dina Hoeyneck**, and a group of young adults. The picnic table art consists of a phoenix flying across a blue sky, representing the resiliency of our community as we rebound from the damage of COVID-19. On the feathers of the phoenix handwritten text shares different experiences and recollections of community members about the pandemic. The project was funded by a grant from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

The Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is another wonderful summer destination and thanks to the generosity of **Don** and **Sally Messinger**, it has a new home for several species of ambassador animals that are used in education programs or during special events at the Zoo. The Don and Sally Messinger Nature Innovation Station is located in the Zoo's Australian Adventure and is truly a gift to the entire Cleveland community.

Got a legal question? **Legal Aid** has answers and will offer a Brief Advice & Referral Clinic from 10 to 11 a.m. Saturday, June 10 at the Langston Hughes Branch of Cleveland Public Library on 10200 Superior Ave. Chat with an attorney about a problem related to money, housing, family, employment, or other issues. Special thanks to volunteer attorneys from **Squire Patton Boggs** for staffing this clinic. Meanwhile,

Legal Aid is open 24/7 online at <https://laslev.org> or by phone at 888.817.3777.

Watt's up with SHPD's driverless cruisers? Several of SHPD's cruisers are equipped with power inverters, which *change DC power from a battery*

into conventional AC power to serve as generators that provide power at intersections to keep traffic signals working during a power outage. So not only do the police serve and protect, but they also help illuminate the community.

House cleaning or downsizing? If you have Mason jars or the like to get rid of, consider donating them to Big Hearted Blooms.com, a non-profit organization, that delivers joy through recycled flowers and vases. This Shaker initiative was founded by **Sue Buddenbaum**. For more information and to help, visit bigheartedblooms.com.

On August 1, **Lillian Kuri** will become president and CEO of the Cleveland Foundation. She will be the first woman in the foundation's 109-year history to hold the title of both president and CEO. **Heather Havre**, director of Laurel's Primary School Grades 3-5 Program at Butler, has been named a Notable in Education Leadership by *Crain's Cleveland Business*.

Spring has sprung and the new local management has been making improvements to the Shaker Square buildings, **Shark and Minnow** has created a new website at shakersquare.com, and the Saturday Market on the Square from 8-noon is bustling. Stroll the Square and see what's new--and keep your ears open for me.

Best wishes to *The Connection's* crackerjack editor **Kristen Romito** as she begins her new position at Canalway Partners, a non-profit cultural heritage organization that serves as a catalyst for projects and programs within the Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area in Cuyahoga County.

heardaroundthesquare@gmail.com

Residents Learn New Job Skills

Fifteen Buckeye-Woodhill residents recently participated in Workforce Development Training. The three-week course was held at the Woodhill Community Center where they learned the process of joining unions and how to prepare for potential carpentry, plumbing, administrative and electrical careers. At the training they strengthened their math skills, trained on conflict resolution, professionalism and problem solving: skills they will need working on any job site and to perform their best on union entrance exams.

Through workforce training all 12 graduates are currently working under subcontractors on the Woodhill Station West construction site gaining the technical skills they earned in the training program and work experience they will need to help them land more job opportunities on other projects.



Rodney L. Brown Photography

LOTHARIO MARCHMON, CAREER COMMUNITY OUTREACH, AND THE 13 MEN AND WOMEN FROM THE BUCKEYE-WOODHILL COMMUNITY, NOW GRADUATES OF THE WOODHILL HOMES' WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION.

Finding Calcutta

By Adam Zimmerman

Reverend Gary Chmura has been a leader in the Cleveland area for over 30 years. Assigned as priest of Our Lady of Peace (OLP) and St. Adalbert churches, Father Chmura further expanded the boundaries of his connection to his Catholic faith on a recent mission trip to El Salvador, in which he and other Priests from the Catholic Dioceses of Cleveland embarked to honor and pray for martyrs of the faith.

In the capital, San Salvador, Sister Dorothy Kazel and Miss Jean Donovan, both from Cleveland, were murdered in 1980 by the El Salvador military.

Father Gary recalls his experience from arriving at the same airport and transporting on the same roads as Sister Kazel. "I thought of the terror she must have had," he says. "When we think of martyrdom, we tend to think of glory. It can be ugly and dirty."

He recalls a 78,000-person memorial that commemorated the lives lost during war in El Salvador. "It was like the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C.," Father Gary recollects. Included amongst the names was Sister Kazel. "With a little diligence and good luck, we found the name of Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel."

The Catholic Dioceses of Cleveland's

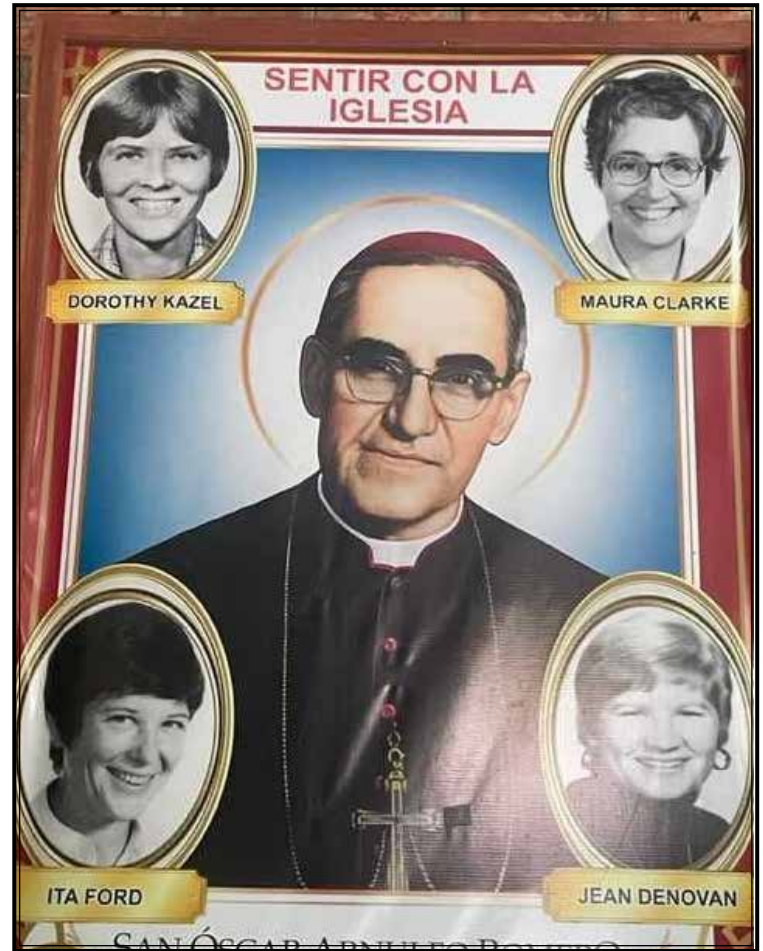
connection to El Salvador was forged in 1964 when Pope John XXIII requested that it send 10 percent of its personnel to the developing country.

While remembering the innocent people who were murdered, Father Gary observed the magnificent mountains throughout the country and contrasted the scenery to the poverty he observed in El Salvador.

As he journaled his trip, he remembered a quote from Mother Theresa about the slums of Calcutta, India, for guidance on how to put into context the poor living conditions of El Salvadorians.

**As Mother Theresa stated,
"You can find Calcutta all over the world, if you have eyes to see."**

Father Gary shares, "Let's continue to find Calcutta or El Salvador right where we are [in Cleveland]. In the children of the Juvenile Justice Center, in those served by the St. Vincent De Paul Society at St. Adalbert and the wonderful Legion of Mary at OLP, in those who come to OLP's pantry or breakfast — but beyond that in places we had not even noticed before — our own homes and families and schools and parishes as well. El Salvador is there. Calcutta is there if we have eyes to see."



A framed photo of the Sisters and St. Oscar Romero inside the chapel in the village of San Pedro Nonualco, where the Sisters were martyred.



Father Gary concelebrated mass with Fr. Tom Johns, pastor of St. John Vianney in Mentor and his seminary classmate. In 1976 a few years before they were ordained. Father Johns and a few other seminarians spent the summer working missions in El Salvador and came to know Sr. Dorothy.



At the same site is a small chapel commemorating their martyrdom.



After the shooting, local authorities buried the bodies one on top of each other in a shallow grave.

EDWINS Gets Top Honor in Culinary World

By Chris Ball

Doors keep opening for Brandon Chrostowski. That's the way the busy restaurateur likes it.

Whether it's a top award or a pop-up eatery or a new program, the EDWINS founder is always cooking up ways to expand his mission "to enhance Cleveland's most vulnerable neighborhoods by helping to cultivate its future leaders," as their website says.

The James Beard Foundation recently named Chrostowski a finalist for its annual Outstanding Restaurateur award. They'll announce the winner June 5 in Chicago. But even making it to the top five is a huge honor in the culinary industry.

"This is impossible," said an amazed Chrostowski, who's still digesting the news. "It's real. It just means you have more responsibility. It's sunk in, but you can't bask in it, you have to use it for good."

For him, the exposure means more "access, and to serve others, and that's what we're doing."

The publicity certainly will help with their ongoing fundraising. Chrostowski taps big donors to support his projects. The latest effort will help overcome a major obstacle for students enrolled in the Edwins Leadership and Restaurant Institute.

"Back in August, we purchased a building on Larchmere, next to the [Loganberry] bookstore, and the whole goal is to get free childcare for students in our program," he said.

Up to 60 formerly incarcerated students are enrolled in their six-month program at any time, learning valuable culinary and hospitality skills. "But 80% of our students with kids drop out," he said. So they created the Edwins Family Center, with capacity for a dozen children.

Donors wrote some large checks. "Individuals come in for a couple hundred thousand," he said. "The Browns helped out. PNC contributed. You've got to raise a lot of money to do these things. That's what we do. We're hoping for a mid-May opening."

Building community is at the heart of Chrostowski's work. In April, he opened a pop-up restaurant, Bar Mleczny's, in Cleveland's Slavic Village to unite the Polish neighborhood. Opening night was April 20. "We flipped the room three, four times. It was packed," he said.

Set in the Polish American Cultural Center, 6501 Lansing Ave., Bar Mleczny's is open only Thursdays from 5 to 8:30 p.m. Reservations are encouraged (216.218.8030).

"We worked all week on the stocks, the sauces," he said. "The bigos [hunter's stew], the goulash, it was all from scratch. The beauty of it is it's one day a week. I don't sleep at night, so I'll go to the Polish center and cook. It's a great

way to really put love into food."

He has no plans to expand it beyond one day a week.

"This is pleasure. I don't want this to be a nightmare. And already, you can't get in for two months. We want to control the quality and have fun. It's not about a cash cow. That wasn't the goal. The goal was to bring some new people to the center and preserve that Polish cuisine, which we did."

Bar Mleczny's has nine tables and 15 barstools. "You just want to love the food. Everything else is so transactional, you've got to go go go, but this is more like ahhhh."

Next on his agenda is affordable housing. "Family housing has really suffered in this city," he said.

He's eyeing a property on South Moreland Boulevard. "There's an apartment building that we put a bid in on. Will it happen? I don't know, but I'm not going to stop, we need to get family housing."

What drives him to keep so many irons in the fire? "It all boils down to injustice," he said. "The injustice in this world is great, and we're just trying to make that less great, trying to beat back the injustice."

See EDWINS Gets Top Honor in Culinary World page 10

George Palda, Treasurer of Shaker Square Area Development Corp. (SHAD) explains, “In the 90s, Fairmont Development was focused on attracting regional retailers. When Wild Oats [the market that came before Dave’s] needed more space for their parking lot, the existing sidewalk was removed.” While the removal of the sidewalk was seen as an improvement by the supermarket, it made it more difficult for pedestrians. “People have to walk in the street because there’s no

sidewalk at the bus stop,” Palda says.

Mary Ann Kovach, president of SHAD, agrees. “In the winter, people have to walk in the street, and there’s less street to walk on. It’s dangerous.”

Over the years, Kovach, Palda and other community members have brought this sidewalk issue to anyone who could make a difference. Kovach states, “We talked to Councilperson Ken Johnson who agreed with us but never did anything about it. We took it to the interim councilperson who replaced

him. We brought it up during meetings about the sale of Shaker Square.” SHAD requested then-board member and architect Steven Smrdel to design what a replacement sidewalk might look like.

Finally, during the planning of the Morelands Project, Kovach brought the issue to the attention of James DeRosa, the director of Capital Projects for Cleveland. “He looked at our plan and said ‘This is important. It’s a safety issue,’” Kovach says.

The Drexmore sidewalk was added to the Morelands Project, bringing an end to a long battle. “We’ve been trying so long,” says Kovach. “It’s finally happening.”

Details of the project can be found at northandsouthmoreland.com.

‘Larchmere Homes’ Infill Housing Initiative Provides Pathway to Purchase

By Thomas Jewell

Work continues toward the fall completion of the \$10.5 million Larchmere Homes infill housing initiative, with new construction on 30 vacant lots: nearly half of those north of Shaker Boulevard.

All of the new homes will become available to prospective owner-occupants through the Cleveland Housing Partners’ (CHN) lease-to-purchase program, a nationally recognized “Best Practices” policy.

Burten Bell Carr Development Corp. (BBC) partnered in the effort by selecting the infill lots for construction, available through the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County land banks.

In addition to locations in the Buckeye neighborhood, thirteen of those new homes are interspersed throughout Larchmere, north of Shaker Boulevard starting on Hamlen and Browning avenues, then moving up to Mount Overlook Avenue and over to Buckingham Avenue and East 128th Street.

In opening the pathway-to-purchase opportunity for low-and moderate-income families, CHN’s “rental-to-residence” ownership model requires 15 years of occupancy in the new homes, leading up to a chance to buy the properties outright at below-market value.

Jennifer Chandler, senior project manager for CHN, outlined the nonprofit’s guiding “equivalency principle” for success at a recent meeting of the Shaker Square Alliance.

Simply put, “families will succeed as homeowners as long as their mortgage, insurance and taxes don’t exceed the amount they’re paying in rent,” the former Shaker Square resident said, of the nonprofit’s mission, focusing on “the power of a permanent address.”

Working with the city and applying to the Ohio Housing Financing Agency in early 2021, CHN and BBC closed on the financing last September, with six homes completed and foundations poured for all but four houses by March.

As for the homes themselves, all but two are being built with two stories, three bedrooms, two bathrooms, full front porches and one-and-a-half car garages.

The other pair, and possibly one more, will be ranch-style, meeting Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

A critical component and principal funding mechanism for the CHN’s lease-purchase program, begun in 1987, remains the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) award from the state, targeted at families making 60 percent of the area median income (AMI).

Other key provisions from CHN include wrap-around home ownership preparation services, credit counseling and homebuyer downpayment matches with household savings.

The organization also works with local banks to extend lending arms providing home mortgages to families that otherwise would not qualify.

Although it has expanded to other cities, CHN remains headquartered in Cleveland, where it got its start in 1981 from six local community development corporations working together to address housing abandonment and affordability.

“This development means quality, affordable new construction homes for neighborhood residents and puts the dream of homeownership within reach for 30 families,” Cleveland City Council President and Larchmere resident Blaine Griffin noted earlier.

BURTEN, BELL, CARR DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Community Meetings

Buckeye- Saturday, June 10, 2023
Britt Oval, 2721 MLK Jr. Drive
1-3 p.m.

Kinsman- Saturday, July 8, 2023
Bridgeport Place, 7201 Kinsman Road
1-3p.m.

Central- Saturday, August 12, 2023
Arbor Park Place, 2500 E. 40th Street
1-3 p.m.

Stay connected with us on social media for updates and details about each meeting!

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Local Food Entrepreneurs Get Money Boost for Business

By Kristen Romito

The backbone to a thriving local economy is successful small business owners. To help up-and-coming food-based businesses get more established in Northeast Ohio, the “Your Amazing Food Idea Pitch Competition” was held in the spring.

The competition was supported and organized by Burten, Bell, Carr Development Inc. (BBC), the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), The Center for Food Innovation, Lorain County Community College (LCCC), and GLIDE.

Ten business owners applied to participate in the competition. All 10 participants began the six-week program in March and received one-on-one coaching competitions to help develop their business skills and prepare for the final pitch of the competition.

There were two tracks that participants could apply to: either the “Start Up” track or the “On The Road” track. “Start Up” was for businesses younger than two years and making less than \$50,000 in revenue, and “On The Road” was for more developed companies that make less than \$250,000 in revenue.

The winner of the “Start Up” track was Carmella Williams with her Youngstown-based company, Deep Roots by Carmella Marie. The company makes and sells cold-press juice that is designed to support healthy skin and hair within. Williams received \$2,000 and other non-monetary prizes to assist her in growing her business that includes 5 employees.

“We are increasing our number of clients in the Cleveland market, and we’re hopefully getting a location [in Cleveland],” Williams says. “Every week I drive up to Cleveland to get my produce. It’s the only place to get organic produce.”

Williams says she will use the prize money to purchase a chargeable, electric refrigerator for her car to store the juice, which she sells at outdoor markets. The new refrigeration system will allow her to travel longer distances and will be more eco-friendly. She currently uses a gas-powered generator to power her travel refrigerator.

“We’re going to get a customized bin with logos on it to hold the juice and for display.” She also will purchase a sell-by-date gun and water-proof labels.

Mark Day, owner of Indigo Lake Sauce Company, was crowned an “On the Road” winner, receiving \$10,000 in addition to other non-monetary prizes to assist him in growing his business.

“I started this business at the age of 63, as an ‘encore entrepreneur’. I’ve gained a lot of business experience over my career, but I also realize that business has changed and in some crucial areas I am not experienced. For instance, social media and SEO. Social media is much different than the direct marketing and advertising experience I have. SEO was a mystery to me,” Day explained as to why he entered the contest. “My business coach, Beth Gantz of the Lorain SBDC has connected me with experts in both areas who are providing me with ongoing education in these areas.”

He has added that he needed to learn how to succinctly pitch his business. “The last time I ‘pitched’ my business it involved creating a 75+ page business plan. The challenge of covering key information about my business and growth plans and pitching it in under 5 minutes was huge!”

Day will use his prize money towards additional product inventory to meet demand. He will also rebuild the company’s website to make it more search engine friendly and to develop a small retail display which can be used by our retailers at point-of-sale to increase sales.

The second “On the Road” winner was Chef Saidah Farrell from Shaker Heights. Her marshmallow of the month company – Joy Craft Cocoa – will get a boost with the \$10,000 prize. “Although I launched in 2019 I still feel like I’m in a startup phase, and still validating my product. I know sales are the true indicator of validating your product, but it’s different when you stand out amongst other brilliant products,” says Farrell.

She adds, “Being part of this pitch competition has given me the confidence to grow the business. The money will help with redesigning our packaging but the in-kind prizes are invaluable! Spending time with professionals that can get Joy Craft Cocoa in the doors of local retailers is what I’m most looking forward to.”

For more information about the food pitch competition and recent winners visit: foodinnovationeo.org, carmellamarie.com.



Shaker Square Has a New Website

Burten, Bell, Carr Development Inc. and Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, co-owners of Shaker Square, launched a new website in early May. The new site – shakersquare.com – provides up-to-date information on the latest developments and plans for the Square as well as a color-coded map and directory of all the Shaker Square businesses.



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Progress Made on Woodhill Homes Construction

Phase one of Woodhill Station West is moving along nicely. The second and third floor framing has been completed as well as the layout for electrical, plumbing and mechanical. The building framing was also completed in mid May. Roofing is slated to be installed in the beginning of June, and electrical and plumbing installation will also be finished then.

Construction is in full swing for Phase Two of Woodhill Center East. Earthwork and the building

padding was finished at the end of April as well as the water connections in the streets of Woodland and Mt. Carmel. Installation of underground infrastructure for electrical, stormwater and sewer for the multi-family building is in process as well as the foundation.

In April, The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) and the City of Cleveland a Choice Neighborhoods Supplemental

Funding Grant for \$10 million, to further support the Transformation Plan for Woodhill Homes in the Buckeye-Woodhill neighborhood. HUD awarded additional funds to 16 current Choice Neighborhoods.



Rodney L. Brown Photography

Phase 1 - Roof Progress

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Providence House Unveils Mural

On May 4, Providence House East Campus held a public meeting to discuss how its new mural should reflect the community at its new 11801 Buckeye Road location. Providence House chose artist Darius Steward to beautify its new building.



YOU CANNOT BE EVICTED BASED ON A PROTECTED CLASS.

While eviction moratoriums in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have expired, families are still struggling. Now, many are facing eviction and don't know where to turn. **Fair housing law may be able to help.**



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Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research

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The Fair Housing Center for Rights & Research, a nonprofit fair housing organization, is available to assist you with questions you may have about your fair housing rights.

www.thehousingcenter.org

Cleveland Takes Owners of Residences at Shaker Square to Court Over Conditions for Apartment Tenants

Continued from page 1



“These slumlords should be ashamed of themselves, robbing our residents of the dignity and decency of a safe place to call home,” Bibb stated. “Make no mistake about it we will hold you accountable. And we will find you.”

Back in court

As part of their motion to send back what they feel is a diversionary case in federal court, attorneys with Douglass & Associates, retained by the city, countered that “the current state of disrepair continues to cause a public nuisance by virtue of inadequate maintenance, improper management and fire hazard conditions.”

The city maintains that keeping the case in municipal housing court will require the owners to submit a nuisance abatement plan that would have to be executed under court supervision and possibly through receivership.

They added that the case should be consolidated in municipal court, where more than a dozen defendants remain.

These include the Cuyahoga County Treasurer’s Office, a painting contractor and a staffing agency, all of which already have “statutory recorded interests in those properties,” either through taxes or mechanic’s liens for unpaid bills.

Another federal court requirement entails a \$75,000 threshold for claims, which attorneys for the city say, “may indicate an admission that the defendants are prepared to concede that their properties are in such serious disrepair and pose such a threat to the public that such expenses are required.”

With that in mind, “Ohio has established a clear preference for local enforcement of maintenance requirements which materially affect the health and safety of local citizenry,” the city’s attorneys wrote.

As a result, the city maintains that the Residences at Shaker Square ownership should be compelled to fix the problems strictly under local jurisdiction.

“Through this pattern of conduct, these defendants have wasted the court’s time, incurred needless expenses that could have gone towards the repair of their properties and merely delayed necessary hearings on the substance of the city’s claims,” attorney Michael Reardon with Douglass & Associates added.



Up and Down the Boulevard

While *PorchFest* is the star of the summer on Larchmere, there's much more to look forward to.



Fiddlehead Gallery owner Susan Rozman paints a window for summer events



Literary Cleveland Storefront



Sidewalk sale

By Barbara Mooney

Larchmere's summer season of events starts with the **Memorial Day Sidewalk Sale** on May 27, which will be joined by a community yard sale at Shaker Quality Auto Body, 12916 Larchmere. Vendors who want to set up a booth anywhere on the boulevard that day can do so for \$25 for residents, \$65 for non-residents; go to www.larchmere.com for information.

Many Larchmere merchants will be having special sales that day. For example, **Loganberry Books** (13015 Larchmere, 216.795.9800) will have bargain books outside and 20 percent off everything inside. Next door, the vintage store **Eclectic Eccentric** (13005 Larchmere, 216-798-3002) will be holding a \$5 patio sale.

Other summer events to mark on your calendar include: **Rock the Blocks**, the parade and street party on June 11 (the street is closed for the parade from 10 a.m.-noon but the fun goes until 5 p.m.). Another street-wide event, **Larchmere Family Festival**, is being put together for July 1.

30 Bands on 30 Porches

Few things could possibly outdraw the 15th annual **Larchmere PorchFest**, the free, daylong music buffet, which is on June 24 from 1 to 10 p.m. While the roster of live musicians was still forming as of press time, there will be 30 acts on 30 porches that will transform into stages that day. Each set will last 30 to 40 minutes. Booths and food vendors will be set up along the street but the hub of the event will be at the corner of Larchmere and East 127th Street.

Go to LarchmerePorchFest.org for up-to-date information.

Look for LIT CLE

Literary Cleveland, a nonprofit group for writers and those with local literary interests, has a new storefront at 13002 Larchmere. The 1,300-square-foot office and event space is next to Peony Antiques. A sign in the window bears the seven-year-old organization's slogan: "Explore other voices, Discover your own." It will take most of the summer to get the space ready to host all of its

programming. Literary Cleveland, which has a growing membership of about 945, had been based in the Gordon Square neighborhood. Go to litcleveland.org for information about the group's programs.

Coffee Central

The UnBar Café (12635 Larchmere Blvd., 216.293.4480), with the recent closing of Bigby Coffee on Shaker Square, is the last coffeehouse left in the immediate area. It has taken up the mantle as a center for meetings and small events. It hosts karaoke Saturdays from 3 to 5 p.m. Starting June 2 at 6:30, it is hosting a poetry event. And it is promoting one of its menu's favorite items on National French Fry Day on July 13. Go to unbarcafe.com to get updated hours and events.

Authors Alley; Garfield Bio

Loganberry Books' events calendar (loganberrybooks.com) is laden with fascinating events this summer. A three-part highlight is Authors Alley,

an annual, author showcase. The first Author Alley event, which will feature authors who are persons of color, is June 10. The second Author Alley, featuring non-fiction writers and poets, is July 8; the third, a fiction writer showcase, is Aug. 12. Children's book writers and illustrators will be featured in the last Author Alley on Sept. 9. Each event is from noon to 4 p.m.

The bookstore hosts a variety of individual author appearances on an almost weekly basis. For local and American history buffs, one to watch for is July 13 at 7 p.m., when C.W. Goodyear will discuss "President Garfield", the first comprehensive biography of the native Northeast Ohioan and 20th president.

Yoga & Brunch

Convenient Vegan (12210 Larchmere, 216.395.9601) has started a brunch buffet for the last Sunday of the month. For \$30, you may partake in a yoga session at 11 a.m. then an all-you-can-eat vegan spread from noon-3 p.m.

First Friday Crafting **Fiddlehead Gallery** (12736 Larchmere, 216.231.9400) invites crafters to join the First Friday crafting sessions in the store from 5 to 8 p.m. Cost is only \$5.

Busy with Ice Cream **Busy Boss Bakery** (12732 Larchmere, 216.832.0381) is now serving rolled ice cream along with pastries, cookies and intricate custom-made cakes.

Remarkable Woman **Lisa McGuthry**, owner of **Our Favorite Things Boutique and Event Center** (12730 Larchmere, 800.975.0731), will be remembered by all the high school girls who benefitted from "Operation Prom 2023", an annual prom dress giveaway. For her business acumen and all-around good deeds, Ms. McGuthry was recently featured on Fox8-TV as one of Cleveland's "Remarkable Woman."

EDWINS Gets Top Honor in Culinary World *Continued from page 5*



Brandon Chrostowski with Jacques Pepin and Andre Soltner





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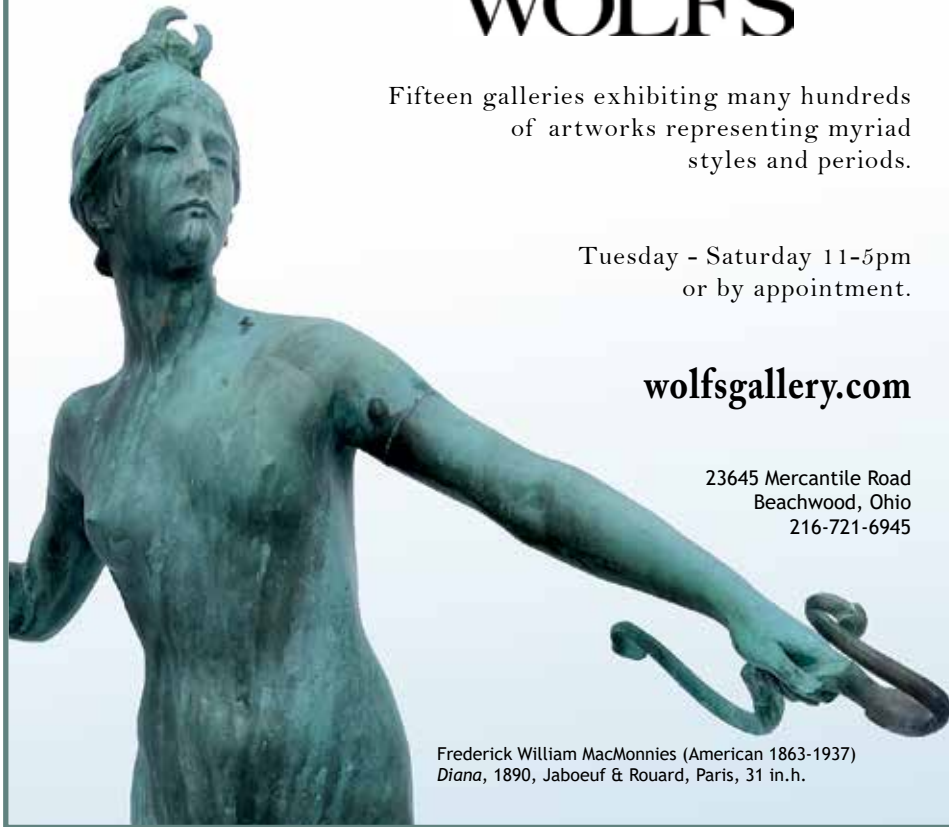
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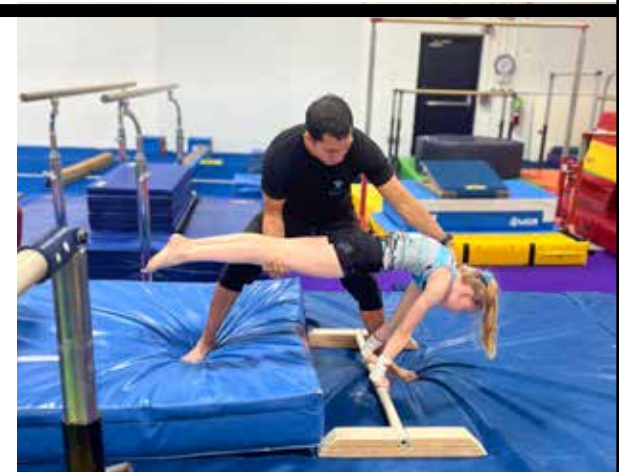
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