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# President's Message – by Ben Pantoja

Clifton's top public safety problem for the past two years has been unruly street takeovers of Ludlow between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. emanating from the Bohemian Hookah Café. On September 17, the CTM Public Safety Committee (a joint effort between CTM and the Clifton Business Association) scored a big win for Clifton. Thanks in large part to persistent pressure from this committee, Cincinnati City Council passed an ordinance to limit the hours that hookah bars can be open, from 9 a.m. – 10 p.m. on weekdays and from 9 a.m. – 11 p.m. on weekends. This ordinance alone should have been sufficient to stop the 2 a.m. street takeovers. But then the courts delivered a decisive opinion on November 3 based principally on the fact that the Hookah Café did not have a permit for indoor smoking. As a result, a judge ordered the Bohemian Hookah Café to shut down by November 14. This two-year long nightmare on Ludlow Avenue has ended, and we look forward to a new business that can operate in harmony with our neighborhood.

CTM's Public Safety Committee persistently defended our neighbors' complaints concerning aggressive panhandling and assaults around Ludlow Avenue. Close work with the police has led to multiple arrests and some troublemakers eventually left the area. Another win for our public safety happened at the Clifton Avenue Metro bus shelter adjacent to the Shell Station. Bus riders felt unsafe at this stop because of others loitering on the benches, alcohol and drug abuse and drug sales. After persistent pressure from the CTM Public Safety Committee, Metro eliminated seating at this

location, in turn eliminating the problem.

Video cameras intended for crime prevention have been installed along Ludlow Avenue by Clifton Business Association, thanks to grant applications made by CTM. When problems are reported, our Public Safety Committee members spend hours reviewing camera footage, then send footage to the Cincinnati Police Department to help address problems throughout the business district. A goal for 2026 is the upgrading of our security cameras to higher resolution equipment to better support police follow up. CBA, CTM, local businesses, our citizens and other organizations will help to cover costs of the improved equipment.

Another CTM priority has been to update the Clifton Plan in cooperation with the City of Cincinnati's Planning Department. The Plan will define priorities and strategies in many areas including transportation, environment and zoning. Each Cincinnati neighborhood has its own plan which the City consults when evaluating potential zoning changes, new development, and other impactful decisions, ensuring that the City is aligned as closely as possible with the wishes of citizens. Clifton last updated its neighborhood plan more than 40 years ago in 1983. The new plan, anticipated to be completed early in 2026 and approved by Cincinnati City Council by June, will establish current priorities and objectives for our community. There have been many community engagement sessions related to the plan, and these sessions will continue over the next few months, so please watch for announcements.

## 2025 and 2026 CTM Trustees

### CTM Board of Trustees up to 1/5/26

**Executive Board:** President Ben Pantoja, Vice President 1 Jan Checco, Vice President 2 Mindi Rich, Secretary Owen Waller, Treasurer Bridget Waller-Kent.

**Trustees:** Gérald Checco, Robert DiMartino, Patrick Etter, Barry Gee, Steve Goodin, Kevin Leahy, Kevin Mohan, Justin Ogilby, Genet Singh, John Whedon.

### CTM Board of Trustees beginning on 1/5/26\*

Clara Babcock, Jan Checco, Robert DiMartino, Patrick Etter, Barry Gee, Kevin Leahy, Kevin Mohan, Ben Pantoja, Mindi Rich, Bob Siegel, Genet Singh, Owen Waller, Bridget Waller-Kent

\*Executives and Committee Chairs will remain the same until January 5, 2026, when the new board will vote to approve new leadership appointments.

### Liaisons

Clifton Business Association - Jan Brown Checco, Genet Singh  
Clifton Community Fund - Barry Gee  
Golf Outing - John Whedon  
Invest in Neighborhoods - Barry Gee  
Neighborhoods of Uptown - Ben Pantoja  
Parks - Patrick Etter

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Chronicle - Jan Brown Checco  
Clifton Community LLC - Ben Pantoja, Bridget Waller-Kent  
Clifton Plan - Gérald Checco  
Clifton Soccer - Patty Klein  
Communications - Ben Pantoja  
Events - Mindi Rich  
Finance - Gérald Checco  
Governance - Ben Pantoja  
Housing and Zoning - Owen Waller  
Membership and Nominating - Barry Gee  
Public Safety - Steve Goodin  
Transportation - Justin Ogilby  
Welcome and Connect - Mindi Rich

### Clifton Chronicle Committee

Chair and Managing Editor — Jan Checco (2021-26)  
Bookkeeping — Gérald Checco  
Copy Editing and Distribution — Linda Fatherree, Clara Babcock  
Design and Layout — Josie Angel  
Columnists — Anna Ferguson, Tom Lohre, Leah Mogadam, Mark Jeffreys, Geoff Gelke, Dora Schield, Bonnie Speeg, Larry Holt, CCAC, Eric Davis/Clifton Library, Margee Garbsch/DPCR, Ann Baumgardner/The New School, Kevin Leigh-Manuell/Manifest, Steven Schuckman, John Whedon, Gérald Checco, Jan Checco, Linda Fatherree

## You are Essential! Become a Member of Clifton Town Meeting. Here's How:

**Clifton Town Meeting (CTM)** is your community council, advocating on behalf of the Clifton community. We sponsor many activities and festivals throughout the year, but to continue this important community work, we need YOUR INPUT. Membership is open to all neighborhood residents aged 18 or older, property and business owners. **Membership dues cover 12 months, are our second largest means of support, and are tax deductible.** CTM also accepts donations, so please consider this as you sign-up or renew at <http://www.cliftoncommunity.org/membership/>

Sign up online, scan the QR code or send this form with a check or money order payable to: **Clifton Town Meeting, P.O. Box 20042, Cincinnati, Ohio 45220-0042.**



Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Email(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Committees and Activities that interest you: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Membership Categories:

___ Single (1 vote).....\$20	___ Senior citizen, 65+ (1 vote).....\$10
___ Household (2 votes).....\$20	___ Senior household, 65+ (2 votes).....\$14
___ Full-time college student (1 vote) \$10	___ Life membership (2 votes).....\$180
___ Business (1 vote).....\$40	___ Donation of \$ _____

**Thanks for  
writing legibly!**



# Clifton Town Meeting Is Your Community Council

Established in 1961 and officially recognized by the City of Cincinnati, our object is to preserve and develop the community, recognizing that Clifton is one of the city's first suburbs and possesses a traditional charm and unique creative character.

## Clifton Town Meeting Monthly Board Meetings

The public is invited to attend and participate on the first Monday of every month, 7-9 p.m. at the Clifton Recreation Center, 320 McAlpin Avenue. Become a member and receive the pre-meeting agenda and announcements in your email via MailChimp!

## The Clifton Chronicle

is CTM's free-to-the-public newsletter, delivered quarterly to over 10,000 readers in print and electronically. Members receive the print edition in their postal mailboxes unless they request to only read electronically. CTM has an archive of the present and past *Chronicles* at <https://www.cliftoncommunity.org/clifton-town-meeting/clifton-chronicle/>. Production of this newsletter is supported by our members, our advertisers and the City of Cincinnati's Neighborhood Support Program and Neighborhood Activation Funds. Our newsletter is only as good as the content that you—our faithful writers and readers—provide, so please remember: stories can be up to 500 words in length; images to accompany texts should be 300 dpi/high resolution and saved as jpgs or pdfs, all sent to [ctm.chronicle@gmail.com](mailto:ctm.chronicle@gmail.com). We love to publish poems, human interest observations, reports, announcements, interviews, historical pieces, promotion of local events and, of course, the always essential messages from our local advertisers.

### Holidays on Ludlow on Clifton Plaza

Saturday, December 20, 7 - 9 pm

New date, new time, please make a note in your schedule!



**Reindeer and Petting Zoo, Santa, beverages, holiday music by the Young Professionals Choral Collective, and our community tree lighting at 7:15 pm.**



**Time to get crafty with that stuff in your drawer full of scraps and glitter! The Clifton Plaza holiday tree wants to wear your ornaments on December 20 at Holidays on Ludlow 2025! Come for the tree lighting at 7:15 pm and enjoy neighborhood cheer!**

**Still a CTM member? Check your status using the QR Code and join us again as we work to support our community, advocating on your behalf!**







# Free Community Yoga in Clifton



**Free Community Yoga on Saturdays,**  
11:00-11:45 a.m. (low intensity, all levels) at  
Trailside Nature Center on Brookline Avenue in

Burnet Woods. These sessions are generously sponsored from October 2025 to April 2026 by the Cincinnati Parks Foundation’s Stewards of Burnet Woods. <https://www.facebook.com/events/610718381953983/610718435287311/>

**Special Event: Community Winter Solstice Yoga,** December 20 at Trailside Nature Center. The Winter Solstice is a deeply significant time recognized by nearly every culture for reflection on the days that have passed and the return of the light. In the Northern Hemisphere, the Winter Solstice marks the shortest day and longest night of the year. It offers a quiet energy that allows for looking more deeply within, to examine and let go of the past and move with ease into the future. Please join us at Trailside Nature

Center for this free event of intention-setting meditation with light yoga practice and guided relaxation. The program includes:

11:00- 11:45 a.m. Guided Yoga Practice with Laila  
11:45- 12:15 p.m. Vegan Treats  
12:15- 1:00 p.m. Fire Ritual + Guided Meditation and Singing Bowls with Jenna  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/782450014315398>

World Peace Yoga offers three different options for their class participation: in the studio, online live stream and free sessions at Trailside Nature Center in Burnet Woods. New to World Peace Yoga? Your first month of unlimited classes, both in the studio or online, is FREE! Go to their “reserve your class” page at [www.worldpeaceyoga.com](http://www.worldpeaceyoga.com) for the details.



In Winter’s Kingdom  
When I wake early  
birds are black silhouettes.  
They wait as I shovel and sweep  
clearing snow from the concrete.  
Then I cup my cold hands  
in the bucket of seeds  
scatter them widely  
so winged friends can eat.  
  
- Nancy Heuck Johanson

## The Cincinnati Clay Alliance Holiday Fair



The Cincinnati Clay Alliance Holiday Fair is returning to Clifton on Saturday, December 6 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Clifton Recreation Center, 320 McAlpin Ave. There is plenty of free parking in the adjacent parking lot. Come and browse a variety of unique, finely crafted, handmade items by members of the Clay Alliance. Pieces include artisanal plates, mugs and bowls for the kitchen, as well as sculpture, jewelry and items for the home and garden. It’s the perfect venue to shop for your collection and for gifts during the holiday season. We encourage you to participate in our fun mug contest: patrons can vote for their favorite mug and the winner will receive a trophy made by Marie Hamaker. Marie creates wonderful functional and sculptural work that merges whimsical natural elements into playful colorful animals.

The Clay Alliance has been a presence in the greater Cincinnati area for 30 years, supporting a strong tradition of high-quality craftsmanship. Our city continues to be a great place for those who appreciate handmade work. Don’t miss out on this one-day event and support your local artists!



### CLIFTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

a reconciling congregation

**Online Worship Sundays at 9:15 AM, In Person at 9:15 AM and 11 AM**



CliftonUMC.com



**“We welcome all people: all genders, gender identities, gender expressions, races, ages, cultures, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, economic circumstances, family configurations, or differences of faith perspective. We celebrate the worth, dignity, and gifts of every person as a child of God.” - Our Reconciling Statement**

**Alternate Expressions of Church Include**



Sundays at 5 PM  
Progressive Christian community  
IG/FB: @ChaptersNorthside



Fourth Saturday Mornings  
Spirituality without boundaries  
IG/FB: @WildChurchCinci



Free Community Laundry  
Third Wednesday Evenings  
@ City Limits Kipling Ave

**Join Us For Christmas Eve!**



5pm  
Children’s Christmas:  
Interactive All-Ages Service

7:30pm  
Candlelight, Communion, Carols

11pm  
Online Lessons and Carols

Image: A Sanctified Art  
Good, New by Carmelle Beaugelin Caldwell

3416 Clifton Ave, 45220      (513) 961-2998      Facebook.com/CliftonUMC      CliftonUMC.com



# Neighborly Care in Winter

— by Gerald Checco

Winter — it's a wonderful time to demonstrate how much we truly rely on one another! The cold sets in, snow softens our urban scene and caring for neighbors becomes increasingly important. Along with festive cheer come challenges that are manageable when we keep sidewalks and driveways clear of snow and ice, making things safer for everyone. True, there's a Cincinnati code that requires removal of snow and ice from sidewalks as soon as possible, preserving walkability and preventing slips and falls.

This season can be especially tough for elderly neighbors, especially for those who live alone or have limited mobility. A simple offer to pick up groceries, run errands, or check-in can mean the world, making them feel seen and supported. Own a snow blower? Take a few minutes to clear a neighbor's sidewalk or driveway, especially if they might struggle to do it themselves.

Our four-legged friends are best protected when pet-friendly ice melts are used, preventing burned paw pads. Choosing the right product at ACE Hardware will keep daily dog walks a pleasure. Ask Bryan to help you find the right stuff! Just remember — shoveling light snow is easier than struggling with a hard-packed, icy accumulation that becomes a real hazard. Carry a small bag of safe ice melt in your pocket to scatter on patches you encounter that have become problematic.

Clearing our street storm drains is a year-round imperative to keep rainwater and snowmelt freely flowing and to prevent flooding and the formation of dangerous ice. Adopt your nearby street drain, regularly raking it clear of debris. If you notice something that needs attention that is not on your own property, ask your neighbor if you can lend a helping hand. You can also request assistance from the City of Cincinnati by calling 311 or using the service app "311Cincy."

Nights are longer, over 14 hours by the winter solstice on December 21. So please leave your porch light on to provide some added security for pedestrians. Everyone can contribute to making Clifton a safer, welcoming, and stronger community.



# Good Plates Eatery: An Uptown Family with a Heart for Giving



Located at the intersection of Clifton and McMillan Avenues, Good Plates Eatery stands as a testament to resilience, community spirit, and generosity. This small, family-run restaurant first opened its doors in March 2020, just a few days before the world was turned upside down by the COVID-19 pandemic. Faced with extraordinary challenges, the owners pivoted to carry-out service, and now, six years later, they are grateful to still be welcoming guests from the neighborhood and beyond.

The driving force behind Good Plates Eatery's enduring presence is its deep-rooted commitment to the local community, illustrated by its signature annual event: the Good Plates Giving Project (GPGP). Now in its sixth year, the GPGP has become a cherished tradition, held each year on the day before Thanksgiving and the day before Christmas Eve. Starting at 10 a.m., the restaurant opens its doors to provide hot meals, winter clothing, wellness products

and toys for children — all completely free to those in need.

What began as Andrew Schlanser and Jamie Roberts' vision for a small, free food initiative has grown into a city-wide event that draws hundreds of guests, with lines wrapping around the block before sunrise. Local news stations help to spread the word, letting the community know that Good Plates Eatery is ready to serve. Preparation for the GPGP is no small feat. Andrew dedicates days to cooking hundreds of pounds of food, while Jamie manages the front of the restaurant, accepting donations, keeping coffee cups filled, and ensuring that every child receives a special gift. Close friends, past employees and their families, and even loyal customers volunteer to make the event possible. The day is made even more festive by a visit from Santa, portrayed by an eager stepdad.

Last year, the Good Plates Giving Project reached an impressive milestone, distributing 5,000 meals. The team hopes to surpass that number this year but recognizes that it's a community effort. Donations — whether cash, Venmo (find them [@goodplateseatery](#), attached to Andrew Schlanser), gently used coats, children's goods, toiletries or other essentials — are always welcome and directly fuel the mission. Good Plates Eatery invites you to look them up on Google or visit their Facebook, Instagram and TikTok pages ([@goodplateseatery](#)) to see videos and stories from previous years.

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## The Clifton Area Pantry — by Michelle Burch



The food pantry is still up and running, thanks to the generous support of our friends and neighbors. As a reminder, it is housed on the CANS campus in the driveway on the west side of the building and is open to any individual or family in need. We strive to stock a variety of nonperishable food items as well as personal care items. In September we had the opportunity to partner with Kraemer Design + Production, a local Clifton business that hosted a canned food drive and collected items for the pantry throughout the month. This huge success allowed for stocking of our shelves and was a wonderful way for the firm to give back to community. We greatly appreciate their support and also the support of the *Clifton Chronicle*! We would love to partner with local businesses or organizations interested in hosting a food drive! The best way to reach us is by email at [cliftonareapantry@gmail.com](mailto:cliftonareapantry@gmail.com)



# FOLLOWING UP: SOLUTIONS TO A PROBLEM ON LUDLOW AVENUE

## Communities Collaborate with City Council for Safer Neighborhoods

— by Ronald L. Mosley, Sr., President, Roselawn Business Alliance, and Jan Brown Checco, Clifton resident. Published in the Enquirer Opinions page on 10/14/25

We tend to live in the silos of our communities, thinking that our problems are unique to just us. In September, we learned that both Clifton and Roselawn — and very likely other communities — have been struggling with an identical threat to public safety: all-night rowdy street parties on weekends, associated with hookah establishments. City Council's vote of 9-0 on September 17 to pass a new ordinance restricting operating hours of Cincinnati's hookah lounges was presented by Councilperson Mark Jeffreys. Operating hours will now be from 9 a.m. – 10 p.m. on weeknights and 9 a.m. – 11 p.m. on weekends. Community members and city leaders worked together to make our neighborhoods safer for everyone, all while encouraging local businesses to thrive.

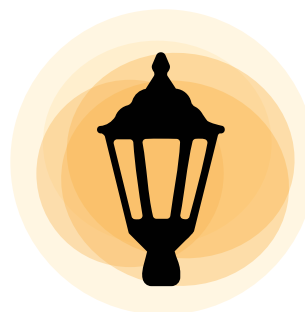
For over two years, both Roselawn and Clifton have endured persistent illegal behaviors associated with their hookah bars, activities completely at odds with everything residents do to make life safe and pleasant. Loud, aggressive street parties disrupted the sleep of residents and the operations of other businesses and services. Illegal activities included unlawful alcohol and food sales on the street, underage tobacco sales, illegal smoking in closed establishments, street altercations and incidents of assault and kidnapping, the brandishing of automatic weapons, and obstruction of emergency vehicles in one episode on Ludlow Avenue that included assault on law enforcement personnel. Neighboring businesses and volunteers are left to clean up the messes in the morning — broken liquor bottles, food, and human waste in private parking lots, and on streets and sidewalks.

Thousands of college students live in Clifton, circulating on Ludlow Avenue on their way to classes at UC and Cincinnati State. Many have only recently arrived in town, and some have fallen victim to the dangerous night crowds. By 2023, things had gone to extremes in both Clifton and Roselawn, and community leaders convened numerous meetings with representatives from community councils, business associations, police officers, elected officials, and city attorneys, trying to understand any options for improvement. City attorneys suggested that legal mechanisms would be necessary for the initiation of interventions towards positive change. Local television and newspapers began to report on the problems.

Roselawn and Mount Adams have already experienced hookah business-related shootings and assaults that led to injuries. Evidence collected by security cameras and private recordings has more than substantiated our communities' persistent complaints. Camera systems are being upgraded for better reporting. One desired step beyond the new ordinance would be the addition of specifications that, after closing of the businesses, people must also vacate the premises, with no loitering permitted in parking lots. Police enforcement must accompany all these operational changes.

The process of getting to positive change was long, but it illustrated that effective collaboration between communities and Cincinnati City Council is possible. Lack of reasonable oversight had created widespread concern. Ohio cities, including Cleveland, Germantown, and West Carrollton, have already implemented common-sense regulations that limit hours of hookah business operation. Ohio's statewide anti-smoking legislation also played a role towards corrective action. With

a new Cincinnati ordinance, Councilmember Mark Jeffreys sought to stop the dynamic that resulted in repeated all-night disturbances. This change in regulations is not meant to shutter businesses but encourages them to operate in better alignment with their communities' standards, optimizing neighborhood safety.



### Clifton Dental Care

Jennifer Lowe, DDS  
(513) 751-5200



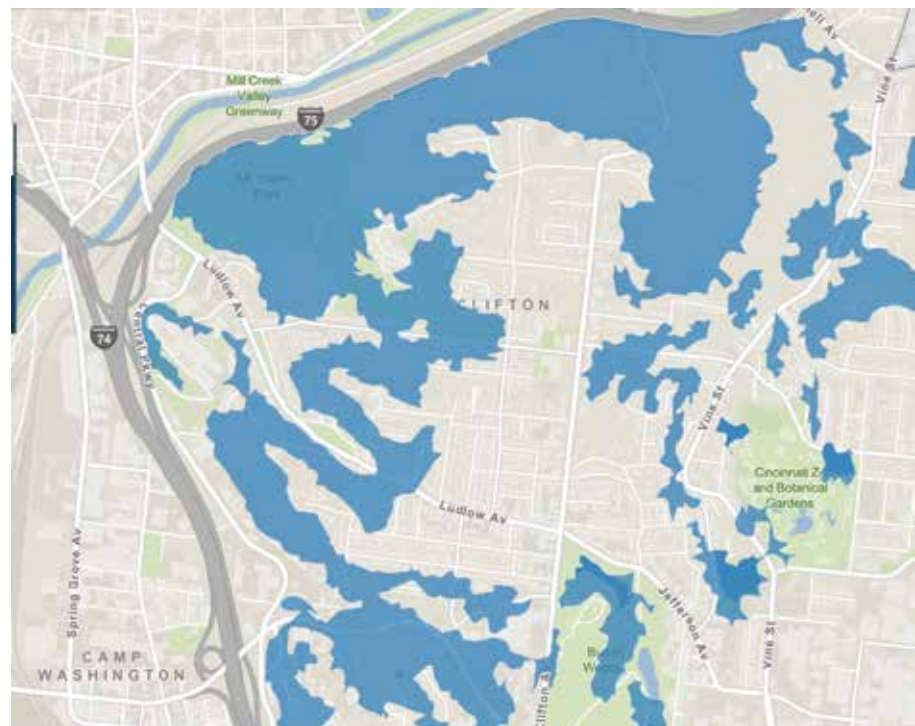
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to Schedule  
an Appointment!

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# Hillsides - An Environmental and Cultural Asset of Clifton

— by Gérald Checco, CTM Trustee; Eric Russo, CEO, Hillside Trust



In blue, the Hillside Overlay District in Clifton

The Clifton Town Meeting (CTM) in partnership with the Hillside Trust has taken decisive actions to address growing concerns surrounding the Hillside Overlay District in Clifton, urging city officials to undertake a robust and thorough reassessment of policies governing development on our city’s sensitive hillsides. This motion comes as community members, environmental advocates, and local leaders highlight gaps and ambiguities in existing zoning codes and development processes, raising alarm about the long-term sustainability and safety of hillside areas. The motion is also consistent with actions taken by Councilmember Mark Jeffreys to revamp the regulations concerning Cincinnati’s hillsides.

CTM’s resolution calls for a comprehensive review of city codes, accompanied by ongoing public engagement to ensure municipal regulations reflect community values and best practices in land use planning. Another resolution calls for an immediate stop of all projected developments along Central Parkway and near Mount Storm.

The Hillside Overlay District was originally established to guide development in areas marked by complex topography, unique ecological characteristics and striking visual features. Clifton is surrounded by hillsides that have been identified as sensitive and vulnerable. Recent proposals for new developments have exposed weaknesses in current regulations that could allow inappropriate parceling, density increases or even circumvention of critical hillside protections. Residents’ priorities

center on preserving natural landscapes, managing erosion and flood risks, and maintaining the unique character of Clifton’s neighborhoods. However, increased demand for housing has intensified scrutiny of environmental impacts, infrastructure capacity and the long-term viability of hillside development.

Community members have expressed particular concern over two important issues that threaten our already fragile hillsides. The first one is the unregulated dumping of construction debris on hillsides during the development of our city. The second one is the observed and projected changes in precipitation patterns, an impact of climate change that EPA estimates at a 37% increase in precipitation. The consequences of development on or near these hillsides may not become evident for years, often leaving future property owners responsible for costly repairs and stabilization efforts. Recent case studies such as the Central Parkway and Marshall Avenue Planned Development underscore these risks; deep cuts and fills well beyond regulatory limits have led to landslides and infrastructure damage, demonstrating the need for stricter review and enforcement.

CTM advocates for several key actions:

1. In-depth analysis of existing codes
2. Targeted review of subdivision processes
3. Assessment of recent development cases
4. Institution of public workshops to gather input from residents, environmental groups and development professionals.
5. Drafting amendments or new ordinances to close regulatory gaps, strengthen requirements and reinforce the protective intent of the Hillside Overlay District.

A major procedural reform requested is the mandatory presentation of any hillside development plans to the local community council before City staff review any proposals.

This would ensure that community feedback is actively solicited, documented and incorporated into official analyses, making public input a legally binding element of the development review process.

In addition, CTM voted for the following actions:

1. A temporary pause on all hillside developments until the reassessment and change of the code is complete.
2. A mandate for developers to secure bonds that would hold them responsible for mitigating any long-term problems.
3. Immediate opposition, even before this reassessment, to any development near Mount Storm and on Central Parkway.

Ultimately, CTM reaffirms its commitment to strong, clear and enforceable protections for hillside areas, urging City Council to allocate sufficient resources and prioritize environmental stewardship as Cincinnati continues to grow. The CTM resolution stands as a testament to our community’s dedication to sustainable development and the preservation of its irreplaceable hillside landscapes.



Room for different beliefs.  
**Yours.**

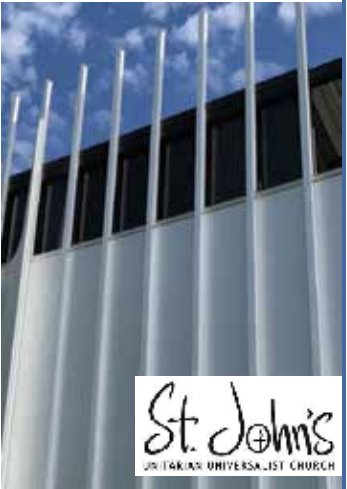
At St. John’s, through actions, words and music, we celebrate love, welcome freedom of thought, and work for justice.

Please visit!

Families of all ages welcome.

Services - 11 a.m. Sundays

320 Resor Ave.  
Clifton Gaslight District  
513-961-1938  
[stjohnsuu.org](http://stjohnsuu.org)





# Putting the Puzzle Together: Clifton Plan Update

— by Gérald Checco, Chair of the CTM Plan Committee, and Kyle Gibbs, City Planner

When the Winter issue of the *Clifton Chronicle* hits your mailbox, the heaviest lifting to create the complete draft of the new Clifton Plan will be nearly complete, and the review and adoption phases will begin. Months of dedicated effort from the CTM Clifton Plan Committee, city administration and community members have brought a comprehensive draft to this point, ready for the next critical steps.

In December, the implementation table will be finalized and the Plan’s draft will be complete. In January, thorough reviews by the Clifton Town Meeting (CTM), the Clifton Plan Steering Committee and the public will ensure that everyone has had the opportunity to provide feedback and engage with the material. In February, any necessary revisions will be made based on this input, and the updated plan will be circulated within the City. March will bring a formal presentation to the CTM (projected for March 2), at which time support for the plan will be requested. The process will culminate in April and May with presentations to the City Planning Commission and City Council, where final approvals will be sought.

The additional three to four months added to the timeline have allowed for more thoughtful development of goals and strategies, as well as increased opportunities for resident engagement and feedback, ensuring that the Clifton Plan reflects the community's needs and aspirations. Please feel free to reach out with any questions, comments or concerns as we move forward into this important phase.



To see where we are, access the survey or communicate with the Plan team, scan the QR code.

# City Hall Corner - Revive 75 Plans

— by City Councilman Mark Jeffreys

Over a decade ago, the completion of improvements to the I-75 interchange at Mitchell Avenue and I-74 brought changes to patterns of traffic and development. Over the past few months, the City of Cincinnati has been engaging the public for input on the update of **Revive 75** plans in four geographic areas: (1) Mitchell Avenue (2) Northside/South Cumminsville (3) Hopple Street/Camp Washington (4) Queensgate/West End/Downtown. The common denominator across each of these areas is land adjacent to I-75 exits where there is a fair amount of vacant, dilapidated property.

The stated objective of updates to Revive 75 is “reconnecting walking and biking connections between and within neighborhoods, planning development opportunities on Ohio Department of Transportation’s (ODOT) unused or remnant land, bringing positive economic development to the neighborhoods adjacent to I-75 as a result of the improvements, and identifying priorities for future investments.”

For those of us living in Clifton, the area of most interest is around Mitchell Avenue near the Kroger on Kenard. The area from the I-75 exit ramp, along Kenard Avenue, leading to Clifton Avenue, serves as a gateway into Clifton’s neighborhood. Presently, this approach is anything but beautiful. It’s mostly empty storefronts across from Kroger and vacant lots with overgrown weeds.

Initial plans shared in public forums show a Mill Creek Trail extended north past Clifton Avenue with added greenspace and suggests potential development opportunities for the mostly vacant land adjacent to where Family

Dollar used to be. Details of the City’s public engagements over the past months can be found here: <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/planning/neighborhood-plans/ongoing-neighborhood-planning-processes/revive-cincinnati-neighborhoods-of-the-lower-mill-creek-valley-plan-update/> Watch for future opportunities to provide additional input as the plans are shaped in these neighborhoods adjacent to Clifton.

As always, please reach out to me at Mark.Jeffreys@cincinnati-oh.gov if you have questions or comments. I appreciate the opportunity to hear from residents and to serve the people of Cincinnati.



## PLAN UPDATE PROCESS





# Mill Creek Transformations

— by Steve Schuckmann



In September, the Mill Creek Alliance celebrated 30 years of dedication to the restoration of the Mill Creek as a prized natural, recreational and economic asset. The waterway and communities situated along its banks are experiencing a new day. Judged in 1997 as the most endangered urban river, the creek has now been largely restored, home to over 40 species of fish, as well as herons, bald eagles and even beaver. There is new energy seen in collaboration and new initiatives among the City of Cincinnati, several civic groups, the neighborhoods of North and South Fairmount, South Cumminsville, Millvale and Lower Price Hill. The creek and its bike trail also connect to

Northside, Clifton and Spring Grove Village. Several projects and plans are proceeding at the same time, aimed at opening access to the Mill Creek while rejuvenating the old industrial corridor along the creek. In early October, a new mini-park with creek access was opened at the Yellow Bridge along Millcreek Road. Unofficially designated "Cumminsville Beach at Yellow Bridge Park," the site is owned by the Millcreek Valley Conservancy District (MVCD) and is adjacent to the City's Sanitation facility in Cumminsville. It is along the Mill Creek Greenway Trail which will eventually provide a safe and scenic way to get to and from downtown all the way to the Ohio River Trail, connecting to Lick Run and communities along the Beekman corridor.

Just upriver, a new "Kayak Kiosk" has been installed at Salway Park where kayaks can be rented for paddling. Think of it as a Red Bike station but with kayaks for floating, a new recreational opportunity to travel down to the Yellow Bridge and beyond.

Work on extending the Mill Creek Greenway Trail and installation of the new creek access

is the result of collaborations between the Mill Creek Alliance, Tri-State Trails, the City of Cincinnati and the Millcreek Valley Conservancy District. The MVCD is the landowner of much of the property along the stream and is charged with flood control. The Mill Creek Alliance is a non-profit organization that has been working for 30 years on cleanup while encouraging people to experience and learn about this historic asset.

The planning and implementation of projects along the Mill Creek corridor rejuvenate neighborhoods and establish new opportunities for recreation, community and economic development. "Experience Millcreek," a planning study funded by the City, has taken a deep dive into conversations about the needs of neighborhoods along this corridor, resulting in several initial projects. Additionally, "Reimagining the Civic Commons," a national study of public spaces, has included Cincinnati and the Mill Creek as one of its focus areas.

Come down to the Mill Creek to see the transformations taking place along the northern border of Clifton!

## The Clifton Historical Society's Holiday Party!

Dec. 20th, 10 am - 1 pm at CCAC  
3rd floor Auditorium, parking at rear.

### *Our Guest Speaker:*

**Nick Rehtin** - of *Creative Aging* will present his slide show of *Christmas in Cincinnati Years Ago*, plus a preview of future CHS presentations.

**Delectable pizza from Deweys & beverages served up with open discussions about where CHS is & where we want to go. Bring your suggestions, & meet our key players.**

**Historical Books on sale - great for gifts!**

**RESERVE your place at**  
***Cliftonculturalarts.org/XmasBash***  
**or call 513-497-2860**

***Donation: \$25/each to support CCAC***  
***and the Clifton Historical Society***



## The Clifton Historical Society's 2026 Programming

### **Seniors Outreach**

Monthly lectures on fourth Fridays beginning in January, 10:30 am to noon at CCAC on the first floor. Historical topics of Clifton and the Queen City by Nick Rehtin and others. Learn about our canals, streetcars and steamboats. Mark your calendars and bring your memories. **Reservations at 513 497 2860**

**Historical Books on sale in time for the holidays!**  
***Inquire at the front desk of Clifton Cultural Arts Center.***

**October: Private Historical Tour of Spring Grove Cemetery**  
Experience a guided tour to the gravesites and mausoleums of Clifton's most notable citizens. *Date and Time TBA.*  
**Reservations at 513 497 2860 or online at**  
***cliftonculturalarts.org/SpringGrove***



# Manifest Drawing Center

## New Programs and Upcoming Workshops

— by Kevin Leigh-Manuell, Manifest Program Coordinator



This winter, the Manifest Drawing Center continues to expand its offerings for artists and the community with new programs that celebrate both the timeless craft of drawing and the evolving study of art history.

The Drawing Center’s Visiting Artist Workshop Series welcomes Savannah Tate Cuff back to Cincinnati this December for Building Form with Reductive Drawing (Dec. 19-21). Savannah Tate-Cuff, a Cincinnati native and internationally trained artist, studied at the Angel Academy of Art in Florence and Grand Central Atelier in New York. Her three-day portrait workshop introduces the reductive method — a process

that begins with a toned ground and builds light by erasing instead of by adding marks. Through demonstration, guided exercises and critique, participants will learn to construct the portrait through value, light and structure.

We are introducing two new art history courses at the Drawing Center, led by art historian Charlotte Gray. Stranger Things: Exploring Historical Artworks in Bone, Metal, Parchment and Glass (Nov. 9-Dec. 7) invites students to rediscover forgotten materials and techniques from bone carving to stained glass while exploring how objects carry meaning across time. Later in the season, Curious Birth: Unpacking Christmas (Dec. 14) offers a one-day event, examining the evolution of Nativity imagery across cultures from early Christian art to modern interpretations.

Manifest’s Open Figure program has expanded its Tuesday and Thursday evening sessions to three full hours (6:30-9:30 p.m.). Open Figure welcomes artists of all experience levels to draw from live models in a relaxed yet focused studio environment.

As the Drawing Center continues to grow, these programs reflect Manifest’s commitment to fostering a thriving community of makers and learners, where artists, students and enthusiasts alike can come together to sharpen their craft, broaden their perspective and draw closer to the enduring language of art. For registration and program details, visit [www.manifestdrawingcenter.org](http://www.manifestdrawingcenter.org).



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# About Cincinnati Public Schools “Safe Sleep Lot” Program

— information source: online reporting by WVXU/NPR and Fox 19



**Project Connect**, the homeless advocacy organization within Cincinnati Public Schools, plans to open a secure overnight parking lot for students and their families who are living out of their cars. Called the **Safe Sleep Lot**, the space will open March 1, 2026, with 12 spots located outside Taft Elementary School in Mt. Auburn. Project Connect says the lot will be open to the families that it serves and will have on-site bathrooms and access to food and hygiene products. The lot will include a locked gate, 24/7 security and Wi-Fi, with car kits provided to families including essentials like blankets, pillows, water bottles and window covers. Families can access meals on certain nights, and the site will connect them with other resources through the Project Connect social services hub.

This program is a direct response to the growing number of CPS families living out of their vehicles. During the 2024-2025 school year, Project Connect identified 4,326 students attending public or charter schools in Cincinnati

who are without stable housing, and says a growing number are living in their vehicles. At that time, Project Connect provided multi-day hotel stays for 355 students and their families. While the brief hotel stays can help families, Program Manager Rebeka Beach says too many families don't transition to more stable housing after they check out. Instead, they often fall back into homelessness, so the organization is offering a new alternative. Safe Sleep Lot can provide a temporary, safe space while families are on the waitlist for more permanent shelter. A safer alternative to sleeping in unauthorized locations which can be disrupted by law enforcement and lead to constant movement, it seeks to ensure that students can get a decent night's sleep, improving their ability to focus and learn in school.

Contact the **Project Connect** office at (513) 363 5670 for more details or visit this page: <https://www.cps-k12.org/our-community/project-connect>

# Clifton Market Report - Winter

Tom Lohre at Clifton Market café interviews Mr. Singh about the state of the market.



**Tom:** How's it going?

**Mr. Singh:** It's going. I wish it was a lot better, but we're going and working hard every day trying to get it to the next level where it needs to be. The market is really kind of in a low spot at this point.

**Tom:** I haven't seen it so low in quite a while. Do you have any timelines in the works?

**Mr. Singh:** We can't go on too long like this. It's probably the lowest since we took over from co-op. We built it back up, and now, I won't say it's at the same spot, but it is low. The goal is to get up before the holidays. To have the store fully stocked before Christmas. That's our goal.

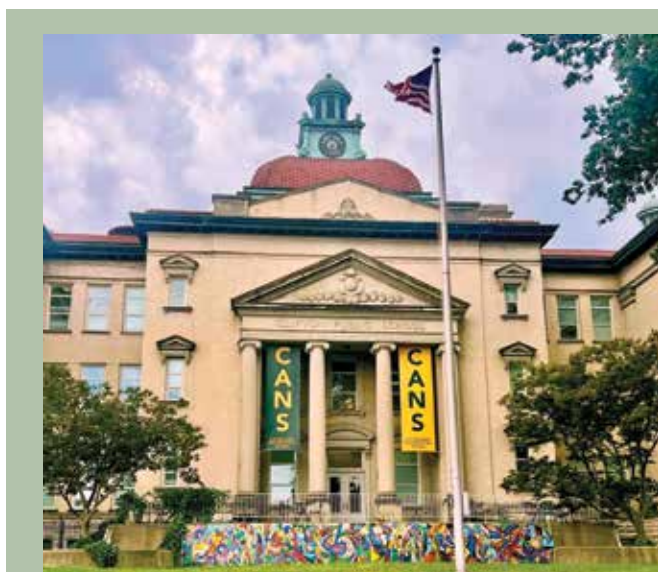
**Tom:** I've been covering the market for a long time. Is there anything the community can do for you?

**Mr. Singh:** I love the community support here. Clintonites are very concerned. Once we get the store back up to where it needs to be, word of mouth will spread the news. If anybody has any suggestions or comments, I will openly listen. It's not a co-op model, so we can't ask for help in any kind of way. We have to figure this out on our own. There are a lot of people who still check in every day asking, “When is it going to come back?” That gives me the strength and hope to keep it going. The community is behind us. Once we get to the point where they can be proud of this store, we won't have any issue getting the business.

**Tom:** Thank you, Mr. Singh.



To watch a video of the interview, use the QR code.



*Clifton Area Neighborhood School adorns its beautiful 1906 Beaux Arts façade with an installation of banners in their school colors, green and gold. Recognizing the need for updated school signage, CANS parents Margaret Vennemeyer and Catherine Hamilton Hicks designed the banners, raised funds and collaborated with CPS to create this handsome and beneficial addition to Clifton for CANS families and students.*



# events

## Crafts & Cocktails

[cliftonculturalarts.org/cocktails](http://cliftonculturalarts.org/cocktails)

Enjoy an affordable, no experience necessary art class with a fresh cocktail in hand. Join us for **SUCCULENTS & SANGRIAS** or **BROOMS & BEE'S KNEES**.

## 2ND SUNDAY Showtime

[cliftonculturalarts.org/showtime](http://cliftonculturalarts.org/showtime)

Free Sunday performances once a month that introduce you to new art styles and organizations like **CCM PREP BALLET**, **PLAYHOUSE IN THE PARK**, and **THE QUEEN'S MEN**.

## SUNSET salons

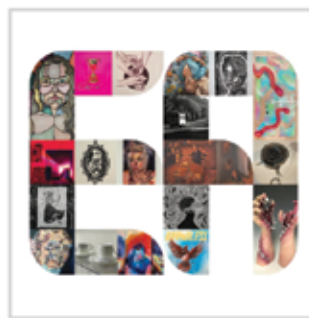
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As they say, there are no stupid questions. Learn everything you want to know about **FASHION**, **ANIMALS**, and **TEQUILA**. Select Tuesdays for just \$10.

# exhibits



**the body between us**  
**Bubly Barna**  
Jan 9 – Feb 6



**Summerfair Cincinnati:**  
**Emerging Artists**  
Feb 13 – Feb 27



**New Woman**  
**Juried Exhibition**  
Mar 6 – Apr 3





returning Mother's Day, May 10  
[cliftonculturalarts.org/hometour](http://cliftonculturalarts.org/hometour)



# Clifton HOME & GARDEN TOUR 2026



presented by

Clifton Cultural Arts Center

3412 Clifton Ave  
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## 2026 SUMMER CAMPS



**CAMPS FOR AGES 3 – 17  
GO ON SALE JANUARY 1!**





# Gaslight Gardening

— by Leah Kottyan, Thrall Street

*The gardens of Clifton are part of our neighborhood's identity. We use our sidewalks; we enjoy each other; we love being outdoors together. In the Gaslight Gardening column, we celebrate the flora of Clifton. Common names for plants are used to make the articles accessible to everyone.*

As summer's heat begins to wane and the air grows heavy with the scent of drying leaves, I find myself reflecting on timing. So much of gardening is about rhythm, not just what we plant, but when we plant it. Over the years, I've learned that a garden's beauty doesn't have to arrive all at once. Instead, it can unfold gradually in thoughtful waves, bringing new surprises with each passing month.

This practice is known as succession planting, and it has become one of the quiet joys of my gardening life. In my Clifton beds, I rarely plan for everything to bloom at the same time. Instead, I stagger my plantings so that color and texture shift across the season. One patch of sunflowers may light up July, while another, planted just a few weeks later, bursts into bloom in September. The result is a living calendar of colorful joy that stretches from the soft impressionistic violets of March to the dramatic jewel tones of October.

Succession planting doesn't require vast space or intricate planning, just a bit of planning and patience. You can try planting fast-growing annuals after your spring flowers fade or mix perennials that naturally take turns at center stage. In one of my favorite perennial beds, purple coneflowers, foxglove and delphinium are at their best in June and July, making way for salvia that takes over in September and into fall. Each plant plays its part in the choreography of the seasons, bowing out gracefully so another may shine.

If you're starting small, experiment by seeding zinnias or cosmos in intervals a few weeks apart. As one patch begins to fade, the next will be coming into bloom. This approach keeps pollinators happy and gives your garden an ever-changing palette of colors and scents. Container gardens can also benefit by rotating plants in pots or window boxes to ensure fresh color and vibrancy well into autumn. The most beautiful gardens are those that never stand still, where every week brings something new to notice, nurture and celebrate. As the season turns and leaves begin to fall, I'm already dreaming of next spring's rhythm: another chance to plant for the joy that unfolds slowly and lasts all year.



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# Shakespeare's Wild Ride to the Gaslight!

— by Larry Holt

On November 11, 2020, I received an email from Clifton Community Fund board member John Osterman with a Craigslist picture of a bronze Shakespeare bench. John had gotten the lead from Clifton resident Catherine Hamilton Hicks. Did the CCF want to buy this bench for Clifton?

And thus, the adventure began! Questions: Where was it? (An estate in Williamsburg, Ohio). How much was it? (A lot!) Where would we put it? (Somewhere in Clifton...duh!) Who the heck is Catherine Hamilton Hicks? (New resident on Whitfield.) So, John, Dave Huwer, the late Bob Rack and I ventured east of Cincinnati to the estate where we saw, not just Will, but many other examples of statuary.

The verdict? It sure looked like Shakespeare! We held an impromptu CCF meeting on the ride back and decided that we had to get it for Clifton. One problem — CCF doesn't spend a nickel unless the full board approves and this was more than we'd ever spent on one project. However, we had to act fast. So, a group of us

decided to put up the cash and hope that the board would reimburse us...which they did eventually.

To get it to Clifton, Catherine had a trailer that could carry a 1,000-pound statue. (Don't most of us?) But where to store it until we could install it? How about board member Margaret Reich's back porch? Done! Could CTM help us locate a permitted spot? Gerald Checco suggested an approved bench location on Telford.

On installation day, we put our 1,000-pound treasure back on the trailer and delivered it to the corner of Ludlow and Telford early on a Sunday morning so that if we dropped the damn thing there would be few witnesses! No drops! Now we just had to install it. Graeter's gave us donuts for strength. Our handpicked Shakespeare team pooled their combined statue installation experience (none) and bolted Will to the ground...where he remains. Now, actors such as the recently videotaped Kevin Bacon can recite Will's immortal words while passing

through Cincinnati on a concert tour! (See the QR code for the video.)

P.S. What about the mural on Graeter's wall? That was Beth Whelan's idea as we heaved "The Bard" into place. My son printed it and Dave Huwer and I installed it from atop my 85+ year-old wooden stepladder. What could go wrong?



*We bow before the Bard.*

## A Clifton Family Affair: Caza Sikes Brings Cincinnati's Stories to the Auction Block

Walk into the Caza Sikes gallery on Madison Road. The soft shuffle of footsteps over wood floors, the hum of a phone bidder in New Mexico and the occasional whoop when the gavel drops. It's an auction house, yes — but also a family story.



Founded by long-time Clifton resident Reid Sikes and his sons Will, Graydon and Evan, Caza Sikes has turned a father-and-sons partnership into one of Cincinnati's most distinctive art and estate auction businesses. They

specialize in helping individuals, families and attorneys sell property, from a single heirloom painting to the full contents of an estate, connecting local stories to a national audience of collectors. "Every piece that comes through these doors has a story," says Graydon Sikes. "Our

job is to make sure it's told well — and sold well."

Sometimes those stories make national headlines. Last fall, a remarkable Joseph Henry Sharp painting titled "Young Medicine Man of



Taos" surfaced in Cincinnati — untouched since it arrived by stagecoach more than a century ago.

The work still sits in its original frame, protected behind glass just as Sharp instructed in letters to its first owner, Herbert Dinkelaker. One letter made the team smile: the artist himself wrote, "This picture is worth twice as much as we agreed on..." The painting went on to sell for more than \$150,000, proving Sharp's instincts right — and reminding everyone that art, like family, can age beautifully when cared for.

That same mix of surprise and scholarship runs through all Caza Sikes' auctions. A recent sale included Native American baskets, beadwork and

early photographs, pieces that carried modest estimates but big stories. Regional paintings from estates around Mount Lookout and Hyde Park found buyers from as far as California and Paris.

The family's approach is hands-on. They research, photograph and catalog each lot in-house, making sure every object — whether it's a Chippendale table, a diamond ring or a baseball card — gets its moment in the spotlight. And when the bidding ends and the lights dim, the Sikes family gathers to swap stories about the people they've met and the lives those objects touched. "We get to handle pieces of Cincinnati history every week," says Reid Sikes. "It never gets old."

For those considering selling, settling an estate or simply curious about the value of what's in their attic, Caza Sikes offers an inviting mix of professionalism and neighborly warmth — proof that even in the fast-moving auction world, there's still room for family. Learn more or view upcoming auctions at [www.czasikes.com](http://www.czasikes.com) or visit their gallery in Oakley.



# The Show Must Go On: “Boss” Cox’s Entertainment Empire

— by Jan Brown Checco, part 4 of 5 stories

Turn-of-the-20th-century Cincinnati was brimming with live entertainment in theatres and opera houses on nearly every block. Retired from politics in 1913, George B. Cox was busily investing in the entertainment business, having developed intimate acquaintances with virtually every American theatrical impresario. His interests included legitimate drama, high-class and family vaudeville, and motion pictures.

Despite declining health, Cox cultivated a second empire of important theatrical real estate in New York City where he had often visited, learning at the feet of Tammany Hall bosses. His investments included part ownership of the Hippodrome Theatre of New York City, the largest in the world, which seated 7000. He purchased Cincinnati’s Columbia Theatre on Walnut Street and merged it with Keith Theatre interests. This started important wheels turning for the Shubert group, helping them to establish an independent booking agency that changed the entire country’s theatrical map. Two years prior to his death in 1916, Cox perfected the system of booking arrangements in over 19 cities where former competitions had been ruinous. The Samuel S. Shubert Theatre (90 E. Seventh Street, downtown) was conceived during his lifetime and constructed in the former YMCA building after his death. It’s fair to ask: Has Cincinnati established itself today as a strong entertainment city because of George’s seminal investments and innovations in the sector?

Cox’s eroding health concluded with strokes that paralyzed him in February and March

1916, followed by death from pneumonia on May 20. At this point, his fortune was reputed to be about \$4 million. The Cox political machine sputtered on for another decade, finally dissolving when Cincinnati's Reform Movement Mayor Murray Seasongood adopted a charter to establish a Council-Manager form of government that ensured no future "bosses." In Seasongood’s opinion, Cincinnati under Cox's leadership was the worst-governed city in the United States.

But George would beg to differ. He said, "I am the Boss of Cincinnati. I never dodged that statement in my life. I've got the best system of government in the country. If I didn't think this system was the best, I would consider that I was a failure in life." The Cincinnati Enquirer summarized things upon his death: “His code of morals was his own, and it contemplated unswerving fidelity to friends and truth under all conditions....”



The Columbia Theatre on Walnut Street, purchased by Keith Theatres in 1909, was redesigned and reopened in 1912, closed in 1928, reopened three weeks later to screen Charlie Chaplin’s “The Circus” and finally demolished in 1965 to make room for the new Fountain Square.



A map of Downtown Cincinnati from 1942 shows numerous theatres in the heart of the city. Provided/CincinnatiViews



Above: The Samuel S. Shubert Theatre at 90 E. Seventh St., located in the YMCA building (1921). Below Cox Memorial Theatre, built in 1921, designed by Caroline Shill Cox as a tribute to her late husband; built in 1921, closed 1954, razed 1976



## Clifton Golf Outing 2024

— by John Whedon

Clifton residents gathered on Saturday, August 23, at Avon Fields (Cincinnati’s oldest golf course) for the 13th annual Clifton Golf Outing. The event raised \$25,000 for the community, including funds to support Cincinnati State’s “C State Complete” program that gives support to students who otherwise might not finish their degree. At dinner on the deck, the post-golf celebration, Duke

Energy’s “Friends of Clifton” Award was presented to Geoff Gelke and Tom Fruth, founders of the Clifton Historical Society. Both have also been instrumental in the success of the *Clifton Chronicle*. Each year Duke Energy recognizes Cliftonites who have given back for the benefit of the community. Clifton Golf Outing has raised over \$175,000 for Clifton nonprofits and is a CTM event.

We’re excited to announce our 2026 event beneficiary: DePaul Cristo Rey and their new golf team — the Bruins. Long-time Clifton resident Dave Lockard is leading the team that completed their inaugural season in 2025, fueling interest in golf throughout the school.

DePaul Cristo Rey provides college preparatory education for urban youth with limited financial resources.



Clifton resident and De Paul Cristo Rey head coach Dave Lockard with the 2025 Bruins golf team



# The Evolution of Our Libraries

— by Geoff Gelke, Clifton Historical Society



Cincinnati's first libraries were supported as early as 1802 by users willing to pay a subscription fee, but those were always costly and thus largely disappeared. Then there were private libraries, such as Henry Probasco's world-renowned collection of first editions, heavily guarded from the public. Against this setting grew public sentiment for a "free and public" library for all citizens. Rufus King II (1817-1891), a very prominent attorney and politician of high birth, drafted the first Ohio Common Schools Act in 1853, authorizing school libraries to tax for their support. Students began to have more than their McGuffey Readers as books. The clamor for a general "free and public" library would fester until the "Public Library of Cincinnati" became a reality in 1874 at 629 Vine Street in the reworked shell of Thomas Handy's unfinished opera house.

But what of the burgeoning outlying neighborhoods, becoming heavily populated via inclines and streetcars, particularly in the 1890s? They also wanted such libraries. Enter, Andrew Carnegie, America's richest man and member of the "Robber Barons" of the era, but who uniquely had a guilt complex about his wealth and how it was gained. Others, like J.P. Morgan, were fond of saying: "I owe the public nothing!" But Carnegie remembered the kindness of a retired Scottish businessman who freely lent him books during Andrew's impoverished youth. He remembered also his own brutal treatment of laborers. These two facts created a catharsis that benefited citizens worldwide with "free and public" Carnegie libraries. From 1883 until his death in 1919, he commissioned over 2,500 library buildings, including 82 in Ohio alone, including seven branches in Cincinnati.

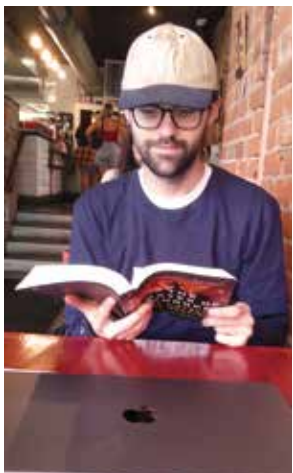
But they were not totally free. Carnegie's assistant, James Bertram, applied the "Carnegie Formula" to municipalities expressing interest in having a handsome new library, including obvious need, a building site, a paid staff, public funding, provision of 10% of the building cost to support operations, and an agreement to provide free service to all. This gauntlet eliminated towns too small to meet

the test and those simply not interested. The architecture also required a high standard, classical styles usually from famed New York architect Edward Lippicott Tilton. Locally, we can sense the dichotomy at play between Corryville and Clifton. Corryville successfully gained an impressive new library in 1907, while Clifton passed, suggesting perhaps divergence in their respective perceptions of "need." Clifton finally had a branch library in 1953, which was in a small storefront on Ludlow. In 2015, Clifton dramatically upgraded their library experience, moving into the renovated Chateausque mansion of George B. "Boss" Cox, finally measuring up to a Carnegie-style library.

Carnegie libraries began to appear around the globe as monuments to the man, and while not required to carry his name, all were of his style. They symbolized the aspirations of upward-moving societies, as did schools and other public buildings of majestic appearance. Innovations like open stacks to promote browsing, circular front desks to minimize book theft, specialized reading rooms, and windows six to seven feet above the floor for light but allowing book shelving below. All such features are still designed into modern libraries, so thanks to Mr. Carnegie!

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## In Praise of Books — by Dora Schield



Those who cling to the myth that books are dying (or already dead) need only visit one of the libraries mentioned in *Evolution of Our Libraries* by Geoff Gelke and take note of the shelves and shelves of books on hold, awaiting dedicated readers to check them out.

Geoff Gelke's story pays tribute to Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie not only contributed to literature but gave architectural importance to where it could be housed. I am willing to bet there are still those out there who have never heard of him or his genius and generosity. When I was in grade school, students were assigned to write essays on their most admired historical figures. It was Carnegie, along with Amelia Earhart, who were the most credited.

I give accolades to modern-day libraries that offer more than just the on-paper media of my childhood. Librarians I talked to assure me that books, magazines, et al, are still the most popular forms of reading on offer. I have never taken to e-books, which were the rage when first introduced. Prior to e-books, I was gifted with a PDA\* with a collection of Chekhov stories. I found Chekhov engaging, but the means of delivery less so.

I came from a family of readers, and no matter where we were housed, our dad designed floor-to-ceiling bookcases. There were also plenty of spaces indoors and out to hide with our books, particularly when we were called upon to do household chores. Our parents were savers, so many of the books we read were inherited from their youth. In addition, bookmobiles that magically appeared during school vacations and trips to the city library were the mainstays of an enriching education.

I pay tribute to students whose formal education is linked to computers yet share a love of reading. Biographies about history makers, as well as books about current affairs, seem to hold the most value for them. Older adults willing to share their reading habits favor memoirs, mysteries and proven fiction writers. Recently, I've been looking to foreign authors and/or rereading books from my own library. If I can't get into a book by, say page 50, I'll donate it, in the hope it will find a more appreciative audience.

Efforts to ban books are not new, but it seems to me that a trend to dictate the reading habits of others is once again on the rise. I therefore celebrate both libraries and bookstores in this city for honoring their patrons' right to read whatever they choose.

\*(PDA) Personal Digital Assistant



# Clifton Branch Library – by Eric Davis

As the winter months usher in cold temperatures and fewer daylight hours, it's tempting to want to just stay in and curl up with a good book. But when cabin fever sets in, it's good to know you're always welcome at the library! Stock up on fresh reading material or join us for one of our many fun, free events. Bring a friend or make a new one. Either way, it's easy to see that the library is the place to be! Here is just a sample of what we have lined up for you this winter:

**Game Night!** Tuesday 12/9, 1/13, 2/10 from 6-7:30 p.m. (Second Tuesday of each month) Join us for a low-key game night at the library! Board games, card games and more will be provided. Bring a favorite to play or learn a new game!

**Silent Book Club:** Tuesday 12/23, 1/27, 2/24 from 6-7:30 p.m.  
Spend an evening in quiet company with your book of choice. All readers and book formats are welcome! We'll have 45 minutes of silent reading and then an optional discussion for the remaining time together.

**Crafternoon:** Saturday 12/27 from 1:30-3 p.m. Join us for an afternoon of crafting and socializing with friends and neighbors. Details and registration a few weeks prior to each month's program.

**Wellbeing Walks in Burnet Woods:** Mondays from 12:15-12:45 p.m.  
Join us once a week for a walk on a paved path through Burnet Woods. Together, we'll take in beautiful views and fresh air! The first Monday of each month, our partners, the Osher Center for Integrative Health at the University of Cincinnati, will lead a walk and share more about the health benefits of walking and time spent in nature. We'll meet at the Clifton Branch Library front porch and depart for our walk at 12:15 p.m. This program is weather-permitting, and walks will last approximately 30 minutes.

**Did you know?** The Clifton Branch Library has a **Seed Library!** Stop in and check out the many seed varieties we have to offer. Grow your own vegetables, flowers and herbs! The University of Cincinnati Greenhouse donated seeds to make

our Clifton Branch Seed Library possible and UC Horticulture Club members help us to keep the inventory organized. Gotta love the power of community!

For a list of more programs at Clifton and throughout the library system, please visit our Events link: <https://cincinnati.library.bibliocommons.com/v2/events>

We look forward to seeing you at the Library!



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## How I Learned to Love Scottish Country Dancing – by Atia Huff



A few years back, a friend invited me to a Scottish Country dancing class in Cincinnati. In fact I was invited many, many times! I resisted, repeatedly, for my heritage wasn't Scottish nor did I know anything about Scottish dancing. Would I feel like an impostor? When I finally got the courage to attend, I observed that there were many non-Scots in the group, and another pleasant surprise was the wide age range. Young to mature adults were dancing jigs, reels and Strathspeys together in total harmony! And they were dancing to upbeat, toe-tapping

music. I was impressed, intrigued — and I joined.

Over time I learned that long ago, before central heating and television, there was Scottish country dancing — which kept the Scots warm and entertained. The Scottish reels and jigs gave dancers a heart-warming aerobic lift. Strathspey is a slow graceful dance, unique to Scotland. Focus on the formations, cleverly combined in the dance, engages the mind. Above all, Scottish Country Dancing is highly sociable: all the dances begin and end with a courtly bow and curtsy.

The Cincinnati group is a member of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS). Queen Elizabeth II was a patron of the Scottish Country Dancers, as is King Charles, allowing the Society based in Edinburgh the permission to use "Royal" in its title. Teachers are certified to provide uniform instruction to the branches located all over the globe. Incidentally, American square dancing derived, in part, from Irish and Scottish reels and jigs.

After learning the basics of Scottish Country dancing, I was able to attend many social gatherings — tea dances, workshops and Scottish balls — some of which are very festive affairs. Ladies in long gowns and gents in clan kilts and Prince Charlie jackets enter two by two, then four by four, and even up to eight by eight with The Grand March, led by a bagpiper, assembling on the dance floor. After a brief welcome, an instruction is given: "Ladies and gentlemen, form the sets!" A fun and lively evening begins.

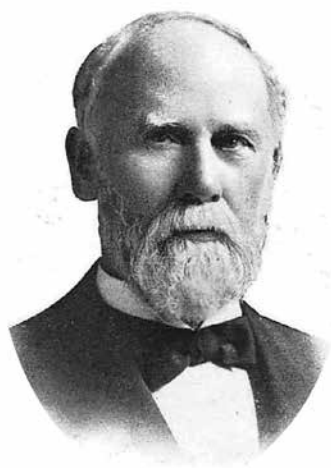
To be a dancer one needs only the following:

1. to know right from left,
2. to count to eight, and
3. to be able to laugh at yourself!

I found this was true! It's a "wee" Scottish Country Dancing primer. If this entices you, the group meets every Wednesday at Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church from 7-9 p.m. For more info: <https://ohiorscds.org>



# Once Upon a Mattress — by Bonnie Holiday Speeg



Woolper Avenue has some history to sleep on. *The Cincinnati Enquirer* 1899: “Clifton real estate owners are working earnestly to secure the continuance of Forest Avenue from Avondale to their suburbs. If the street goes

through it will connect with the new avenue opened in Clifton called Woolper. Over 250 signatures were secured on a petition asking for this. That number represents the best people in the ‘Home of the Barons.’ It would give Avondale and Clifton a much-needed connecting link.”

Around 1900 Woolper Avenue linked Avondale with Clifton. A north section of the Resor Subdivision would be bought by Seth C. Foster whose 1860s Glenmary property ran the length of the woods and ravines behind the homes, over to the Resor Greendale Subdivision, to the future Woolper.

Stearns & Foster Mattress Company founder Seth Cutter Foster was born in 1823 in Boone

County, Kentucky, near Burlington to a family of modest means. Seth moved to Cincinnati as a young man, attending the first Woodward night school class and finding work in a dry goods store. He then met Massachusetts native and printer George Sullivan Stearns. Engaged in manufacturing printers’ ink at Clay and Liberty Streets, Stearns was experimenting with cotton wadding, stuffing and horse carriage cushions. Foster sold cotton goods on Main Street and suggested he could find a market for Stearns’ manufactured goods. In 1846 Seth invested \$5,000, and the business was born. It prospered even more in moving to Lockland.

Stearns & Foster was one of the first factories to make cotton wadding in the United States. After losing two wives, but prospering in the mattress business, 37-year-old Seth Foster married Julia Resor in 1861 (daughter of Greendale’s William Resor). The couple built a grand home on Glenmary and raised seven children. Their property ran the entire distance between Glenmary and the future Woolper Avenue. A visit to Boone County and to Woolper Creek and Woolper Road shows that Foster’s Clifton property closely resembled the creek he loved as a boy. Consequently, it’s the name he gave to his Clifton home and land and also by 1908, to the street officially named Woolper.

*The Cincinnati Enquirer*, 1909: “Miss Laura

Foster, granddaughter of Mr. & Mrs. Seth Cutter Foster, will have her wedding at Calvary Church. The wedding breakfast is at the bride’s grandfather Seth Foster’s residence on Glenmary, named Woolper for Mr. Foster’s boyhood home in Old Kentucky. That house is a mansion with broad porches, spacious rooms and velvet lawns studded with great oaks on forty acres where they raise horses.”

Julia Foster died in 1914 and Seth Foster in 1915 at age 90. Their daughter Julia Resor Foster lived at the Glenmary Woolper mansion until her death in 1937. The mansion was later demolished and the land subdivided for developers, creating Biddle Road and new streets filled with modern houses.

Seth Foster is buried in Spring Grove Cemetery near his partner Stearns. Bedfellows, one might say.



## The New School Montessori’s Annual Camping Trip — by Ann Baumgardner



The New School Montessori’s 4th, 5th and 6th graders took their annual camping trip to Moscow, Ohio, jumping right into adventure! They pitched their own tents, cooked delicious campfire meals, and ended the nights the best way possible—around the fire with s’mores in hand. With the team from Urban Wilderness, our students learned how to build fires and shelters, practiced wilderness survival skills, and got a crash course in emergency response. In

between all that outdoor fun, they also made dream catchers and other creative art projects. These were days filled with teamwork, campfire laughs, and plenty of unforgettable memories!



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# DePaul Cristo Rey News – by Margee Garbsch

## New Partners in DPCR Corporate Work Study Program

Greater Cincinnati's youngest professionals returned to the workforce in September as DePaul Cristo Rey High School (DPCR) kicked off another year of its Corporate Work Study Program, welcoming 10 new businesses and organizations to the program. They are:

- Benken
- Crayons to Computers
- Feed The Soul
- Greater Cincinnati Foundation
- HealthPath Foundation of Ohio
- Meals on Wheels
- OKI Regional Council of Governments
- pep promotions
- UC Health
- Visit Cincy

These, along with 76 returning partners, open doors of opportunity, mentorship and real-world experience for DePaul Cristo Rey students. Through the Corporate Work Study Program (CWSP), the students work five days a month at a business or organization from one of multiple industries, ranging from banking to healthcare to law. These students earn part of their education costs while learning from professionals and mentors and contribute to the partner organizations by performing actual work tasks. For the full list of CWSP Partners:

[depaulcristorey.org/corporate-work-study-program](http://depaulcristorey.org/corporate-work-study-program).

**DePaul Cristo Rey's Family Emergency Fund**  
Huntington National Bank has awarded a grant of \$20,000 to support the Family Emergency Fund at DPCR, an important resource that supports our holistic approach to student success, addressing academic, emotional, spiritual and physical needs. School leaders rely on this fund to respond to barriers that can interfere with a student's school success, using it for family emergency needs such as rent and utility assistance, groceries and the purchase of school uniforms. Huntington has also been a partner in DPCR's Corporate Work Study Program since 2017 and has over a 150-year history of strong community involvement and supportive civic leadership, developing relationships and investing in local nonprofit/charitable organizations to build healthy and vibrant communities.

**Annual Golf Classic Fund Raiser**  
DePaul Cristo Rey High School's 14th annual Golf Classic was the best yet, a sellout with 128 golfers and raising over \$110,000 for student academic and enrichment programs, including support of the school's new golf team. Held on September 29 at the Western Hills Country

Club, the classic was chaired by longtime school admirer and coach of DPCR's inaugural golf team, Dave Lockard. Cintas was the presenting sponsor, with many other sponsors giving support. A dedicated group of volunteers, joined by members of the DPCR golf team, kept the event running smoothly.

*DePaul Cristo Rey is a Catholic, college-preparatory high school with a mission to educate young people who have the potential but limited financial means to attend college. This mission is accomplished through a dynamic academic and work-study program not available at any other local high school. Sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, DPCR is one of 41 high schools in the nationwide Cristo Rey Network®, which serves 12,300 young people.*



*Golf Classic Chair Dave Lockard (left) is pictured with the inaugural DPCR golf team who volunteered at the outing.*

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# Romero Academy at Annunciation

— by Liz Reckart



When Clifton Firefighter Mac Ogletree and his wife were looking for their daughter's first school, Romero Academy at Annunciation became their top choice. Just down the street from the fire station, they toured the campus, noticing Transitional Kindergarten students engaged in painting, small groups of seventh graders working on complex math, and students in the hallway being honored as that week's "Most Virtuous People." The public and private schools they'd visited did not project the same sense of warmth and love they felt here. They learned that every student is on track to pass the Ohio Third Grade Reading Guarantee, compared to roughly half of students at the other schools. The combination of real results fueled by the genuine love children receive led them to enroll. Now their nieces and nephews attend, too.

Romero Academy at Annunciation, a PK-8 Catholic school with free tuition available, combines rigorous academics with a deep focus on character formation. Our teachers believe that every child, no matter their background, can achieve at the highest levels when they are known, loved and challenged to grow. The school's mission is grounded in the conviction that excellence in education and virtue go hand in hand.

Each day begins with morning prayer and a focus on a specific virtue, such as perseverance, responsibility or kindness. Students are encouraged to live out these virtues throughout the day in class, on the playground and at home. Students who exemplify these virtues are celebrated weekly, creating a culture where doing the right thing is both expected and celebrated.

For the Ogletrees, an especially meaningful aspect of the school has been an emphasis on self-control, a Romero core virtue. "It's something we talk about often at home," Mr. Ogletree said. "We see our daughter growing

not only academically but also in how she manages her emotions and treats others with respect." This focus on forming the whole child — mind and heart — has made a lasting impression on their family.

The Ogletrees also appreciate the school's clear and open communication. "We always know what's happening in the classroom and how we can support our daughter at home," Mrs. Ogletree says. "That partnership makes all the difference." Families are regularly updated on academic progress and classroom activities, reinforcing the close-knit, family-like atmosphere that defines Romero Academy.

Since Romero began managing at Annunciation in 2023, enrollment has grown from 16 students

to 162, reflecting the community's trust and enthusiasm. The school currently serves students through seventh grade and will expand to include eighth grade next year. Graduates have their sights set on attending outstanding local high schools, including Purcell Marian, Roger Bacon, Elder, St. Xavier, St. Ursula and Mount Notre Dame.

With caring teachers, a joyful community and proven academic success, Romero Academy at Annunciation offers something truly special for Clifton families. Applications open soon for the 2026-27 school year for PK-8th grade. To learn more or schedule a tour, visit <https://romeroacademies.org/cincinnati-private-schools>.



*Blest be the hearth attuned to its glory,  
that warms the heart when nights are hoary;  
invites the child with chilly toes, comforts a toiler at sunset close.  
Blest be the shelf for crock and jug, platter, bowl and hot cider mug,  
pewter, goblet, serviette, ware, with shelter beneath for seasonal fare.*

*Blest be the table whereon is spread the makings of an honest bread;  
broth with dumplings, a gamey stew, pandowdy, pie you'll find there too!  
Blest be the table, hearth and shelf. Blest be the family, friends and self.  
Make you merry a bountiful repast, for here rests memory meant to last.*

- dora schield  
(Inspired by a 19th century etching)





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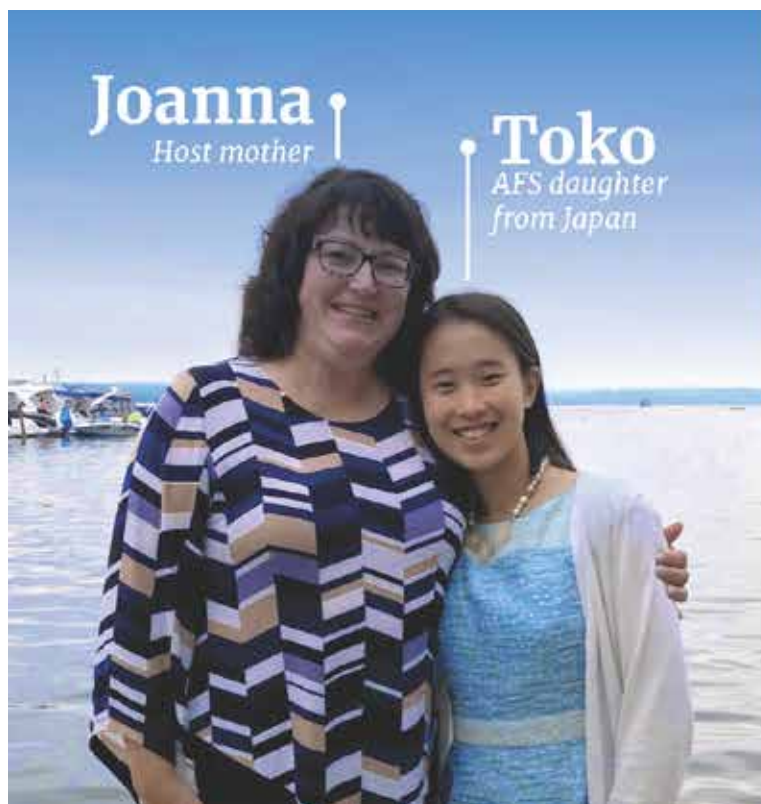
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