

# SHAKER LIFE

## How Challah Baker Meg Hennen Brings People *Together*

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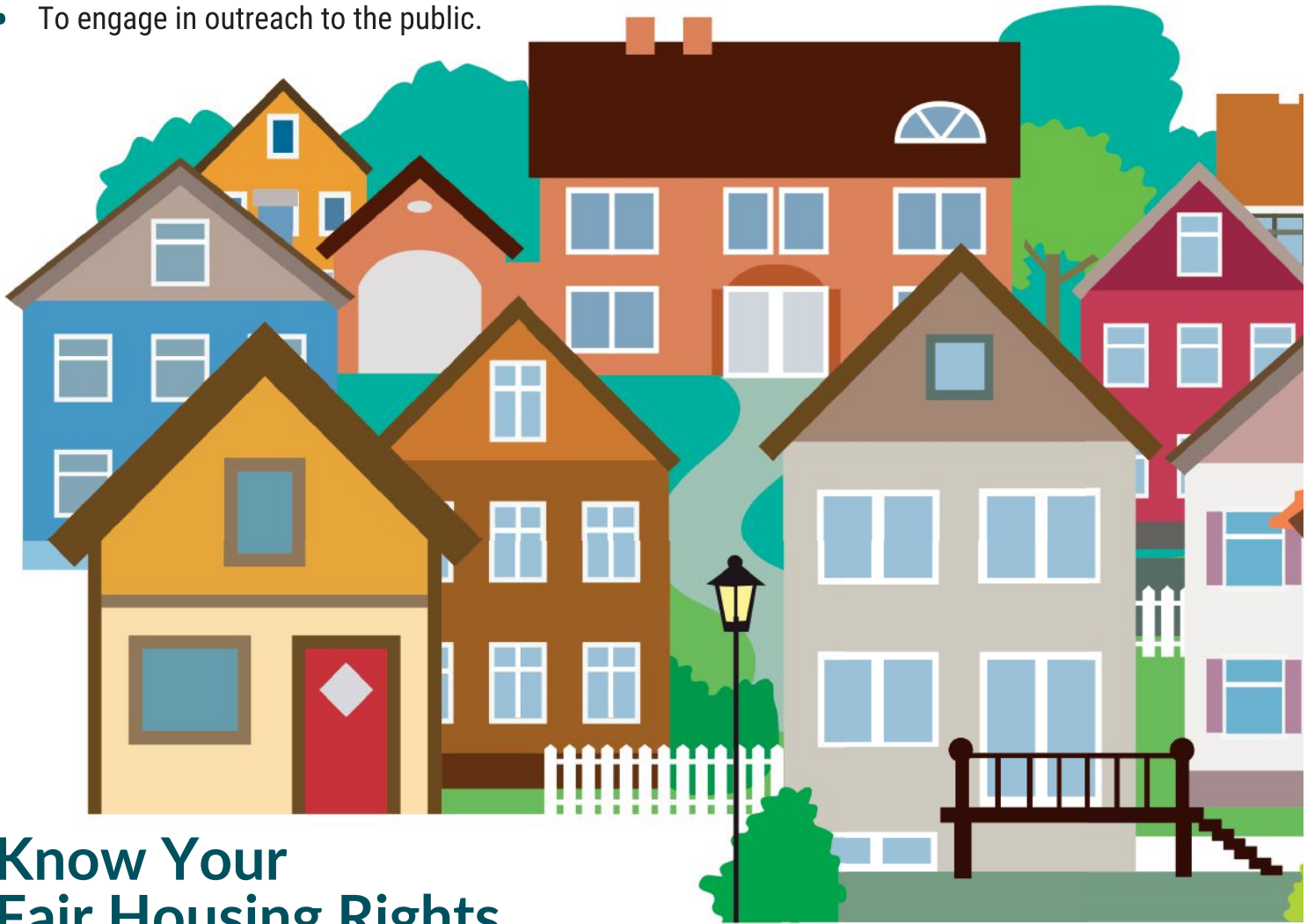


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**SHAKER LIFE**

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## Faithfully Fit

Maridah Akram is one of many who learned that a pandemic can obliterate the best-laid plans. But, true to form, Akram powered through the setbacks with her eyes firmly fixed on her goal.



## Fernway School

Two years after a devastating fire, Fernway Elementary School reopened as a state-of-the-art learning center symbolizing the power of the community coming together for a common purpose.



## Haus Malts

Making malted grain for beer is as old as the Pharaohs. What started in the basement of a Winthrop Road home in more recent times has become a thriving business for a father-and-son team.



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## Storefront Renovation Spotlight

Talk about curb appeal. If you've traveled on Lee Road south of Chagrin Boulevard in recent months, you've likely noticed the dramatic transformation of the building at 3700–3704 Lee Road. The building, which is owned by the Shaker Lee Development Fund, is home to Process Canine Training Center (3700), True Vibes Unleashed (3702), and Rivals Beauty Lounge (3704).

"We knew that renovating the exterior of this building would be impactful because of its size and where it is on the street," explains Nick Fedor, executive director of the Shaker Heights Development Corporation (SHDC), which managed the project on behalf of the Fund. "It's also a recognition of the great things that are happening with these businesses on Lee Road."

The Fund was formed by SHDC in 2021 with the goal of redeveloping and revitalizing the Lee Road commercial district south of Chagrin Boulevard. To date, the Fund has raised about \$750,000. Learn more at [shakerdevcorp.com/thefund](http://shakerdevcorp.com/thefund).

"The renovation is a good example of one of the goals of the Fund, which is to provide good, quality commercial space for small and growing businesses on Lee Road," explains Fedor. "We also hope we've offered some inspiration to other property owners by showing what's possible with one of Lee Road's older commercial buildings."

Shaker-based Gibbon Architecture designed the new façade. The project was the recipient of the City's Storefront Renovation Program, which provides rebates of up to \$15,000 for qualifying exterior upgrades to commercial properties located in Shaker Heights.

"This storefront renovation is an example of how a small change provides vision for what is possible for the future," says Councilmember Carmella Williams, chair of the Neighborhood and Economic Development Committee. "It is also an example of the benefits of collaboration with SHDC, the Fund, local community members, and others. It is the hope that these partnerships will continue to serve future endeavors along Lee Road."

Learn more about the Storefront Renovation Program at [shakeronline.com/storefront](http://shakeronline.com/storefront).



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### New Program Rate Takes Effect for City's Gas Aggregation

Starting in April, participants in the City's natural gas aggregation program will see their rate rise to \$4.56 per MCF. This rate will be in effect through March 2025.

Natural gas rates are up throughout Ohio, which accounts for the price increase for the City's program. Still, the new rate remains competitive for the region.

The City has again selected IGS as the supplier of the natural gas aggregation program. IGS has been the City's provider of choice for 16 years. The decision was made based on price – IGS offered the lowest price per MCF – in addition to its record of outstanding customer service.

"The City and its residents have received excellent service from IGS over the past 16 years, and the City has been able to offer competitive rates for natural gas," notes William Ondrey Gruber, the City's law director.

Residents participating in the program received an opt-out notice in February. Those who wish to remain in the program should do nothing; residents who wish to opt out of the City's natural gas aggregation program should follow the instructions in the letter.

Note that residents may enter or exit the City's program at any time and with no penalty. Learn more at [shakeronline.com/gas-aggregation](http://shakeronline.com/gas-aggregation).

### New Green Electric Aggregation Program Starts June 1

It's official. The City will launch its new 100 percent green electric aggregation program on June 1. The rate is 7.71 cents per kWh for 24 months.

Previously, the City was a member of the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) for its electric aggregation program. At the end of 2022, the City left NOPEC with the goal of creating its own electric aggregation program offering 100 percent green electricity. Learn more at [shakeronline.com/green-electric](http://shakeronline.com/green-electric).

"Operating our own electric aggregation program allows Shaker Heights greater flexibility to offer our residents a competitive price while significantly reducing our greenhouse gas emissions," says Michael Peters, the City's sustainability coordinator.

Eligible residents, including those who participated in the NOPEC program, will receive an opt-out letter in April. Residents who wish to join the City's electric aggregation program should do nothing. Residents who don't want to participate should follow the instructions in the letter.

As with the natural gas aggregation program, residents may enter or exit the electric aggregation program at any time and with no penalty.



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## Go Electric and Earn \$100

### City launches \$100 rebate program for residents who switch from gas to battery-powered electric mowers

Among the ways the City is striving to become a more sustainable community is with programs that help residents to live greener in Shaker Heights. This spring, that will include a new Lawn Mower Rebate Program, which encourages residents to make the switch from gas- to electric-powered mowers.

Research shows that replacing a gas-powered mower with a battery-powered electric version can have a big environmental impact. That's because gas mowers emit an abundance of greenhouse gases, whereas electric mowers emit zero greenhouse gases. Electric mowers are also much quieter, helping to reduce noise pollution in Shaker neighborhoods.

"Gas-powered lawnmowers are among the most polluting equipment we use as residents," notes City Councilmember Nancy Moore, who chairs City Council's Sustainability Committee. "The research shows that gas mowers emit 20 times more pollutants per hour than cars with gas engines, and that one hour of grass cutting produces as much air pollution as a car that is driven 100 miles. Those are startling facts."

The rebate program was created by the Sustainability Committee and offers residents — on a first come, first served basis — the opportunity to earn a \$100 rebate for purchasing a battery-powered electric lawn mower and turning in their gas-powered mower.

"There are so many reasons to make the switch, including the environmental benefits," notes Moore. "They're easier to use, require almost zero maintenance, much quieter, and they cost no more to operate than gas mowers and, depending on electric costs, may even cost less."

The City has also been replacing its own lawn mowers with electric versions. To date, it has purchased an electric rider mower (see photo) and will purchase another one this summer. These mowers and other electric lawn equipment are charged with the City's 100 percent renewable electric plan and "so are truly green machines," notes Moore.

#### To be eligible for the rebate, residents must:

1. Purchase a new electric battery-powered lawn mower from any vendor. Save the purchase receipt and take a photo of the make, model, and serial number.
2. Bring their gas-powered lawn mower, with an empty fuel tank, to the City's Service Center at 15600 Chagrin Boulevard during the Household Hazardous Waste Roundup on Saturday, April 29 or Sunday, April 30 between the hours of 9 am and 4 pm. You will receive a rebate form verifying you recycled a mower.

The first 40 residents to turn in their gas-powered lawn mowers and present the rebate forms, the receipts for their new electric battery-operated lawn mowers, and photos of the required information will be eligible to receive a \$100 rebate from the City of Shaker Heights. The rebate will be issued by check and sent by mail approximately three weeks after the complete information is received.

Want to explore other ways to green up your lawn care program? Use the QR code to read recommendations from our Sustainability Committee.





## A Note from Colleen

By Colleen Jackson, Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer

## Ready...Set...Goals!

Happy spring, Shaker! Spring is a time for new beginnings and we're moving forward with a series of established DEI goals for the City. They include:

- A community conversation to understand and alleviate concerns about the fairness of point-of-sale inspection requirements/enforcement.
- Generating lists of minority-owned businesses and promoting those businesses, possibly with banners or signs.
- Building awareness of – and alignment with – key City-wide priorities, such as early childhood education, recreation, older adult services, and mental health response.
- Holding quarterly community meetings and including community organizations.
- Continuing to organize welcoming projects through the Library and neighborhood associations, as well as appointing ambassadors.

With the DEI assessment and final report on the working environment for Shaker employees being completed last month, our next steps are to implement the DEI action plan presented by the internal DEI Taskforce and chart our growth and improved culture and climate.

I'd like to thank the DEI Committee for their work at focusing us in our efforts to make a more inclusive Shaker, and to all of those who reach out to me via phone and email to offer your help and support for the work. I welcome your feedback. Contact me at 216-491-3201, or at [colleen.jackson@shakeronline.com](mailto:colleen.jackson@shakeronline.com)



  
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## Construction Season Is Here

Spring is here and that means it's construction season in Shaker Heights.

Among the major projects slated for this year: Cuyahoga County's rehabilitation of the bridge on Warrensville Center Road.

The bridge crosses over the Rapid tracks between eastbound and westbound Shaker Boulevard. The County plans to maintain traffic in both directions on Warrensville, while also ensuring access to the fire station and the Green Road Rapid station. The County anticipates completing the project in 2025.

Regional utilities will also be working to upgrade their infrastructure within City limits. Dominion East Ohio will replace gas mains on Winslow Road and in the Malvern neighborhood. In June, work will begin on a water main replacement for Ardmore Road.

The City's annual roadwork program also kicks off in late April with 14 streets scheduled for resurfacing. The City will also partner with the City of Beachwood to replace a culvert at the intersection of Green and Bryden roads, which will help control flooding in this area.

Visit Construction Zone at [shakeronline.com/construction](http://shakeronline.com/construction) for the latest updates all season long.

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## Preservation Month Photo Contest Invites Entries

Grab your phone or camera and point, click and capture the beauty of Shaker Heights. The 10th annual Preservation Month Photo Contest officially kicks off in the spring. The contest was created in honor of National Preservation Month, which is celebrated each May by preservation organizations across the country.

Residents are invited to hashtag photos on Instagram of what makes Shaker “Shaker” for the 2023 Photo Contest. Post your photo on Instagram with the hashtag #PreserveSH23, then upload to [shakeronline.com/preserve2023](http://shakeronline.com/preserve2023). Please retain a high-resolution version of the photo in case you’re a winner. The deadline for entries is 11:59 pm on May 31, 2023. For questions, contact [anna.mates@shakeronline.com](mailto:anna.mates@shakeronline.com). View the 2021 entries on Instagram at #PreserveSH21.

Clockwise, from top: “Twilight Rain,” by Sarah Ezzie Haines, 2021 Grand Prize; “Shaker Dawn,” by Daniel Medalie, 2014 First Place; “Winter Crossings,” by Leo McGuinness, 2020 Runner-up.



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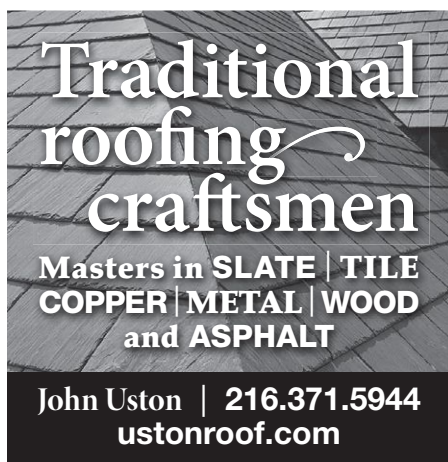


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## Earth Day Becomes Earth Month

### Local High School Students Create a Month-long EcoChallenge

Earth Day falls on April 22 this year, but the student-led subcommittee of the Shaker Heights Sustainability Committee will be celebrating the earth all month.

SYLEEDs, with students from Shaker Heights High School, Hathaway Brown, Hawken School, and University School, has launched its third annual Shaker EcoChallenge, a month-long interactive event to encourage environmentally conscious practices. Participants who sign up at [sites.google.com/hb.edu/shakeryouthleeds](https://sites.google.com/hb.edu/shakeryouthleeds) will receive weekly e-newsletters with challenges, updates on leaderboard rankings, and the chance to win prizes from local businesses to reward sustainable actions.

The students created their EcoChallenge using guidelines from the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED rating system for the design, construction, and operation of green buildings. LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, looks at environmentally conscious practices in categories including ecology, transportation and land use, greenhouse gas emissions, and materials. (The SY in SYLEEDs stands for Shaker Youth.)

In 2021, the City achieved LEED Gold certification with SYLEEDs playing a role in the City's efforts. Read more about that accolade at [shakeronline.com/sustainability](https://shakeronline.com/sustainability).

## 2023 Recycling Events

Mark your calendars for the remaining recycling events for the year. All events are held at the Service Center, 15600 Chagrin Boulevard.

- Computer, Electronics & Small Appliances Roundup: 8 am–4 pm, April 15–16 and April 22–23; August 5–6 and August 12–13
- Community Shredding: 9 am–1 pm, April 15 and October 21
- Household Hazardous Waste Roundup: 8 am–4 pm, April 29–30; May 6–7; September 9–10 and 16–17
- Habitat for Humanity Restore Collection: 9 am–1 pm, August 26

Check out our Recycling Events page for additional information (e.g. what's accepted) at [shakeronline.com/201/Recycling-Events](https://shakeronline.com/201/Recycling-Events) **SL**



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## Letter from Schools' DEI Chief Included in Letters to My Father Exhibit

Do you ever wonder what people who have passed on would think about what is happening in the world? Would Martin Luther King Jr. come back and be happy about the progress we have made? *Letters to My Father* takes a look at how some people in the local community have been impacted by the work of others who were change makers.

The exhibition, on view at the Shaker Historical Society through May 7, includes a letter from Lawrence Burnley, chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer for the Shaker Heights City School District. Burnley's letter is addressed to Carter G. Woodson, an American historian, author, and journalist and the founder of "Negro History Week," the precursor of Black History Month.

*Letters to My Father*, which opened February 17, was organized by Kim Harris, a library technician at Woodbury Elementary School and the founder of Shaker African American Mothers Support (S.A.M.S.). The Shaker Historical Society supported the initiative.

## Enroll Now for the 2023-24 School Year

Enrolling your student in the Shaker Heights City School District has never been easier. Parents and guardians can visit [shaker.org/enroll](https://shaker.org/enroll) and complete all the necessary documents online, then schedule a by-phone appointment to review the completed forms and to complete the registration. For more information, contact the Registration Office, 216-295-4321. The office is located in the Shaker Heights Schools Welcome Center in the Shaker Heights Public Library main branch. Telephone support is available from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. In-person office hours are 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

### Stay Informed:

For the latest news and information about Shaker Heights Schools, visit [shaker.org](https://shaker.org). Follow us on Facebook.com/ForShakerSchools or Tweet us @ShakerSchools.



## State Representative Brent Visits the Shaker Heights Schools

State Rep. Juanita Brent (D-Cleveland) visited the Shaker Heights City School District in February to tour classes and discuss education and other issues with Superintendent David Glasner. Brent, who has a proven record of bipartisan accomplishments, strongly supports fair school funding. She toured Shaker Heights High School, where she was able to visit a few of the school's newer offerings, such as manufacturing and robotics.

The 2022 redistricting fight, resolved by a federal judicial panel, moved the two-term state representative into a newly formed District 22, which includes Shaker Heights. District 22 overlaps with parts of current District 9, which had been represented by Janine Boyd until her April resignation. Rep. Bishara Addison, appointed to the vacancy, did not run for reelection.

Brent authored House Bill 285, a driver's license fee debt reduction program that helps Ohioans reinstate suspended driver's licenses. The bill became law in 2020. Currently, she serves as a ranking member of the Agriculture and Conservation Committee. She also serves on the Transportation and Public Safety and Commerce and Labor committees.



## Honoring Two Women Who Made a Difference for Shaker Heights Students



Our Mom grew up surrounded by music. She encouraged both of us at young ages to take part in the Shaker Heights choir and band programs. She was an enthusiastic member of the Shaker PTO, Band Boosters, and the advisory board for the Shaker Schools Foundation. Last year she was thrilled to sing on stage with the No Name Band and Mariama Whyte for the 30th anniversary of A Night for the Red & White (photo at left). We both grew up performing at the Red & White, whether with the Chanticleers or Jazz Ensemble/Combo, and we were able to witness our Mom's love for the schools and the growing success of the events. As a co-founder of that yearly fundraising gala event, Mom continued to show love and support for the Shaker Schools long after we graduated from SHHS. We are grateful for our Mom's impact on the Shaker Schools, and for the impact that the schools have had on our own lives.

~ Martin Schultz (SHHS '04) and Drew Schultz (SHHS '06)

### **K.J. Montgomery** **Dedicated to Public Service & Public School Education**

The late K.J. Montgomery is remembered and celebrated for her public service, musical talent, and passion for philanthropy. Montgomery served for 27 years as judge for the Shaker Heights Municipal Court. An active musician, she participated in "Sing-Out!" events benefiting the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center.

Montgomery worked with Freda Levenson to co-found A Night for the Red & White, the Shaker Schools Foundation's annual fundraising gala. Montgomery's band, the No Name Band, was featured at the 30th anniversary of the Red & White. And 31 years after the inaugural event, the gala continues their legacy and vision to bring together parents, teachers, staff, and community members in support of the Shaker Heights Schools.

Contributions in Montgomery's memory may be made to the Shaker Schools Foundation to enhance opportunities for Shaker students in and out of the classroom. Visit [shakerschoolsfoundation.org/donate](http://shakerschoolsfoundation.org/donate) for more information.

### **Aisha Fraser** **A Creative, Compassionate Teacher**

As a sixth-grade teacher at Woodbury, Aisha Fraser had a gift for making math accessible and interesting to all of her students. A 1991 Shaker graduate, she taught mathematics in the District for 12 years.

Fraser worked with all children to provide mentorship, and she supported the Woodbury fifth- and sixth-grade Female MAC Scholars National Geographic Society research project. Passionate about community building, Aisha helped organize Woodbury's Sixth-Grade Camp, which provides students the opportunity to participate in team-building activities.

November 17, 2023, will mark the five-year anniversary of Fraser's passing. Friends and family would like to create a lasting memorial to Fraser by providing a bench to be placed at Woodbury. To contribute to the Aisha Fraser Fund at the Shaker Schools Foundation in support of the memorial bench and scholarships for the Woodbury Sixth-Grade Camp, visit [shakerschoolsfoundation.org/donate](http://shakerschoolsfoundation.org/donate).



Aisha was a dynamic daughter, mother, teacher, and friend. I still marvel at all that she accomplished in her amazing life. She was generous with her time, her talents, her heart, and her love for her children. I am a better person because of her.

~ Chante Thomas,  
Woodbury 5th-Grade Teacher

## Shaker Hockey Star Named Greater Cleveland Sports Commission Top Male Athlete



Hockey standout Tyler Lencewicz, a 2022 graduate of Shaker Heights High School, was named the Greater Cleveland Sports Commission 2022 Male High School Athlete of the Year during the organization's awards ceremony at Rocket Mortgage Field House in January.

As a senior forward, Lencewicz was the Raiders' captain for the 2021-22 season and one of the most potent scorers in the state of Ohio, leading all goal scorers that season with 39 goals and 23 assists. He had multiple goals in 12 games, including four hat tricks. A factor in nearly every game, he was held without a point in only seven of his team's 31 games. He earned 1st Team All-State honors and was named the Cleveland.com Player of the Year.

Lencewicz, who was also a standout on the lacrosse field, is now a freshman at Ohio State University.



## District-wide Kindergarten Kickoff is April 15

Join us for Shaker Heights Schools District-wide Kindergarten Kickoff on April 15, 2023, from 1-4 p.m., at Mercer Elementary School, 23325 Wimbledon Road. Bring your incoming kindergartner and learn more about the District, including the enrollment process, transportation, health and immunization information, communications, special education support, and more.

Learn more about events for incoming Kindergarten families and complete a Kindergarten Kickoff registration form online at [shaker.org/kindergarten](http://shaker.org/kindergarten). **SL**

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# # Shaker Grams

## We **see** you **seeing** Shaker.

- > H/T to those capturing the community.
- > Tag your photos to #shaker365.
- > You might just see them on these pages!



@shakerhoundacademy | Who's at the door?



@americancastles | Snowy majesty



@shakerrockscimbing | Lateral move



@clevelandyoga | Morning stretch



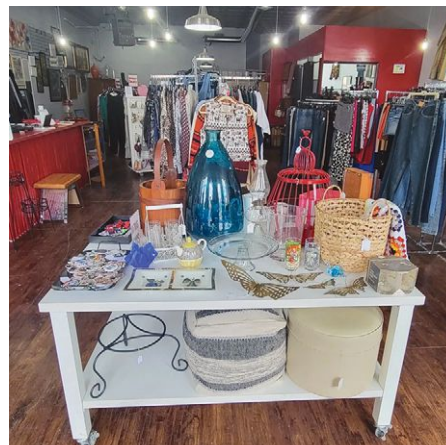
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@shakersuppercrust | Cajun crispy



@tlgshaker | Crafting fun



@shop.reclamation | Vintage finds



@1936csc | Theater on ice

# Tweets & Posts



**@ComposedClaytor:** Sitting in Motiv in @ShakerOnline, reading for Council tonight, and @DMX's #RudolphTheRedNosedReindeer comes on. Have to love a local, small, #BlackOwnedBusiness, without a corporate playlist to really make you feel at home. Stop on by! [motivshaker.com](http://motivshaker.com)



## Living in Shaker

**f Neighbor #1:** Huge thank you to Khae Chanel and the amazing crew at Compassionate Cleaning Services. We hired them for a deep clean and it is worth every penny. My tiles are gleaming so bright I am afraid to shower and ruin them again. Highly recommend. Thank you, Khae! **Neighbor #2:** Agree, Khae and her team are amazing! **Neighbor #3:** We humbly appreciate you and the awesome review! We aren't perfect, but we try our best to deliver!!! **Neighbor #4:** Good morning! I wanted to take a minute and recommend Khae Chanel and

her crew at Compassionate Cleaning Services. They came to our home yesterday. I knew I needed help getting a solid deep clean, but wow! We haven't had one since pre-pandemic, and with three kids and two high-shedding dogs...Help! I was hesitant because it wasn't inexpensive. However, I've had inexpensive before and it wasn't great. Honestly I don't think my house has been this clean since we moved in 4 years ago. The attention to detail and the ability to get the places that are often missed was fabulous. **Neighbor #3:** Awww! Thank you! We are glad you're very happy with the service we provided. It's important to me that we do an outstanding job & that our customers have one less worry after we've cleaned. **Neighbor #5:** We were just thinking about getting a deep clean for the house. It REALLY needs it and there is never enough time for us to get it done - so seeing this post first thing must be a sign! LOL.



## Living in Shaker

**f Neighbor #1:** I would like to give a big shout out to Esinpy, LLC. I reached out to get a quote to paint my small business based on a recommendation I saw on Living in Shaker Hts. From start to finish, Patti and Shanita were responsive, courteous, and professional. They exceeded all of my expectations. The price was very reasonable, they showed up when they said they would, the paint job was exceptional and they cleaned up. I'll be hiring them for all of my future painting. **Neighbor #2:** Very nice!! Love the Shaker FB recommendations. They never let you down! **Neighbor #3:** Patti and Shanita are great! We've used them a few times over the years and they always do excellent work.

Shanita even designed and painted a custom mural for my son's nursery last summer! Highly recommend them. **Neighbor #4:** We have used them a few times and I agree. They are great **Neighbor #5:** So happy to hear this as they are coming to paint my living room soon!

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## Q&A with Library Director Amy Switzer

Photography by Robert Muller

When Amy Switzer was appointed the eighth director of Shaker Library in October 2016, she began work by engaging in conversations across the community about the future of library spaces, services, and resources. She has approached her responsibilities with an emphasis on continuous improvement, inclusive practices, community engagement, and providing an outstanding customer experience. Her commitment to customer-focused services has included enhancing the library's physical spaces and its outreach to the community it serves.

Switzer spearheaded the renovation of the Main Library while leading the Library through the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis. She worked with the City and the Schools in a Forward Together initiative on facility assessment and planning before beginning the design for the Bertram Woods Branch renovation in April 2022. Construction on the branch began in January and completion is anticipated in the fall.

The native Ohioan graduated magna cum laude from Miami University of Ohio and earned her master of library and information science degree (MLIS) from Kent State University, summa cum laude. She has 33 years of experience in libraries; 21 of them in public library management and administration. Before being appointed director of Shaker Library, Switzer served as its deputy director for seven years. Before that, she worked as a children's services librarian and children's services coordinator at Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library for 13 years.

“ I think the core values of libraries are values for the ages, even if the way we deliver service changes as the times and needs change. ”

**Q** What do you consider your greatest accomplishments in your seven years as director?

**A** Shaker Library has changed greatly in the 14 years I've worked here. The most visible change since I've been director is obviously the Main Library renovation – and soon the Bertram Woods Branch renovation. We worked to create flexible, functional, modern, and beautiful spaces to meet the needs of our community today and in the future.

In recent years we've focused on identifying and removing barriers to being a fully equitable and inclusive organization. One of the most important changes we've made is going fine free in October 2019. Library fines can be a huge barrier to access and many people stop using the library when they have fines but don't have money to pay them. And fines don't work to make people return library materials. We've also worked to expand service in other ways, including access to library cards. We now have special cards for those who don't have a permanent address, as well as the Three for Me and Three for Teen cards to help youth who can't get a regular library card.

Our collaboration with the City and schools as part of Forward Together has been so important and I'm thrilled that the Shaker Schools Welcome Center is located at the Main Library. I'm so proud of the library staff, who are creative, dedicated, and focused on helping improve the lives of our community members. We've built a strong team who are a joy to work with. I am fortunate to work in a library system that has an excellent board of trustees, an amazing group of Friends of the Library volunteers, and strong community support.

**Q** Your librarian skills – the ability to listen well, compile data, and do research – are invaluable, but as a library director, what skill sets did you develop that you didn't learn in library school?

**A** Now that I'm a director, I spend my days planning, budgeting, writing policy, reviewing contracts, dealing with HR issues, connecting with community partners, solving the problems that inevitably come up, and overseeing facility management, including leading the renovations of both of our buildings.

**Q** Shaker taxpayers approved funds for the renovation of the Main Library and Woods Branch. Now that the Main Library renovation has been completed, what were the final costs?

**A** The Main Library renovation, which was completed in December 2021, was funded with \$10.4 million in Certificates of Participation and from other library funds. The total project budget was \$11,028,214.

The Bertram Woods Branch renovation is being funded by \$3 million in Public Library Fund bonds and from other library funds. The total project budget is \$3,475,455.

**Q** Why are public libraries important today?

**A** I think the core values of libraries are values for the ages, even if the way we deliver service changes as the times and needs change.

Libraries are a haven and a refuge. You can read, learn, study, and work at the Library. You can attend programs and meetings at the Library. You can use our computers and the internet to connect to the world. You can find community and acceptance. You can find quiet space to read and dream, and you can find space that is filled with the laughter of children and chatter of teens as they play, learn, and grow. Everyone is welcome here without judgment, and you don't need money to take advantage of all we have to offer.

In the past, you could check out books and record albums. Today you can check out books, laptops, and wi-fi hotspots, then go to a program, get help finding a job, apply for a passport, and pick up a free COVID-19 test kit. You don't even have to leave home to use our wealth of digital offerings.

When I began working in libraries, I never could have imagined what they'd look like today. And while tomorrow's libraries will offer things unheard of today, we will always be there to help our community connect, collaborate, solve problems, and envision the future.

**Q** What books are you reading and recommending?

**A** Recently I've read and loved *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus and *The Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America's Shining Women* by Kate Moore. **SL**



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## What happens when a writer, an early childhood educator, a lawyer, and a sociologist walk into a library?

**T**hey soon decide to enroll in Kent State University to earn a master's degree in library and information science.

Students of library science study human information-seeking behavior, organization of information, freedom of information, technology, and community engagement, among other subjects. A love of books and learning are helpful, but more important is a dedication to serving individuals and communities. Librarians combine strong people skills with technological and analytical skills. The MLIS degree usually takes two years of full-time work.

"Being a librarian isn't just about books – it's about helping everyone gain access to information and find resources. In this age of so much information, it's important for people to find the right answers," says Library Director Amy Switzer. "And the Library supports staff pursuing library science degrees by offering some tuition reimbursement."

### Stay Informed:

For the latest news and information about Shaker Heights Public Library, visit our website at [shakerlibrary.org](http://shakerlibrary.org). Follow us on Facebook at [ShakerHeightsPublicLibrary](https://www.facebook.com/ShakerHeightsPublicLibrary) and on Twitter @ShakerLibrary.



● **Luke Darby, circulation assistant**, earned a bachelor's degree in English literature from Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi, and an MA in journalism from New York University. Before working at Shaker Library, he worked as a freelance journalist for GQ, The Guardian, and Outside Magazine, where he wrote on politics, food, and fitness.

Says Darby, "I was attracted to working in libraries because it's a lot more stable than contract work, and it seemed like a concrete way to serve the local community." His current focus at Kent is on adult services for public libraries, and he cites Information Services for Diverse Populations and

Marketing the Library as his most interesting classes to date. Lately, he has been reading *The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl* by Timothy Egan, watching "Murder She Wrote" reruns plus the new anime "Chainsaw Man," and listening to Miley Cyrus' latest single.

● **Sarah Holden, circulation assistant**, worked as an early childhood educator. While she enjoyed working in education, she wanted the flexibility to work with a variety of different-aged children.

"I appreciate the greater emphasis on community collaboration and diverse representation that's promoted in most libraries, which not every school permits discussing in the classroom," Holden says. She is specializing in youth librarianship and was especially inspired by a class on Youth Literacy in the Digital Realm that looked into how children of different ages interact with digital media. Says Holden, "We discussed how to encourage healthy media habits in children, and how to use digital media tools to encourage learning and creativity."



She is currently taking a class on teen engagement, so is working through a lot of popular young adult works from the past few years.

"I'm currently reading the historical fiction work, *X: A Novel* by Ilyasah Shabazz with Kekla Magoon, which gives a really fascinating look into the early life of Malcolm X – and I've stayed up way too late every night this week caught in the just-one-more-chapter trap."

● **Caitlin Hunter, youth services associate**, was a partner in a large law firm where she spent more than 10 years in corporate finance. Says Hunter, "I've loved libraries my whole life, and a year ago I decided to embrace that passion and make a career change. I'm inspired



by the work the Shaker Library does to empower our community and serve as a hub for social connection, and I feel incredibly lucky to learn from such a talented group of colleagues.”

She is focusing her studies on youth services in public libraries.

Last semester, she took a class that gave an overview of various types of information institutions — libraries, museums, archives — and the kinds of work one can do within each of those institutions. The class helped her develop a broad framework for thinking about the profession.

“I’ve always enjoyed school, and I’m looking forward to taking elective courses related to youth services and public libraries,” she says. She is currently reading *Trust* by Hernan Diaz, listening to Caroline Polachek’s new music, and watching “The White Lotus.”

● **Tracie Pickett, adult services associate**, earned her bachelor’s degree in sociology and Pan-African studies from Kent State in 2018. While attending KSU, she started working in a public library.



Says Pickett, “I fell in love with my job. My supervisors at the time encouraged me to apply to library school.” Her focus is on reference and user services. She is currently taking a class on Information Services for Diverse Populations, which she says is “very fascinating and eye-opening.”

She is reading *The Perfect Crime: 22 Crime Stories from Diverse Cultures Around the World*, edited by Vaseem Khan and Maxim Jakubowski, and *The Secret to Superhuman Strength*, a graphic novel by Alison Bechdel.

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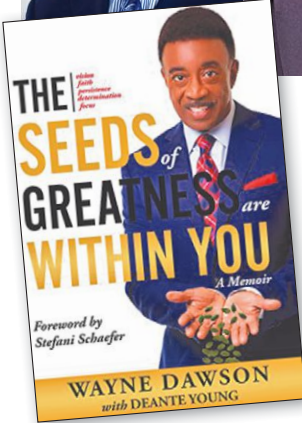
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Meet the Authors



Join us when WJW journalist and author Wayne Dawson (above left) visits Main Library to discuss his new memoir, *The Seeds of*

*Greatness Are Within You*, from 2-4 pm Saturday, May 13. He will be joined by his co-author Deante Young (above right).

Dawson is the co-anchor of Fox 8 News in the Morning. Before teaming up with the morning crew, he was co-anchor of the weekend editions of FOX 8 News – rated number one for five consecutive years.

Before joining WJW in the late 1970s, Dawson was an anchor/reporter at WNIR Radio in Kent. The Kent State graduate holds a bachelor's degree in journalism. An eleven-time Emmy winner, Dawson is a member of the NAACP, the National Association of Black Journalists, and Phi Beta Sigma, a fraternity dedicated to enhancing and promoting fellowship, justice, equal rights, and service to America's communities. He is also a member of the Broadcasters Hall of Fame.

In 2014, Dawson was inducted into the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Silver Circle and received the Chuck Heaton Award from the Cleveland Press Club. He was also awarded the William Taylor Alumni award from the Journalism and Mass Communications School of Kent State University. He has twice been named one of Jaycee's "Outstanding Young Men of America."

Beyond that, the Professional Women's Business Association selected him as Outstanding TV News Reporter and Delta Sigma Theta named him Man



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As we near the completion of the Doan Brook Restoration Near Horseshoe Lake Park pre-design phase, we plan to bring residents together in May to see the next steps. Watch for details and join our mail list at [neorsd.org/doanbrook](http://neorsd.org/doanbrook).

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of the Year. Dawson also has been the pastor at Grace Tabernacle Baptist Church in Lyndhurst since 2018. He is married to LaVerne Dawson. They have four children and eight grandchildren.

Deante Young is a native Clevelander from Glenville. He is a writer and motivational speaker on personal development, life lessons, and self-doubt. His books and apparel are available at [dirtytruthpublishing.com](http://dirtytruthpublishing.com) and [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

Books will be available for sale and signing.

**Library Partners with The Cleveland Seed Bank to Offer Free Seeds**



For the benefit of its gardeners, both seasoned and new, the Library operates a Seed Library in collaboration with Cleveland Seed Bank, where gardeners can take home a packet of heirloom seeds and grow their own heritage vegetables, herbs, or flowers. The Seed Library opens on Earth Day, April 22.

The Seed Library is "planted" in an old-fashioned card catalog at Main Library with drawers filled with a selection of organic, herb, vegetable, and flower seeds (above, Adult Services Associate Tracie Pickett with last year's display). Growers can take home up to five seed packets each month. Simply bring your seeds along with a check-out form to the Information Desk.

If you've never planted a garden, this initiative encourages you to try. Gardening can help to keep you healthy by providing a connection to the land, good



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The iREAD: Find Your Voice program, for children from birth through 12th grade, begins June 1 and continues through August 1. It's easy to participate. Simply register on Beanstack and then log 20 minutes of reading each day to win prizes along the way. Complete several activities and attend fun programs that will help you make an impact in your home, school, library, and community.

For many children, the best part of summer reading is that there are no assignments and their favorite books tend to be the ones they choose. Any kind of reading counts: books, magazines, audiobooks, comic books, graphic novels, internet articles, the back of a cereal box. Reading is reading. Library staff looks



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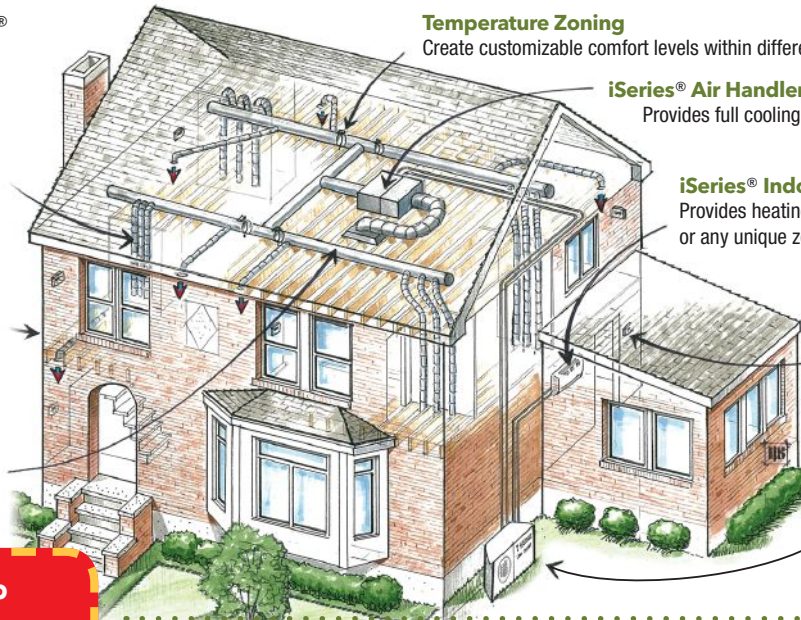
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forward to helping children discover just the right books that will spur them on to find and raise their voices.

### Friends Hold Spring Book Sale May 3 – 7 at the Library



Book Sales are among the Friends of the Shaker Library's favorite events – held twice a year

on the Library's second floor – to give items donated from the community or withdrawn from the Library's collection a second chance at a well-read life. Revenue earned from the sales supports Library programs and services.

This year's spring sale begins with a Members' Preview from 4-8 pm Wednesday, May 3. The sale opens to the public on Thursday, May 4 from 9:30 am-8 pm and continues on Friday, May 5 and Saturday, May 6 from 9:30 am-4:30 pm. The popular Bag Sale is held on Sunday, May 7 from 1-3:30 pm.

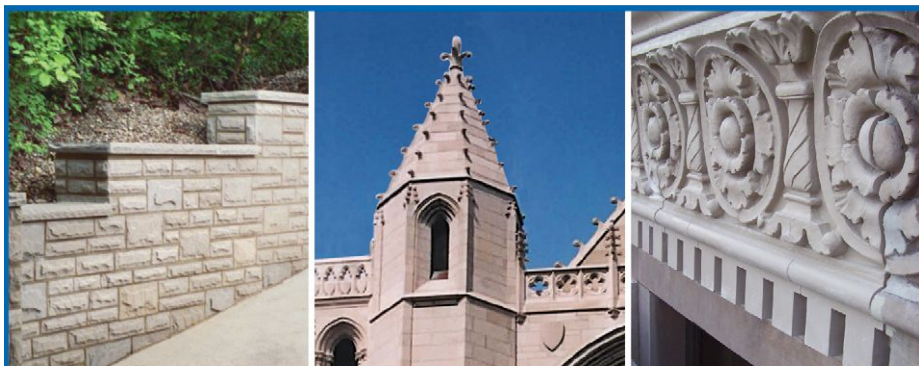
Residents wishing to volunteer can email [Friends@shakerlibrary.org](mailto:Friends@shakerlibrary.org)

### Friends of the Library Teams with the Open Book Project to Deliver Books to Correctional Institutions

Friends often receive more books than they can sell at book sales. Board members continually brainstorm ways to get the unsold books into the hands of readers who will enjoy them. Past efforts have included delivering large print books to senior facilities, delivering adult and children's books to barber shops for customers to read while they wait, and filling Little Free Library requests.

Recently, Friends welcomed a new partner, The Open Book Project, an initiative that encourages and coordinates collaboration among students and teachers for the development of high quality, freely distributable textbooks and educational material.

As a graduate of CWRU, Friends Board member Christine Wolken was familiar with the Seminar Approach to General Education and Scholarship and the Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society's book drive for



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Photo: Katie Montague

incarcerated people at Grafton Correctional Institution. Wolken contacted Professor Benjamin Sperry, who delivers books

to incarcerated individuals at Grafton Correctional Institution once a month. The Friends will partner with him to provide books on a monthly basis.

According to Sperry "There's a hunger for books." He believes that books give many incarcerated people a second chance at education, and Christine Wolken and the Friends are pleased to participate in this worthwhile endeavor.

**National Library Week 2023: There's More to the Story**

Your Library is full of stories in a variety of formats – from picture books to large print, audiobooks to ebooks, and more.

Join us to celebrate National Library Week, April 23-29, with the theme,



There's More to the Story. Monica Boone, local theater director and arts champion will present a Storytelling Workshop from 2-4 pm on Saturday, April 8, when she

will provide expert storytelling training to help participants share meaningful moments of their lives in memorable presentations. The workshop will be followed by a Shaker Storytellers Showcase from 2-4 pm on Saturday, April 15, when participants can display their new skills, followed by an Open Mic opportunity for community members to share their own special stories.

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**5/3-7**

■ [www.shakerlibrary.org/friends-of-the-library/book-sale](http://www.shakerlibrary.org/friends-of-the-library/book-sale)

Library programs bring the community together for entertainment, education, and connection through book clubs, story times, crafting classes, and lectures. And free internet and technology access, literacy skills, and support for businesses, job seekers, and entrepreneurs add even more to the story.

### Library and City's Tree Advisory Board Hold Arbor Day Bookmark Design Contest



Arbor Day is celebrated on the last Friday in April and is marked by the planting of trees. This year, children in grades K-6 are invited to enter the Arbor Day Bookmark Design Contest and create a bookmark that encourages people to plant trees. Entry forms are available in the Children's Room through April 27.

Four winning bookmarks will be printed for the community to enjoy. Everyone who enters will receive a small memento from the Tree Advisory Board for their contributions.

### Library Closings

- April 28 for Staff Professional Day
- May 29 for Memorial Day
- June 19 for Juneteenth **SL**

#### eLibrary:

The eLibrary at [shakerlibrary.org/our-collections/elibrary2-2](http://shakerlibrary.org/our-collections/elibrary2-2) is open 24/7.

#### Look for us:

Watch for us in the City's Memorial Day Parade.

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4. It's a nationally registered historic site.
5. It's a **vital habitat** for wildlife and a **key migrating point** for birds.
6. Our communities have said clearly we want to **save Horseshoe Lake.**
7. The Sewer District's plan would permanently **destroy Horseshoe Lake.**
8. The Sewer District has not listened to residents or worked to compromise.
9. The Sewer District admits to having **no plan** to pay for their proposed park or maintenance and **could cost millions.**
10. **There is another option that would save the lake** - The Horseshoe Lake Restoration Plan. It's safe, controls stormwater, and costs the same as the Sewer District's plan that destroys the lake.

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# SNACK BAR





# A Second Helping



# of Susie's Q

**Thornton Park's  
popular caterers  
return this  
summer to make  
another splash**

**By Nate Paige  
Photography by Jason Miller**





## It's a Friday night in January during a DJ Skate event at Thornton Park.

The building is abuzz with energy, as it's the beginning of a three-day holiday weekend. Young people are everywhere – some skating, some sitting and chatting, and others in line at the concession stand ordering snacks.

There's also a lot of activity in the concession stand kitchen, where Lovey Hunt of Susie's Q Catering is preparing several orders of soft pretzels. Her daughter, Kaiya, is working the counter, taking orders. She's assisted by her boyfriend, Brent. Both are seniors at Shaker Heights High School. Lovey's son, Robert, a freshman at the high school, has the night off.



Chris Hunt  
ladles out  
homemade  
tomato  
soup.

"It's nice to have family that you can depend on," says Lovey.

While her primary focus is the concession stand, her husband, Chris, enjoys handling the catering aspect of Susie's Q Catering. The business, launched in 2013, focuses on smoked meats and savory sides and is named after his late sister, Susan, a 1989 SHHS grad. Chris and Lovey are also Shaker grads – classes of '91 and '92, respectively.

## Catering to Shaker

Last summer, the Hunts were brought in to run the Thornton Park concession stand during pool and summer camp season. Their varied and tasty fare was a game changer, but it wasn't an overnight success.

"When we first started, business was really slow," says Lovey. "After some discussion with several parents, we found out they were feeding their kids at home before dropping them off."

Once parents were made aware of the menu options, business picked up immediately and remained consistent throughout the season.

Although most of their Thornton Park customers are children, Chris and Lovey made sure the menu contained items for an adult's more sophisticated palate, such as avocado toast, Caesar salad, cauliflower crust pizza with vegan cheese, zucchini sticks, and a hummus bowl with warm pita.

Oftentimes last summer parents purchased items to take home, even calling in orders on their way home from work, or they brought their kids back in the evening to have dinner.



As the end of summer neared, Lovey and Chris wondered who would handle concessions during the fall and winter when the ice rink becomes the focus.

"Initially, we were informed that the Recreation Department would handle concessions for hockey season, but in October I was contacted to see if we were interested. So, it turned from something seasonal into something almost year-round for us," says Lovey.

Back in the kitchen, orders have come in for cheeseburgers, nachos, hot dogs, and Ring Pops. Lovey swiftly moves around the room, gathering what she needs for each order while still answering a visitor's questions.

"When this extended opportunity came up, it expanded quickly, due to the City offering us additional events to provide food for. We catered the Senior Lunch, and several police officers stepped in as servers. We also catered an event for the Village Garden Club, and the Ohio High School Competition this past February. There are so many opportunities here, and the City is really utilizing our services. I love it," says Lovey.

**Lovey Hunt admires a customer's baby.**

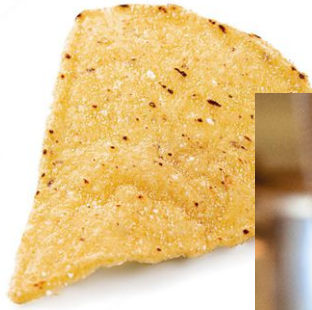




## A Match Made in Shaker

During their years at Shaker Heights High School, Chris and Lovey knew of each other, and had several friends in common, but it would be years before they got together. And even then, it was initially a platonic partnership as Lovey helped him promote his business.

“We didn’t run in the same circles in high school,” says Lovey. “I didn’t think anything of him – good or bad. There were many opportunities for us to meet in school, but it never happened.”



"During all my years of high school, I shared lockers with a good friend – who happened to be Chris' best friend."

Lovey is an identical twin, and admits to being quite the introvert.

"I was a homebody; my sister was the extrovert. I was in the marching band. I also played softball and enjoyed writing. Running this concession stand is probably the most extroverted thing I've ever done," she says with a laugh.

As long as she's known Chris, he's been involved with cutting hair and cooking.

"I'm the last of the three Hunt siblings to attend Shaker Heights High School. I was the barber and chef within the circle of people I associated with in high school," says Chris. "From cutting hair in the social room, to firing up the grill at our cookouts. It was an awesome experience to attend Shaker Schools and be part of the Shaker family, which continues to embrace one another."

Chris attended the Ohio State Barber College in the mid-90s. He is a self-taught meat smoker and he started his catering business several years later, on a much smaller level.



That's when he and Lovey initially got together – as business partners. She helped him out with the business aspects of his catering company.

"When we got married, I added my business experience to his efforts, which led to small events including a Van Aken District pop-up, Wade Oval Wednesdays, and other local food festivals.

Opportunities began to increase after that," says Lovey.







## What free time?

Both Chris and Lovey are multi-taskers. In addition to the catering company, Chris owned and operated the Untouchable Barber Salon in Cleveland Heights for 18 years. On occasion, he still cuts hair. Lovey, a Notre Dame College graduate, owns an IT company and serves dual roles as owner/director of HR and compliance.

Despite other commitments, their hearts keep them in Shaker. "Our passion comes from growing up in this beautiful community," says Lovey. "We want to help preserve the reputation that Shaker is known for. Even if it is something as simple as a consistent chicken tender, we want to always serve the best to the community that has given us so much."

While many of the most popular items will remain on the menu this summer, Lovey is mapping out a few new options. What are they? You'll have to stop by the Thornton concession stand in June to find out. Come hungry! **SL**



## Facebook loves Susie's Q

Shaker residents and other fans of Thornton Park raved about Susie's Q on Facebook last summer. Here's a small sampling of their posts...

The concession stand has been a highlight of our summer at Thornton. Love the variety and great service!  
– Amber

We have been going to Thornton for a long time now, and this has been by far the best concession stand experience. I hope they are able to do this every summer. It's also great to support Shaker grads and a local business, of course!  
– Nick

This has become the favorite part of coming to the pool for my son! Thanks for keeping the residents well fed!  
– Megan

Your food and your friendly service helped our grandkids have a very special visit to Thornton! Thank you!!  
– Judith

You guys have been wonderful! Thank you so much. Such a great menu. We really appreciate what you're doing!  
– Cathy

We loved the concession stand this year and they have always been so sweet to my young kids!  
– Erin





# Preschool: A Driver of Equity

● One of the few things educational researchers agree on is the value of a high-quality early education program.

By Scott Stephens  
Photography by Gus Chan



Learning and fun go together hand-in-hand in pre-K teacher Danielle Klink's classroom at Onaway Elementary School. The District has been providing high-quality preschool opportunities for children for more than 35 years.



# The only tears shed by the pint-sized scholars

in Danielle Klink's preschool classroom come when it's time to go home. To these tiny students, their teachers are rock stars.

"They are sad when the school day ends," says Julie Langhinrichs, a paraprofessional who helps Klink with the class of 3- to 5-year-old students. "I ran into some parents the other day at the Van Aken District and they said, 'You're an idol in our household!'"

One of the few things educational researchers agree on is the value of a high-quality early education program. A majority of research shows that many pre-kindergarten or pre-K programs benefit students in both the short and long run.

A recent study in Georgia, for instance, found students who attended the state's preschool program had higher math scores when they reached the middle grades. Researchers in San Antonio found that students who attended that city's pre-K program were less likely to be assigned to special education later on. A study released earlier this year by a Massachusetts Institute of Technology economist found that attending preschool at age 4 makes children significantly more likely to go to college.

In other words, what happens in preschool doesn't stay in preschool.

"We feel our responsibility is to provide an equitable, safe, and developmentally appropriate environment that not only gets a preschooler ready for kindergarten, but also helps them become lifelong learners," says Kristin Koenigsberger, a preschool teacher at Onaway who has taught in the District for 16 years.

Research aside, it is clear that preschool is often a child's first experience in dealing with adults and other children outside the cocoon of their family. And for many families, preschool is their first foray into their child's education experience. That all means that preschool, amid the naps and crayons, can be a powerful driver of equity.

Onaway Principal Dora Bechtel says the exposure to language and socialization young learners receive in a high-quality preschool program is especially important to children from marginalized families, or those who have special needs. Many times, students diagnosed with disabilities who receive strong intervention services in preschool no longer need special accommodations after they matriculate to the later grades.

"It allows everyone to start with the same foundation," Bechtel says. "Preschool can really level the playing field."



**"Preschool can really  
level the playing field"**

~ Principal Dora Bechtel





Emmitt Jolly

# Striving to close the gap

**In the U.S.**, access to high-quality preschool is a confusing patchwork. As a result, it is difficult to determine how many children are enrolled in preschool. The National Institute for Early Education says that approximately 39 percent of the nation's 4-year-olds were enrolled in some kind of preschool program during the 2020-2021 school year.

National plans for universal preschool programs have stalled in Congress, so governors and state legislators are taking the lead. This year, at least 14 states are discussing preschool expansion. But what that expansion might look like, and how it would be funded, varies widely.

Ohio, for instance, will receive \$48 million in federal grant dollars over the next three years to increase access to early childhood education for children, most of them from low-income families and those with special needs. While the funding boost is welcome, it is a far cry from the scale of the ambitious universal pre-K programs under consideration in Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, and other states.

Shaker Heights is striving to close that gap.

Last year, Shaker Heights Board of Education President Emmitt Jolly proposed a transformative expansion of the District's current pre-K program with the goal of establishing universal preschool in the community. Doing so could establish the community as a national model in early childhood education.

"Research shows that high-quality preschool programs enhance the social and emotional well-being of young learners, prepare them for kindergarten, lead to enhanced academic outcomes, and reduce disciplinary problems later in their school career," Jolly says. "These positive outcomes are especially true for children from historically disadvantaged and marginalized communities."

Jolly's proposal is part of the District's long-term facilities planning process, which is expected to conclude this spring. Where to put an expanded preschool program – and how to pay for it – are issues that have been under discussion since the fall. In January, the Board of Education indicated it wanted to explore placing a preschool site at the old Ludlow school building and potentially maintaining the current program at Onaway.

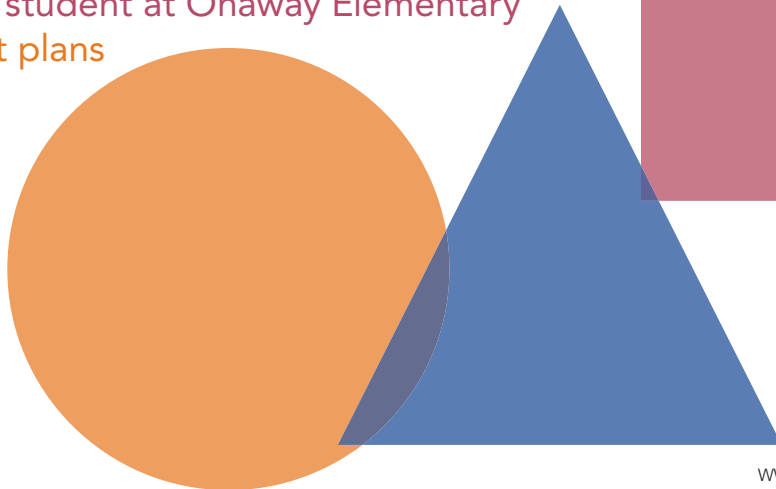
Jolly acknowledged at the time that finding a funding stream to pay for an expanded preschool program – and the space to house it – is not easy. But he argues that the return on investment is great.

"It is the kind of transformative investment that Shaker has historically made to maintain our tradition of academic excellence," he says.





Paraprofessional Stephen Shinn offers a congratulatory hug to a preschool student at Onaway Elementary School. The District plans to expand pre-K opportunities for the community's youngest scholars.





Marla Robinson

**The Shaker Heights Schools** preschool program is the only one in Ohio to incorporate the prestigious International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme philosophy with a continuation through the 12th grade. All classes include both students who have been identified to have disabilities and those who have not been so identified. The practice of blending students in general education with those who have special needs – a “peer model” approach – provides constructive examples to students with special needs and exposes general education students to children with differences.

“In Shaker’s early childhood program, IB is the umbrella for all that we do,” says Allison Colvin, a preschool teacher at Onaway. “It is an inquiry-based program where the children engage in researching and exploring topics that affect our classroom, school, community, and our world.”

Onaway’s program is open to children between the ages of 3 and 5 who live within the District and are toilet trained. The program is tuition-based for general education students but on a sliding scale for families who qualify for free or reduced-cost meals.

This year, there are about 85 students enrolled in the District’s preschool program – both full-day

## A community-wide collaboration

and half-day. Nearly the same number of children are on the waiting list. Full-day preschoolers get a taste of all of the basic subjects their older peers get, as well as “specials” such as music, art, and physical education. Half-day students get an abbreviated version of that menu. All children go on a wide variety of field trips.

Onaway maintains a long and constant preschool waiting list, confirming the belief that a market for high-quality pre-K exists. Marla Robinson, the District’s chief strategic priorities officer, views expanded preschool opportunities as a community-wide collaboration, rather than a competition.

“We’re all better if we work together,” Robinson says. “We are committed to collaborating with other local preschool programs. Wherever the children are attending preschool, they are still our children.”

A strong preschool program was an attraction for parents such as Nellie Brown. A Shaker graduate who now works in the District’s Human Resources Department, Brown and her husband, Shannon, moved back to Shaker for the diverse, high-quality education opportunities the District affords, including its strong preschool program.

This year, Brown’s daughter Emma, 5, attends preschool at Onaway. She has two other children, Dorothy and William, in the school system.

“Emma was a COVID kid - she was at home with me,” Brown said. “The children she is in preschool with now are her first group of friends. She loves it! She talks about all her friends and loves her teacher.

“I went to Onaway,” Brown adds. “We moved back to Shaker to give our children the same diverse experience that I received.”

On a cloudy mid-winter morning, the children in Klink’s class at Onaway are unconcerned about enrollment numbers and education research. Gathered around their teacher in a circle, they are focusing their attention on the picture book “Waiting for Mama,” a tale of the challenges animals face living in the Antarctic.

“Where is mama going?” Klink asks as the children stare at images of penguins soldiering through their icy home. “Do you have a prediction of where she is going?”

“She’s looking for food,” someone volunteers.

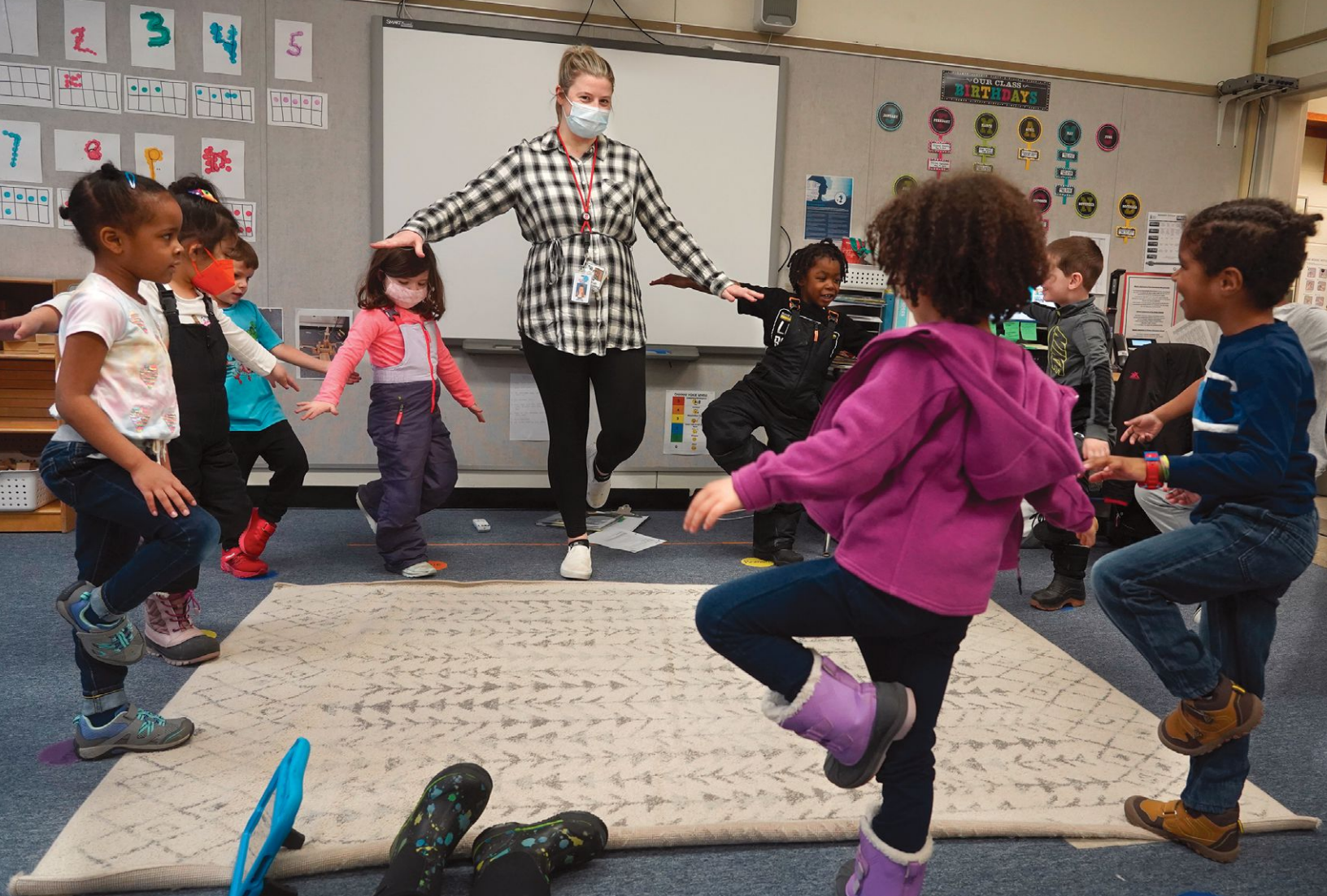
“Let’s find out!” Klink says.

It sometimes feels like the journey to expand preschool to more of the community’s young learners is as daunting as the challenges facing those hungry penguins.

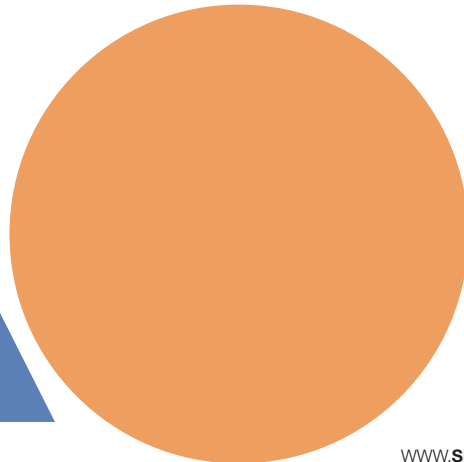
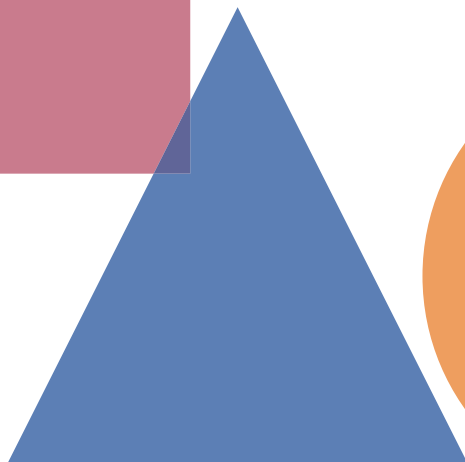
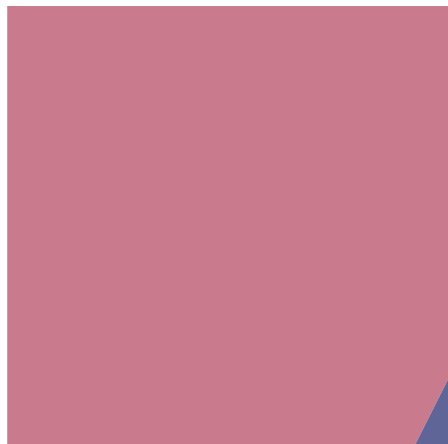
Preschool advocates such as Colvin point out that because high-quality pre-K for all children is not compulsory in Ohio, it will require a partnership between the community and the School District to expand the District’s preschool opportunities. Because so many skills were lost or under-developed during COVID, high-quality preschool and early intervention services are even more critical now, she says.

“I believe it can happen with proper planning and adequate resources and support,” she says. “Although change takes time, I believe this kind of change can’t wait. Many families in our community cannot afford to wait. Their children’s futures depend on what happens now.” **SL**

*Scott Stephens is executive director of communications and engagement for the Shaker Heights City School District.*



“A high-quality preschool experience helps ensure that children get the experiences their brains need to further develop and the socialization necessary to develop empathy. When offered universally, preschool helps close the opportunity gap.”  
– pre-K teacher Kristin Koenigsberger.

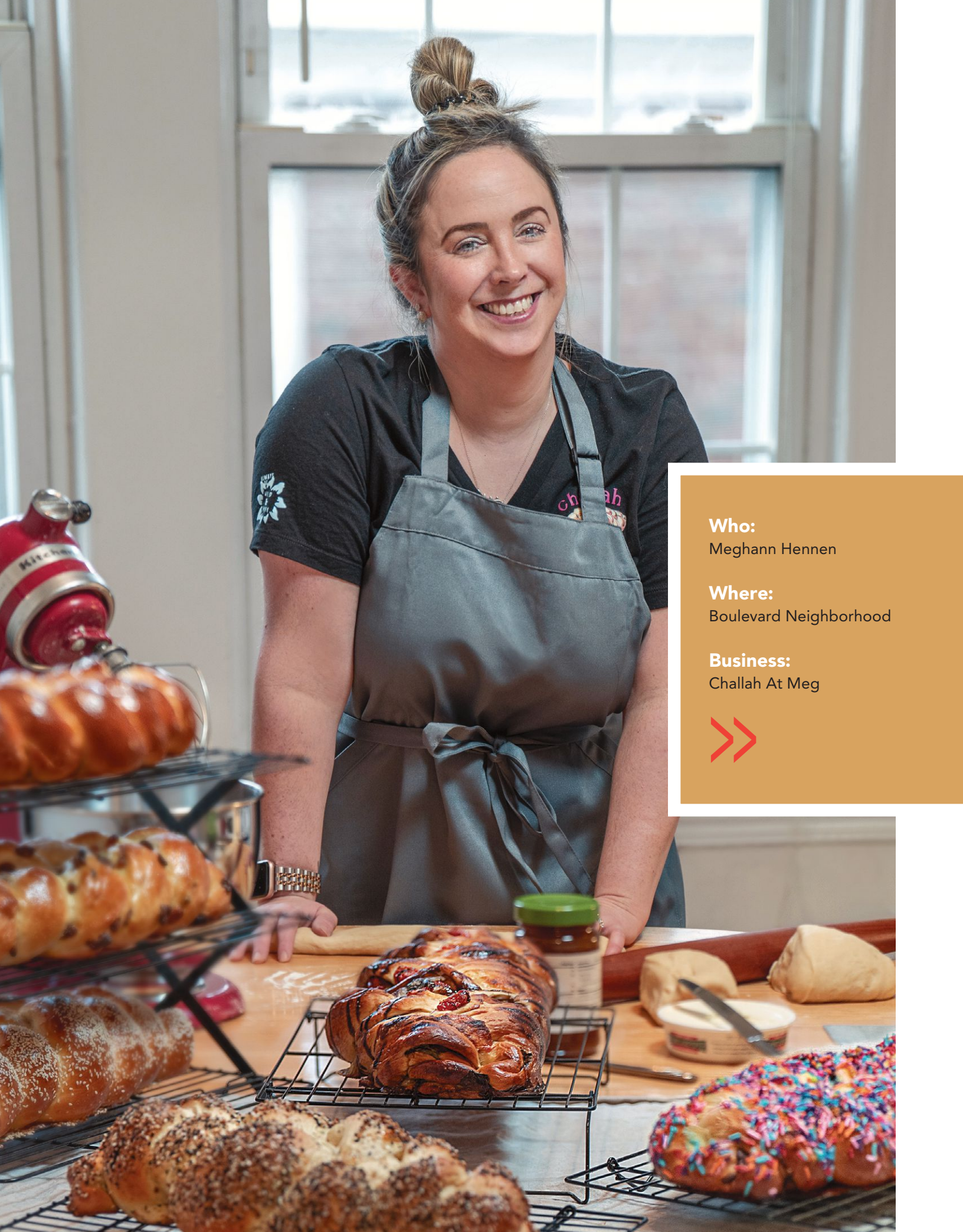


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# Fostering *Connectivity*

By Sue Starrett | Photography by Robert Muller





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#### **What I Love About My Work:**

Challah has helped me so much spiritually and emotionally. I originally made challah for the first Shabbat Zoom with my toddler families from work at the Jewish Community Center during the first week of the pandemic. I fell in love with the process and strived to perfect my craft. I love that I have been able to connect safely with the community and still provide comfort during difficult times.

Now that everything has become more open, I have had the opportunity to meet face-to-face with my customers. I have met so many amazing people and discovered that our lives have overlapped at different points. I love hearing their stories of how and where they ate and shared my challah with their families and friends.

Something else I appreciate about my business is the ability to ship my challah nationwide. In some ways it's like the sisterhood of the traveling challahs! And I love the social networking. The challah community locally and on Instagram has provided me with endless inspiration and connections. I am grateful to be a part of several online groups and have met such kind and lovely followers.



### Personal Background:

My background has nothing to do with baking. My experiences range from figure skating and classical ballet training, to being a visual and performance-based artist (represented by HEDGE Gallery at 78th Street Studios), to teaching early childhood and special education. I also love to travel and have performed in Europe, New York, Cleveland, and Florida. I believe my background is all braided together, and everything I've done supports everything I'm doing.

As a competitive figure skater, I started my days at 5 am at Thornton Park for ice time before going to school. I quit at age 15 because I was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, which affected my knees and jaw. I continued ballet at Cleveland City Dance, where I assisted the director and learned to teach pre-school, pre-ballet, and beginning ballet classes. After graduating from Beachwood High School in 2001, I earned a BFA in painting and drawing from The University of Akron Mary Schiller Myers School of Art. In 2006, I began studies at Parsons School of Design, where I received my MFA in painting and performance art.

I lived in New York City for 10 years, making and exhibiting art and teaching in different synagogues and preschools. Having found that my passion is working with toddler-to-kindergarten-age children, in 2013 I applied for an MA in early childhood education and special education from Teachers College, Columbia University. I believe all children need an advocate who will help them and give them affection.

I teach the whole child and work with them where they are developmentally, and I especially love teaching in a play-based environment and allowing children to find and develop their interests. I was told at a young age that I would never amount to anything and I shouldn't/wouldn't be able to go to college with my poor grades. However, with two master's degrees and a small business, I know I am resilient and can overcome anything.

### On Working and Living in Shaker Heights:

My husband Pat and I relocated from New York City to Shaker Heights in 2015. We both wanted something that was urban, yet suburban. I love our neighborhood and being close to the Lower Shaker Lake, where we take our St. Berdoodle, Luna, for long walks. I run my business from our small apartment, with one oven and a four-foot countertop. During the pandemic, I made about 25 challahs a week. Now that I am working in-person full-time, I make about 10 a week, and sometimes I am booked out for months at a time. For the past several years I have been in partnership with Suburban Temple, Kol Ami in Beachwood.

### Contact:

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Phone: 646-957-5223

Website: [challahatmeg.com](http://challahatmeg.com) **SL**

I believe my background is all braided together, and everything I've done supports everything I'm doing.





## Scene in Shaker

# Cruisin' Along

By Sue Starrett

Photograph by Jason Miller

**Flash Gordon**, the protagonist of a popular space adventure comic strip, made his debut in 1934. Four years later, Joe “Flash” Gordon, a successful car salesperson for the past half century, was born. While neither of the Messrs. Gordon possesses typical superpowers, both have had brave and grand adventures.

Joe Gordon’s father relocated to Cleveland from Memphis in 1930, landed his first job at a service station, and eventually managed several, including one at East 75th Street and Woodland Road. Gordon often helped his dad, and after working the entire summer of 1954, dropped out of high school to provide more than seasonal assistance. When Standard Oil of Ohio purchased that property, Gordon helped secure a loan from Cleveland Trust for a new facility, which opened in April 1963 at East 79th and Woodland. Because Gordon’s father was aging, the lender persuaded Gordon to accept ownership. In doing so, he became one of only a handful of African American gas station owners in Cleveland. Altogether, he worked in service stations for 18 years.

Gordon’s entrepreneurial spirit eventually led him to a General Motors plant manager to pitch a new concept, car security systems. Instead, he was encouraged to consider a “fail-proof business” and apply for an 18-month program for minorities to learn how to become a GM franchise dealer. He was selected, completed the training, and began his new career as a part of the sales force at Arthur Pontiac (now the site of Motorcars on Mayfield Road). Over the years, Gordon has worked for Blaushild Chevrolet, Qua Buick, Central Cadillac, and several other dealerships.

During the fuel shortage of the 1970s, he switched venues to own and manage a beverage store at East 45th Street and Superior Avenue. Almost 10 years later, he sold the property and returned to Blaushild, where he would receive his famous nickname. A sales contest in 1974 awarded five prizes; Gordon received third prize, a Polaroid camera. He took so many photos that one of his co-workers started calling him “Flash.” As it happened, another Joe was on the sales force. So the moniker stuck. Gordon’s business cards and sales flyers sported his new, and legendary, name.

Now Gordon has office space at Crestmont Cadillac as a freelance representative.

“I am there to help my longtime customers and occasionally sell a new car – to the children and grandchildren of my former customers,” he says. One of the benefits of working in car sales is driving a company vehicle,

a “demo.” Throughout his 51 years in the business, he has driven a Chrysler Cordova, Buick Electra, and Chevy’s Monte Carlo and Impala, among others. His current ride is a 2013 Cadillac. He enjoys getting dressed up every day and driving to work.

“I’d like to retire, but what would I do? I’ve been working since I was 16 because I’m blessed with good health,” says Gordon. “I stay active and am in great shape.”

Estimating that he has sold at least 100 cars annually – although one year his total was 250 Buicks and another year, 300 Chevys – Gordon figures he’s been responsible for placing about 3,000 cars in the area. “It’s mind-boggling to me sometimes,” he remarks about his career.

Gordon and his family lived in Cleveland Heights for many years. He and his wife are the parents of two sons and a daughter, although Mrs. Gordon died in 1990 and their older son in 2015. Now he is the grandfather of two and great-grandfather of five, four of whom live locally. In 2020 he moved to the Oliver House in Shaker Heights, where he enjoys his neighbors, the larger community, and his easy commute to work.

“At my age, I just want to cruise along.” **SL**



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