



NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

REPRESENTING CLIFTON HEIGHTS • UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS • FAIRVIEW

November, 2008

Next monthly meeting:

Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2008, 7:30 p.m.
Deaconess Hospital Cafeteria,
Lower Level
Straight Street

From the President's desk



Sitting here on a cool November morning, I am inspired again by the events of the week. As citizens, we have elected a new President, and we have been called to renew our sense of civic responsibility.

What a historic community we live in! We share a rich history with the University and with the Downtown. The Clifton Heights, University Heights, and Fairview Heights Neighborhood again sits poised on the brink of great things.

I am also struck by how important history is to the future. I have had the luck of coming upon a group of old Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletins. They have many great articles about the players in our city and the development and history of Cincinnati. Did anyone know that there was such a thing as the CUF Historical Society back in the 1970s? Who knew that they had been planning a "Banks" development back in 1948? Who knew that the original UC Medical School, Law School, and Cincinnati College were Downtown, and were not moved to their current location until 1893 after the city had given the University acreage in Burnet Woods in 1889? One of the earliest buildings of the University sat at the intersection of Vine Street and West Clifton on the old McMicken estate.

Who remembers the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 and the later oil embargos of the 1970s? The rising price of gasoline put doubts into many as to the viability of Downtown due to expensive commutes. This summer we saw another sharp rise in gas prices and hoped that the city centers would be invigorated by those who would return to living Downtown by the high cost of gasoline.

Who remembers that Mt. Adams was considered a "blighted and deteriorated" neighborhood in the 1948 City of Cincinnati Master Plan and was "slated for redevelopment?" By the

1950s, many were moving to this neighborhood because of its proximity to Eden Park and the Cincinnati central business district. Now look at Mt. Adams and it is hard to envision that time period.

So I ask you, neighbors, what will CUF look like in 50 years? Will we be poised to look toward the future and bring our neighborhood into the prosperity that we know it deserves? I placed communications about the two major developing bodies in our neighborhood, the Uptown Consortium and CHCURC, so that we can all start learning and participating.

We are a community rich in human capital, poised between Downtown and the University of Cincinnati. I envision a safe, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood with a wide variety of people who enjoy being close to the Downtown, but not too close. Where we can still have a garden, yet walk to see a live band play or spend an afternoon jogging through the park. A community of visionaries.

Let's go CUF!

Rob Neel

Minutes of the CUF general meeting, October 20, 2008

- Rob introduced himself and welcomed the group. He pointed out the University Heights group and their success.

- District 5 Police report: Sgt. Volkerding reported on action on Wheeler St. with a large party and 3 people being arrested. UC police were very supportive.

- Landlord accreditation programs continue with 30 properties involved.

- Hughes High School students have been a problem before and after classes. This is being addressed by the police.

- Explained noise ordinance which is any loud noise that is disturbing from more than 50 feet. This applies to cars as well as houses.

- Ofcr. Lisa Johnson has developed numerous strategies for improving neighborhood quality of life. Calling the police creates a record that can be referred to when they respond to a call.

- Complaints were made about the cleaning of the business district, especially the bus stop on McMillan and Wheeler.

- UC police officer Doug Barge explained how he led safety seminars over the summer for incoming freshmen. Four main periods for increased crime

on campus: move-in at start of year, holiday break, spring break, end of year

- Everyone is encouraged to invite one or two neighbors to the next meeting.
- Update on the clean ups around the neighborhood. UC students participated.
- Suggestions were made for a full-time clean up person in the business district
 - Towne Properties still plans to have a presentation about their proposal for block 1 & 4
 - Parking on the grassy area — part of the property is still private and available for that use
 - NSP fund allotments will be voted on by the CUF membership in attendance at the next general meeting. Bring your suggestions.
 - Urban home buyers extravaganza on Oct. 4 was attended by Rob Neel and Debbie Herman
 - Linda Ziegler represented CUF at the annual Fire Station Day, Oct. 11.
 - The City Link development has started. The impact on the CUF area is undetermined.
 - Holiday Party is still a go — date and location may be announced at the November meeting
 - Ben Sloan - petition to make a dangerous intersection safer. He is proposing to turn the current 2-way stop at Riddle & Marshall into a 4-way stop.
 - Rebecca Groppe, from Hamilton Co. Recorder's office, made a presentation about trying to get action on abandoned or neglected properties
 - The 4th annual CPOP awards banquet is planned for Nov. 6th
 - The Freestore free pet day was announced, anyone with a pet in need of medial care is welcome.

November Treasurer's Report

Balance on: 10/1/08 \$4,401.49

Income:

Dues	\$6.00
NSP reimbursement	\$1,336.59
Dues	\$6.00
Dues	\$24.00
Total income:	+ \$1,372.59

Expenses:

Gallagher, J's Mulch	\$63.84
Gallagher, Hardware	\$44.99
Neel Evans Landscape	\$231.70
Kinko's Sept newsletter	\$145.80
Total expenses:	- \$486.33

Balance on: 11/1/08 \$5,287.75

Computer recycling event (Hamilton County residents)

Each year, the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District provides a free computer recycling event for residents. To be notified of upcoming events, contact them at 946-7766 or visit www.hamiltoncountyclecyles.org

Location: Technology Recycling Group
5139 Kieley Place
St. Bernard, OH 45217

Dates: March 31 - December 30, 2008
Time: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Closed all major holidays.

West Clifton renovation plan

This project started from a CPR request by CUF to improve the rock fall protection along the base of Bellevue Park. It was combined with an upcoming roadway resurfacing project using the city's matching funds to enable us to apply for various road and safety funds. Approx. \$ 1.7 million was approved and the City created an all encompassing plan on West Clifton Avenue from Vine St. up to McMillan Ave.

The plan calls for reconstructing the roadway at the curve to improve safety, add rock fall protection along the hillside, add a new matching stone wall at the lower hillside, add a new sidewalk to connect the area at the base of Bellevue Park (to continue pedestrian access for both sides of the street), replace all the sidewalks and driveways on both sides, add new trees throughout and rebuild the traffic signal at Vine Street. All in all, the project will greatly improve this gateway corridor for both the CUF and OTR neighborhoods.

The project has been designed and opened to bidding. The low bidder is within the estimate. The City will review the contract and award the project shortly if everything is in order. This project could begin construction as early as January 2009. Completion would be sometime in August.

Another gateway is also being proposed at the old Bellevue Incline. This will be a separate project but built immediately afterwards if funding is available. We will utilize the incline abutment as a bus stop adding a "roof", etc. Diego Jordan has taken over the design of this addition and will review it with the CUF community council when it is a little further along.

Towne Properties meeting, November 20

Towne Properties will be holding an open house to see preliminary plans for the development of the property between McMillan and Calhoun Streets on Thursday, November 20, 5:30 pm to 7 pm, at the CHCURC offices at 2510 Ohio Street, Suite C. Come to learn!!

Personal safety session #1

The January 2009 general meeting will have a different start than normal. At 7 pm at Deaconess, we will start the meeting earlier than normal with the first hour being led by Governor Williams, one of our esteemed

District 5 police officers. He will be instructing residents on a few basic personal safety techniques and will be giving tips to all for increasing our awareness of our surroundings.

Plan on arriving at 7 pm for a 1 hour session. This will replace our normal police report session. We will have the normal meeting start at 8 pm.

Let's meet the players in our neighborhood!

The following excerpts are taken directly from the respective web sites of the two organizations:

The Uptown Consortium

"The Uptown Consortium (www.uptownconsortium.org) is a non-profit community development corporation dedicated to the human, social, economic and physical improvement of Uptown Cincinnati. The organization was formed by the chief executive officers of Uptown's largest employers and the area's leading tourist attraction: Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, The Health Alliance of Greater Cincinnati (The Christ Hospital and University Hospital), TriHealth, Inc. (Good Samaritan Hospital) and University of Cincinnati. Combined, the consortium members employ nearly 50,000 people, have a payroll of \$1.4 billion, and produce an annual economic impact of over \$3 billion.

The consortium's areas of focus are public safety, transportation, housing, economic development and integrated social services for neighborhood residents. Uptown Cincinnati is located just north of downtown and includes the neighborhoods of Avondale, Clifton, Clifton Heights, Corryville, Fairview, Mt. Auburn and University Heights. Uptown is Cincinnati's dominant regional center of learning and health care."

To learn more, go to http://uptowncincinnati.com/about_uptown.

CHCURC

"The Clifton Heights Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation, CHCURC, was established as a partnership between the Clifton Heights Business Association, CUF Neighborhood Association and the University of Cincinnati. This partnership is dedicated to the revitalization of the Clifton Heights Neighborhood and is undertaking a number of redevelopment projects. The goals of CHCURC were developed through the Clifton Heights/UC Joint Urban Renewal Plan. These goals include:

1. Promotion of homeownership
 2. Revitalization of the local retail market
 3. Create a pedestrian friendly business district "
- To learn more, go to <http://www.chcurc.org>

So that we understand when we are talking about Block 3 and Block 1, etc. you can view a schematic of the area on the last page of this newsletter.

Parks news, Winter 2008/09

Across The Universe

Kick off to the International Year of Astronomy.

2009 will mark the 400th anniversary of Galileo's use of the first telescope to explore the wonders of the nighttime sky. **Trailside Nature Center, Burnet Woods** will be offering special programs throughout the upcoming year as part of this global celebration.

Sat., Jan. 10, 11:00 a.m. – noon – *365 Starry Nights* - Join us in the Wolff Planetarium for an introduction to the night sky, a history of star gazing and a look at the seasonal highlights for the upcoming year.

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. – *Across the Universe – A PowerPoint Presentation* - Sit back and relax as you enjoy a guided tour through the depths of space and time. We'll examine the planets and moons of our local solar system as well as scenic destinations within our Milky Way galaxy... and more.

Mt. Airy Forest Hike

Sat., Jan. 24, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. – Mt. Airy Forest Join us for a brisk hike through Cincinnati's largest urban forest. We'll explore the history of the park and hopefully meet some of its wilder residents. Be sure to dress for the weather and bring a snack for along the trail. Meet in the Treehouse parking lot.

Winter Bird Feeders

Sat., Feb. 7, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. –

Burnet Woods, Trailside Nature Center

From the warmth of the Trailside Nature Center's Craft Room and Bird Viewing Area you can customize an attractive holiday feast for your feathered friends. With a variety of ingredients to choose from, your feeder is sure to be a hit.

Planetarium Shows

Come join us at the Wolff Planetarium for an introduction to the constellations and some of the legends connected to them. Programs are open to adults and older children accompanied by adults. Seating is limited; please call 751-3679 for reservations. Fee: \$2.00 per person.

Public planetarium shows presented by Dean Regas, Outreach Astronomer at the Cincinnati Observatory and Michael George, Cincinnati Park Board Naturalist.

Winter Skies

Sat., Dec. 6,	1 – 2 p.m.	Cincinnati Skies
Fri., Dec. 19,	7 – 8 p.m.	Cincinnati Skies
Sat., Jan. 3,	1 – 2 p.m.	Winter Constellations
Fri., Jan. 16,	7 – 8 p.m.	Winter Constellations
Sat., Feb. 7,	1 – 2 p.m.	Native American Skies
Fri., Feb. 20,	7 – 8 p.m.	Native American Skies

Group Programs

Planetarium programs are available to school classes and groups by appointment; call 321-6070 for school reservations; 751-3679 for after-school groups.

Tales and Trails Nature Story Hour

Trailside Nature Center, Burnet Woods

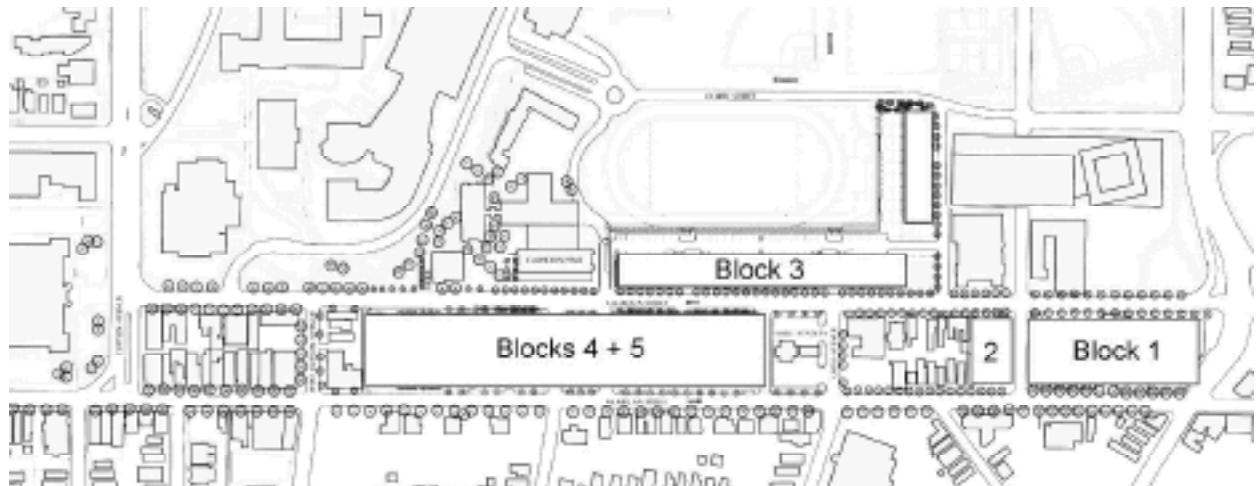
Tuesdays, Jan. 6 through Feb. 24, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Preschoolers and their adult companions are invited to join Ms. Lexie and her animal friends for a weekly hour of exploring the natural world. Activities and topics will vary from week to week and include story time, games, songs, discovery walks and more. For more information and reservations, please call 751-3679.

Time Sensitive
Material

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Cincinnati, Ohio
Permit No, 4834

2364 West McMillan Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45214

NEIGHBORHOOD
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Block designations for the area between McMillan and Calhoun Streets

Real estate realities

This month, we will have a new addition to our newsletter. Julz Brown, a neighbor on Flora and neighborhood advocate, posted this for those who are worried about the real estate market. Each month, Julz places homes that are for sale in our neighborhood on her webpage. This is a great way to let others see how affordable it is to live here and to try and get new homeowners into our neighborhood. She has agreed to send a monthly update to us and a little free advice. Thanks to Julz Brown!

Top 10 Real Estate Market Myths Debunked

With mortgage meltdowns, plummeting home prices and soaring foreclosure rates constantly in the news, it's no wonder people are wary of the housing market these days. But contrary to popular belief, things are not as dismal as they seem, according to Lawrence Yun, chief economist of the National Association of Realtors. Yun debunks 10 commonly held beliefs about the current housing market.

1. *Peak-to-trough home price declines to date have been about 20 percent.* Wrong. Measurements of home price declines can be skewed depending on which homes in which markets are being measured. For instance, the Case-Shiller Index, which indicates that home prices are down 20 percent, is heavily skewed towards homes with sub-prime loans and other distressed home sales. These troubled homes have experienced a steeper decline than home prices in general, says Yun, adding that both government data based on loans backed by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and data from the National Association of Realtors suggest much more modest price declines. TIP: If you're selling your home, the best thing to do is price your home right.

2. *The much smaller number of new homes now under construction indicates the dismal outlook for the housing market.* Wrong. The inventory of homes on the market is very high, so the last thing we need now is more new homes being built. Home builders have cut back sharply on production, which will help lower inventories and stabilize prices. The builders have done exactly what market forces are dictating under current conditions, Yun says. TIP: With many new homes completed but not sold, you can find great opportunities.

3. *Even when the housing market recovers, home price growth will be only 4 to 6 percent per year -- much less than historical average returns for the stock market.* Most buyers put less than 20 percent of their own money into a home purchase; this borrowing power can translate to a greater rate of return. This is how Yun explains it: Home price appreciation historically has been about 1 to 2 percentage points higher than consumer price inflation, which translates into about 4 to 6 percent per year. But this growth rate cannot be viewed as a rate of return like the stock market. The reason is that most people do not buy a home for all cash, instead making a cash down payment and borrowing the rest. The leverage this borrowing creates can magnify returns -- and losses. If price growth returns to historic norm, the price growth of 4 percent can easily turn into 20 to 30 percent rate of return if the home buyer makes a down payment of 10 or 20 percent. TIP: Get the fundamentals right when investing in real estate.

4. *Impending baby boomer retirements and moves to small homes will cause a glut of homes on the market.* Wrong. The first edge of the baby boomers has reached 60 years of age and the massive bulk of that generation will soon go into retirement, but far from trading down, many of these older homeowners are keeping their homes or moving to ones of comparable size. And even if more boomers do sell their larger homes in the years ahead, Yun points out, the rapidly growing U.S. population should absorb the inventory of existing homes on the market. TIP: Active seniors can find a retirement community that caters to their needs and interests.

5. *The federal government takeover of secondary mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac is a bailout that will cost taxpayers bundles.* Too soon to tell, says Yun. It's conceivable that taxpayers may have to cover some losses. It's also possible that the government takeover will result in no loss of taxpayer dollars. Even if taxpayer funds are used, the bailout would be preferable to the global economic problems that would have occurred if Fannie and Freddie had gone belly up. TIP: Uncle Sam is "bailing out" homeowners facing foreclosure.

6. *The Federal Reserve controls mortgage rates.* Wrong. Yun explains: The Fed's activities influence mortgage rates but don't directly control them. What the Fed sets is a very short-term interest rate called the Federal Funds Rate. Mortgage rates are determined by global savings as well as credit spreads and inflationary pressures. Over the past two years, the Fed has raised the Fed Funds Rate to 5.5 percent, and then cut it deeply to around 2 percent. All the while, the 30-year mortgage rate has averaged in the 6 to 6.5 percent range. TIP: Today's rates don't look bad compared to the 10 percent we saw in the early '90s and 17 percent in the '80s.

7. *It's the wrong time to buy.* Wrong. All real estate is local. For those who are financially and mentally ready to buy, there has never been a better time to be a buyer in many markets. An abundant selection of homes and historically low interest rates give buyers an edge over sellers. The recently passed \$7,500 federal tax credit for first-time home buyers creates an added incentive. For someone with a long-time horizon, Yun says, there is very little worry about home values since homes have historically provided a solid foundation for wealth accumulation. TIP: Compare the pros and cons of renting vs. buying to see what makes sense for you.

8. *It's the right time for everyone to buy.* No. All real estate is local, and everyone is unique. Someone who is not emotionally or financially ready should not be forced or induced to join the rank of homeowners, even when a

market presents good buying opportunities. Potential homeowners clearly need to understand that the decision to move up to ownership requires sacrifices, like saving up for down payment and elevating their credit scores. Home owners who lose their home to foreclosure serve no one's interest, Yun adds. TIP: Take a good hard look at your financial status and create a homeowner's budget to see if you're ready to buy a home.

9. *It's a terrible time to sell.* Wrong. In markets where home sales are picking up strongly, a seller can easily get an offer if the property is priced correctly. Also, Yun says, for those looking to trade-up, selling low on an existing home is more than offset by buying the new move-up home at a lower price. When the market recovers, home price appreciation on the traded-up home will bring bigger bang for the buck. TIP: Homebuyers want bargains in this market. If you price your home much lower than your competition, you might end up with a bidding war.

10. *With the advent of the Internet, more and more homes are being sold by owners (FSBOs), and real estate practitioners are becoming obsolete.* Nope. According to Yun, the share of home sellers who choose to go it alone when selling their home has actually decreased from about 20 percent in the late 1980s to about 12 percent today. Even after these sellers successfully complete a transaction, only 4 in 10 say they would sell their next home without the assistance of a real estate professional. TIP: You don't have to sign a listing contract to talk to a Realtor. Ask family and friends for referrals and interview a few. You might even get some free advice.

Sincerely,

Julz Brown

www.sellingcincinnatihomes.com/MyBlog.

Group Realtors

513.237.1072

Golden Dustpan winners



Doug and Shannon Sanker are the most recent winners of the Golden Dustpan! The Sankers are long-time Block Captains on lower Victor Street. They recently proposed and hosted a first for Block Captains - a midweek cleanup party. WOW!

This informal get-together was well-attended, made a big difference in the neighborhood, and a fun time was had by all afterwards. Doug and Shannon reminded us that being a Block Captain is all about having fun - and Clifton Heights is a better place to live thanks to all their efforts.

THANK YOU DOUG and SHANNON !!

Make a Difference Day

On Saturday October 25th, 40 volunteers gathered at Christy's outdoor beer garden and marched into the neighborhood to do not only trash pick up, but also a few major projects. Organized and led by Debby Herman and Kyle Canavera, volunteers were treated to coffee from Baba Budans and snacks as they organized into teams.

The Bellevue Park plantings and garden were tended by a team led by Cathy Raffles. Bob and Suzanne Sumemr led a team to clean and mulch the Chickasaw Plantings. Rob Neel led a crew to continue the work on the Fairview Park entrance wall and mulched another 8 yards of mulch and continued to clean the top of the wall off. Paul Gallagher and Truman Toland led had mulched the McMicken Plantings during the week, then spent that Saturday planting new redbuds along the woods. Jason Masterson led a team to continue to clean Schorr Alley. Dorothy

Wilson and Catherine Pleva led a team to work on the plantings at Old St George. And Daniel Lewis led the best team for clean ups!!

Thanks to all who came, and a special thanks to the UC Bearcat Ambassador Program.

Look for more clean ups in November.

Household hazardous waste and computer recycling

The Hamilton County Household Hazardous Waste collection/drop-off program ends Saturday November 22nd for the year. The program usually runs March 1st to the end of November.

Contact the Hazardous waste Hotline at 513-946-7700 to find what it is acceptable for drop off and look at the list below.

The drop off-site is at 4650 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45232.

Open: Tuesdays – 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.,
Saturdays – 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Acceptable Items

Paint
Pesticides/Fertilizers
Solvents/Thinners
Lawn/Pool Chemicals
Cleaners
Batteries
Prescription Drugs
Fire Extinguishers
Propane Tanks
Mercury
Fluorescent Bulbs
Driveway Sealer
Gasoline
Antifreeze
Motor Oil
Thermostats

Unacceptable Items

Radioactive Materials
Medical Waste
Explosives/Ammunition
Gun Powder
Heating Oil Tanks
Tires
Yardwaste
Garbage
Roofing Materials
Appliances
Computers/Electronics
Fuel Tanks
Unmarked Cylinders