

WEST PARK

MAGAZINE

WEST PARK KAMM'S NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT | FALL 2024



A scene from a late fall market in 2023.
Learn more about the Kamm's Corners Farmers Market on page 15



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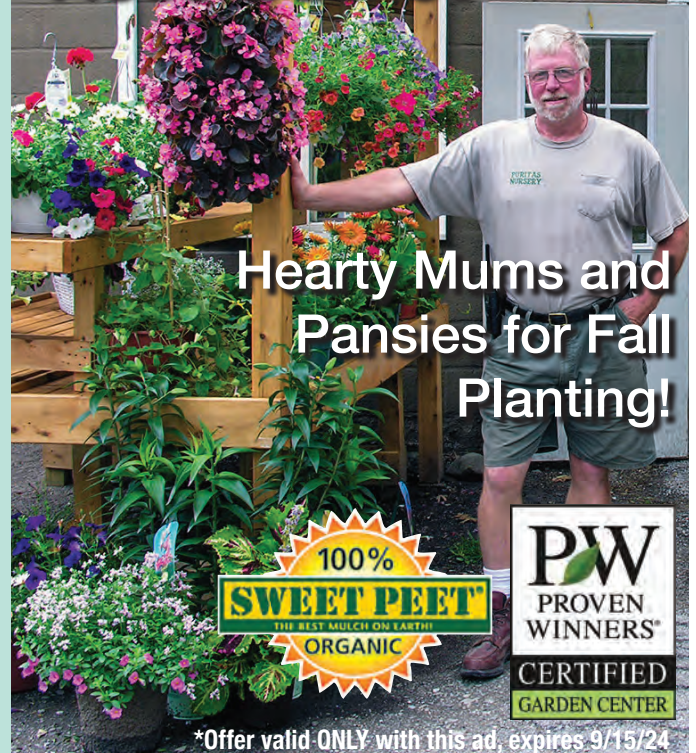
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LEARN MORE about our last cover which featured Kelly Crotty of Kelly's Creations in the CLE on page 12



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The mission of West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development is to cultivate a neighborhood where the diverse needs of its people are met through community-building, stewardship, and development initiatives.

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DEAR NEIGHBORS

This letter serves as my first neighborhood-wide communication to all our stakeholders. With that in mind, I'd like to start off with a bit of gratitude. Thank you for your passion. Thank you for your resiliency. Most of all, thank you for your commitment to this incredible neighborhood.

My time officially began with West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development (WPKND) at the tail end of May. Since then, I have had countless conversations with small business owners, organizational leaders and residents from all corners of Ward 17. The sense of pride imbedded in West Park & Kamm's Corners runs deep. So deep in fact, I wish it could be bottled and exported to the many other neighborhoods of Cleveland.

Community pride is the foundation for neighborhood development. This essential building block is what leads to engagement and ultimately empowerment. Even when we may disagree with one another on certain aspects of the neighborhood, we know that their thoughts and perspectives are rooted in their commitment to West Park — and that is something we can all build upon.

The summer months in the neighborhood were filled with many opportunities to engage. WPKND kicked off summer with the Hooley, our annual street festival held in the heart of Kamm's Corners. Our activations continued with the launch of the Kamm's Corners Farmers Market and Pop-Ups in the Parks event series. As we transition to fall, the farmer's market will keep running through mid-October and more opportunities to explore West Park will begin.

With mention of the past months, I'd be remised if I did not address the impact of August 6 and the days that followed. The storms that hit our neighborhood caused immense damage to homes, businesses and our robust tree canopy. The aftermath was not easy for any of us, compounded by the utility outages that continued for multiple days. WPKND will continue to advocate for additional resources for our community and I hope all of you are close to being fully recovered.

As a newbie myself, I learned that there is a handy guide built into the magazine. You can see our logo has four different colors to the left of this letter. Turns out, the creative team here at WPKND uses them to color coordinate each article in every issue. Articles with green trim represents businesses, the dark blue highlights WPKND organizational updates, the light blue serves as general community news, while the coral color signifies content focused on residents. Some may find that unworthy of a shoutout, but I just love a hidden Easter egg. I'm sure some of you do too!

I look forward to working together to build upon our community's strengths and continue fostering the pride that makes West Park and Kamm's Corners so special. Please don't hesitate to reach out—I'm excited to hear your ideas and collaborate for the future of our neighborhood.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "David".

David Robinson
Executive Director

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Welcoming New WPKND Board Members

By David Robinson

DR. BRIAN GALLAGHER

Business Representative



Established in West Park:

West Park Dental was established in 1961 and has been in the neighborhood ever since.

Favorite West Park Spot:

Souper Market for the best grilled cheese in the city (with soup of course)!

Day Job:

I became a dentist at West Park Dental in 2016.

Looking forward to:

Joining the West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development Board and being a part of the continued growth of the neighborhood!

ANDREA ARNEY

Resident Representative



Moved to West Park:

2017
Favorite West Park Spot:
I enjoy 5 Points Café; it is a great place to meet for a Saturday or Sunday coffee!

Day Job:

I am a Director of Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine at the Cleveland Clinic.

Looking forward to:

I am looking to collaborating with my neighbors to ensure West Park continues to be a vibrant and thriving community. Additionally, I look forward to every fall seeing the leaves change in the Rocky River Metroparks.

MELANIE KORTYKA

Resident Representative



Moved to West Park:

My wife and I moved to West Park in 2018 with our three dogs, however, my grandparents and parents grew up in West Park.

Our neighbors on Fernshaw are absolutely amazing people.

Favorite West Park Spot:

I attended Saint Joseph Academy for high school and love its beautiful campus, especially during the holiday season. Savor the Moment and 5 Points Coffee are my favorite weekend spots to walk or bike to.

Day Job:

I work for a non-profit land use and real estate organization called the Urban Land Institute. I am the director of the Cleveland district council and there are 53 district councils in major cities across the country.

Looking forward to:

I really enjoy biking and am looking forward to the Lorain Connector Trail being complete! I am also excited to become more engaged with West Park Kamm's as a new board member and look forward to supporting our neighborhood.

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Welcoming the New Board President at WPKND *By David Robinson*

Not only did this year bring new management to the staff of West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development, but the organization's Board of Directors also had a leadership transition at the end of June. WPKND is proud to share that Danielle Doza, Nick Aylward, Becky Eby, and Lori Koenig have been elected to the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, respectively.

Danielle Doza's two-year term as President officially began on July 1. Her ties to the neighborhood and overall leadership in the greater Cleveland community will bring a fresh perspective to the organization. She and her wife, Emily, have lived in West Park for a decade, having committed to the neighborhood for its walkability and sense of community.

Doza was one of the founders of the



Danielle Doza

now dormant "West Park Neighbor Night," where neighbors could discuss their concerns and develop solutions, together as a community. Although

the group is not operating today, they accomplished park cleanups, graffiti removal, and more. She has an innate ability to harness the energy of those around her and focus it on progress.

Professionally, Doza has had a career focused on community development and sustainability. Doza was co-founder and partner at a boutique consulting firm that focused on corporate sustainability for many years. In October of 2023, she was named Vice President of Sustainability and Environmental Services for the Cleveland Cavaliers. This role was the first senior-level position focused on sustainability throughout the NBA.

A native of Cleveland, Doza has earned degrees and certificates from The Ohio State University, Cleveland State University, and University of Pennsylvania. She and Emily live on the eastern edge of Ward 17. ■

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Save the Date for December 5, 2024



All money raised goes to support the work that WPKND does including:

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Local Coach Builds Back Sports Leagues at Gunning Recreation Center

By Joe Dill

Even though the summer is winding down, the activity calendar at Gunning Recreation Center is still bustling, in large part thanks to the work of Donnell Stephens. Over the last couple of years, Donnell has reignited several sports leagues at Gunning to give kids the opportunity to be active, make new friends, and learn how to be part of a team.

Donnell grew up in the West Park neighborhood and has fond memories of playing in leagues out of Gunning Rec. Although Donnell now lives in Tremont and is a Behavioral Specialist at Scranton Elementary School, when he wanted to find an outlet to connect with kids in his spare time he returned to his roots at Gunning.

His leagues are open to any children ages six to fourteen and at least one



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sport is available to play all year. Each league, aside from tackle football, is free to play. Donnell's goal is to raise enough funds to help buy the equipment associated with tackle football so that the rec center can have their own equipment on hand and make tackle football less expensive for kids to participate in.

The sports calendar continues this fall with indoor basketball kicking off in October through January, followed by flag football from March through June, and tackle football in June through October. Cheer and dance squads are also available to join.

For any adults curious about how they could become involved, there are plenty of opportunities for that, too. Currently, the greatest need is for coaches. Each league is currently seeing between 80-100 participants with numbers growing each season. Donnell's goal is to continue to add more teams to existing sports and establish new sports offerings as their volunteer capacity grows.

GET INVOLVED WEST PARK!

The leagues need coaches, volunteers, donations and sponsors to help our kids thrive. Get in touch with **Donnell Stephens at westunitedcle@gmail.com** and **GET IN THE GAME!**



Similarly, individual donations and team sponsorships go a long way in helping to support the work happening at Gunning Recreation. Businesses could sponsor a team and individuals could make monetary donations to the organization.

If your child is interested in registering for a league, stop by the front desk at Gunning Recreation to learn more.

If you'd like more information on making a donation, sponsoring a team, or volunteering to help coach or organize one of the leagues, you can reach out to Donnell at westunitedcle@gmail.com.

The leagues are currently working on building out a website, but in the meantime, you can follow them on Facebook or Instagram by searching West United CLE. ■

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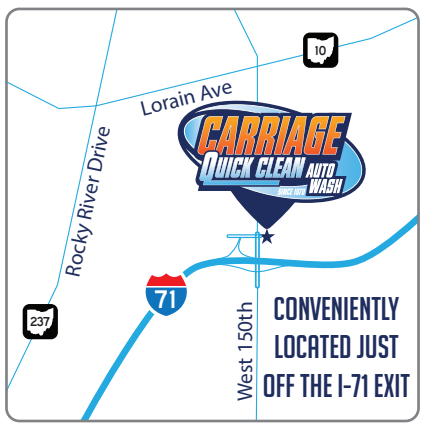
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Patrick Burke Expands Barber Shop Brand with West Park Barber School

By Joe Dill

Nearly two decades ago, Patrick Burke opened his first barber shop in the heart of Kamm's Corners. Since then, West Park Barber Shop has grown into a regional brand with locations stretching from Avon Lake to Eastlake. This summer, Patrick continued to expand his business with his latest venture, West Park Barber School.

Patrick was born and raised in the West Park neighborhood so when he decided to start his business in 2006, he didn't look any farther than the place he called home. A graduate of Our Lady of Angels and St. Edward's High School, his roots in the community are strong. That sense of community and familial ties is a common thread in Patrick's business.

With the grand opening of West Park Barber School this past July, Patrick and his team hope to continue to grow

the region's network of trained barbers. As West Park Barber expands in the future, the goal is for graduates of the school to become members of the team at one of the regional barber shops.

Now at the end of a nearly one-million-dollar investment, the school is ready to enroll as many as forty-four students at one time. Students can enroll at any time and should expect to complete their training in roughly ten months if they are full-time students. In total, the course requires 1800 credit hours.

Inside the facility, the main floor contains twenty-two stations with two students assigned to each one. Additionally, there is a classroom for lectures and a training room where students learn technical skills and chemical processes. Students spend ninety days in training before they are on the cutting floor



West Park Barber School's lecture classroom.



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working with clients. Once students complete their ninety days of training, half of their day is spent in class and the other half working with clients.

Students can expect to not only learn the technical skills required to be a barber, but also how to find success in the business. West Park Barber's approach will be a holistic one, teaching students about financial planning, filing taxes, and how to operate as an independent contractor within a barber shop. Patrick's hope is that graduates of the school are fully prepared to manage their careers with all the tools they need.

The school is not just a training ground for barbers but for other instructors as well. In addition to Patrick and his business partner Jennifer Scibana, West Park Barber School is training four instructors working towards earning their instructor license. In the future, the team hopes to have up to eight teachers at the West Park location. Patrick has a goal of opening three to five schools in Ohio, so building his



Students learn technical skills and chemical processes in the training room.

network of instructors is important for future growth.

The school will offer a full range of services to clients including cuts, beard trims, colors, gray coverage, and perms. Women's services are also available. As a way to support the community, fire, police, and EMS workers are eligible for free haircuts. Building on other philanthropic endeavors Patrick and his team undertake through their charitable organization, West Park Barber Charities,

his plans for the school include outreach programs to engage youth, residents, and partner organizations alike in community building and mentorship.

West Park Barber School is located at 3873 Rocky River Drive. For the time being, West Park Barber School is for walk-in appointments only. Individuals interested in enrolling at West Park Barber School can visit westparkbarberschool.com for more information. ■



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History of a Neighborhood Staple: Public House

By Joe Dill

In the ever-changing landscape of bars and restaurants, one constant in the West Park scene is Public House. The current ownership team of Therese Chambers-Arth, Kevin Arth, and Sean Hearn recently celebrated their twenty-second anniversary as owners, however, Public House's history in the neighborhood reaches back a few decades more.

A neighborhood staple since the 1970s, Public House was previously owned by Therese's cousin. When the opportunity came to purchase the bar in the early 2000s, Therese and her husband Kevin stepped in to take the reins. Though owning a bar was not something they forecasted for themselves, the Public House's history with their family was something they weren't ready to let go.



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Early days of The Public House.

The restaurant's history with the neighborhood is something they are proud to be a steward of, as well. They like to describe their space as a "regular-forward bar." Many of the customers who regularly patronize Public House know the staff by name and have come to rely on Public House's seven-day-a-week service. Following the pandemic, many bars and restaurants had to reduce their hours of operation

to adjust to changing customer habits and staffing shortages, but Public House has found a way to make their regular schedule work thanks to their patrons and staff.

Some members of the team have been there for more than ten years, while the cooking staff has stayed the same since 2019. That continuity allows customers to know what to expect when they dine and drink at Pub-

lic House and for ownership to be able to focus on the experience folks have while they are there. There is a place for everyone at Public House which is most easily felt in the relaxed atmosphere and casual dining menu.

In addition to the hearty sandwiches and home-style soups, daily and seasonal specials offer something new no matter what day of the week you dine. Recently, Public House has established a partnership with another West Park business, Farm Dog Fresh, to purchase locally grown, fresh produce to incorporate into their Monday chef specials.

Partnerships like that help to continue to expand their customer base. They say their family of patrons grows best by word of mouth and the folks who bring their friends and family by to experience Public House's atmosphere.

Public House is located at 17219 Lorain Avenue and is open seven days a week, 11 am–2:30 am. Stop in anytime to enjoy their regular menu or seasonal specials throughout the year! ■

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Meet the Cover Star: Kelly's Creations in the CLE

By Molly Crawford

Learn more about the woman featured on our last cover of *West Park Magazine*! Kelly Crotty, owner of Kelly's Creations in the CLE, has been in West Park for 15 years and in business for seven, becoming a neighborhood name in the process.

Life did not begin in West Park for Kelly; in fact, it didn't even start on the West Side. The Concord native attended Kent State University before following a couple of her sorority sisters to Lakewood. This is when her love for gardening blossomed. "I moved into a duplex, I was upstairs, and my neighbor's downstairs had planted some nice flowers, and they had some herbs and I was like, oh, I think I'm going to do that."

In the following years, Kelly finished a business degree and moved to West Park, buying her house in 2009. She also began working for an online gardening platform teaching courses in managing and owning a garden consulting business as well as courses in methods of growing and planting. "After several years it came to this point where I've got students that have become more successful than me by doing what I'm teaching them because I'm teaching them and not doing what I need to be doing in my own business, and that was a lightbulb." In February of 2017, Kelly took the plunge and became a full-time small business owner.

Initially, Kelly was doing mostly in-ground landscaping design and installations, but her services soon grew to include produce gardening as well. The community was a vital support for her in those early days of the business, particularly neighborhood Facebook groups and pages. Initially, she would respond to posts from others having issues with their plants and give them advice or offer to help. Before long, it grew to a scale that she decided to expand her business to include these services. "People were so supportive, they



Kelly Crotty and the garden beds in the front of her house in West Park. Below are two examples of designs done for her clients.

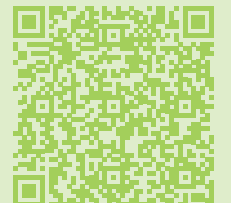
gave me a chance when I was 100% transparent and said I haven't done this or that, but I know I can accomplish this for you, and they recommended me to their friends. There's no better marketing than word of mouth."

Her business continued to grow and her demand with it, and eventually Kelly knew it was time for a change, so she narrowed her work to focusing on Kitchen Gardens. Kitchen Gardens consist of above-ground beds that are densely packed with home-grown food. "It's meant to be easily accessible. Here in West Park, that's easy, we have small yards, but it's also meant to be a place that you want to spend time in, so you're looking at stuff almost daily." Kelly herself has several beds that make up her kitchen garden, including beds in her front yard and on the side of her house. "I have a passion for learning how to



grow your own food, and living where I live, I wanted to prove that you could do it in an urban setting and grow a lot of it. I'm not buying produce right now, I'm just eating what's out of my garden." ■

To learn more about Kelly's Creations in the CLE and sign up for her newsletter, which includes an introduction guide to growing seasonal food, scan the QR code at right or visit kellyscreationsinthecle.com.



New Restaurant Viva Vallarta Opens in Warren Village

By Joe Dill

Warren Village recently got a little more flavor thanks to the opening of a new bar and restaurant, Viva Vallarta. The team behind Si Señor on Lorain Avenue expanded its footprint in the neighborhood with its take on a Mexican restaurant specializing in seafood.

The space's festive interior makes you feel like you've stepped into a resort as soon as you enter, and the menu's food and drink offerings add to the atmosphere. Multiple authentic dishes featuring fresh fish and Mexican flavors are available with one highlight being Viva Vallarta's fish soups.

Viva Vallarta regularly hosts live



music nights with local performers for guests to enjoy. Karaoke and paint classes help to fill out their calendar for folks looking for an interactive activity while dining out. Viva Vallarta also hosts special events like viewing parties for the World Cup.

Viva Vallarta is located at 3364 Warren Road, Cleveland, OH 44111. The space is open Monday through Thursday 11am-10pm, Friday and Saturday 11am-2am and Sundays 11am-12am. Lunch specials are available Monday through Friday 11am-3pm. ■

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Opening Doors: Homebuyer and Seller Workshop Preps Residents for Success

By Allison Woods

On the evening of July 10, West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development partnered with area ReMax Traditions Realtor Anna Lee Rindskopf to host an insightful workshop for residents interested in buying or selling a home. The event drew a handful of West Park residents who gained valuable insights from Anna Lee about the current housing market, strategies for making offers, working with lenders, and navigating the inspection process. Participants arrived with their own specific questions, allowing Anna Lee to provide individualized advice and guidance. The collaborative environment also allowed residents to discuss their next steps with both Anna Lee and fellow participants. Thank you to Anna Lee for facilitating such a lively and informative meeting. If you are interested in homeowner resources and missed this session, please check our website and Facebook page for upcoming announcements about future workshops. ■



Anna Lee Rindskopf (middle) with the group of workshop participants.



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Sept. 8 | Buckeye Fresh! –

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Sept. 15 | WIC – Families who use WIC are eligible for a booklet of \$5 coupons totaling \$30 in free produce coupons on each distribution date.



Sept. 15 | WIC Perks – Families who use WIC are eligible for an additional \$20 in free produce vouchers, along with a free cooking utensil on days WIC Perks is joining WIC FMNP at the markets.

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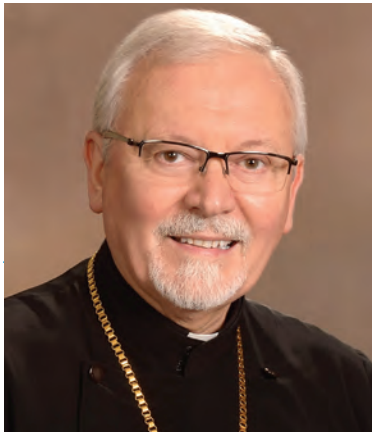


Meet Some of Our Community Faith Leaders in West Park

By Rebekah Ferro

One of the many amazing parts of our West Park neighborhood is the number of communities of faith that call West Park home. For this issue, we would

like to take some time to highlight the outstanding leaders of the different faith communities within West Park, although this list is far from complete. ■



THE VERY REV. DR. REMUS GRAMA – ST. MARY ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

Father Grama has been serving as the parish priest at St. Mary for 35 years. Born in Romania, he came to America as a graduate student in 1980. He felt the call to stay in America and be ordained as a clergy. Father Grama notes “Leadership is something you grow into, with perspiration, reliability, and sacrifices. I praise God for all things! God gave me the vocation of being a peacemaker and I responded.” Fr. Grama loves the history, culture, and people of his parish. As the oldest Romanian Orthodox parish established in the United States, St. Mary serves as a cultural center for many people in West Park. The parish includes a Culture and Romanian Ethnic Art Museum, which people can visit by appointment, and tells the story of Romanian immigration to America. Fr. Grama is proud of his multi-generational congregation, which has a blend of those born in America, as well as those who have immigrated to America at all different times. He loves how connected his parish is with West Park as well, offering an extremely popular and well-loved Fish Fry every Lenten season, as well as the St Mary Romanian Festival in mid-August. He describes West Park as “friendly,” “a great place to grow a family,” and calls West Park his “second home.” Outside of work, Fr. Grama has a deep love and appreciation for gardening, citing his village roots as the source of his love. He notes “There is nothing better than a tomato harvested as the fruit of one’s labor.” He also has a love of reading.



THE REV. JASON THOMPSON, SENIOR PASTOR – WEST PARK UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Pastor Jason Thompson has been serving at West Park UCC for seven years. On his ministry and becoming a faith leader, Pastor Jason notes “It wasn’t really a choice I made, but one that God made for me. I felt God nudging me into ministry for a long time, but it finally got to the point where God said, ‘Time’s up! You’re doing this.’ So, I listened to God and became a pastor; I still do my best to follow God in all things.” West Park United Church of Christ just recently celebrated their 165th Anniversary, as recognized by Councilman Charles Slife. Pastor Jason loves the people of his church most of all. He appreciates that he can share his authentic self, including his triumphs and failures. “I really like that the people here accept my silly antics and goofiness. I truly believe we can have fun and serve God at the same time.” He loves the connection with West Park as well. West Park UCC has multiple ministries serving the community, especially those in need, including the Community Cupboard food pantry, as well as their yearly mitten line. “The neighbors here are really big on relationships. I love that about West Park. Over the years, we have built partnerships with so many other organizations, both religious and secular. I am grateful for the sense of community that we are all in this together.” Outside of work, Pastor Jason loves to travel to destinations close to home and abroad. He also loves to show off pictures of his cats!

IN NEED OF HOME REPAIRS?

WPKND CAN HELP! SEE PAGE 22-23



FATHER JOHN PFEIFER — ST. PATRICK'S PARISH AND ST. VINCENT DE PAUL PARISH

Father John Pfeifer has been serving at both St. Patrick's Parish and St. Vincent de Paul Parish for five years. He has always known deep down that he wanted to make a difference in people's

lives. He credits his parents and the way they lived and loved as the source of this desire. After exploring different careers, he "felt this tug in (his) heart to make the difference through helping people to know God's love for them." St. Patrick's Parish recently celebrated their 175th anniversary and has been a staple of the neighborhood for a long time. They offer various community programs such as sports programs, fundraisers that support Cleveland police and firefighters, and a hunger center. St. Vincent de Paul recently celebrated their 100th Anniversary as well. Father Pfeifer loves the community of both parishes and finds that they are "filled with good, hard-working people who love God and who seek to love and worship him as best they can. Each parish is its own unique community with its own history, story, and personality and I am blessed to be a part of each of them." Father Pfeifer finds West Park to be a "welcoming and vibrant community, rich in history and tradition." Father Pfeifer notes, "When I first arrived in West Park almost 5 years ago, I felt like a part of the community almost right away and I am blessed to be here!" Outside of work, Father Pfeifer enjoys playing the guitar, hiking in nature, and playing with his dog, Angel. He also enjoys creating art through painting and colored pencils.



REVEREND BOB McCANLESS — HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

Reverend Bob McCanless is a newer pastor to the West Park neighborhood, having begun his ministry at Holy Cross Lutheran Church on September 4th of last year. He describes his call to min-

istry as one he tried to run away from for many years, having careers as a textile engineer and in television and radio before deciding to go to seminary. Holy Cross has multiple ministries that serves the community, including Holy Cross Lutheran School, and their Heavenly Harvest food pantry. Pastor McCanless loves many aspects of his church, including the open and airy architecture of the sanctuary, the organ and organist, the bell choir, and the stained-glass windows. He also noted that Holy Cross is the first church he has served in that has air-conditioning, which is very welcome in the summer! He describes the members of Holy Cross as "wonderfully faithful." He loves meeting the families of the students who attend Holy Cross Lutheran School and learning more about the Cleveland area, and West Park. He describes West Park as a place that is "very easy to get around, shop, walk, & enjoy the community." He also calls West Park "very peaceable with friendly people." Pastor McCanless says that he had a lot more hobbies before a stroke

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in 2021, but he enjoyed golf, fishing with his children, and attending Pittsburgh Pirates games. He also has a love for classic cars and racing. "I spent 21 years in Pittsburgh before coming here. I 'restomodded' an old Dodge Ramcharger and enjoyed off-roading there. I grew up a gearhead in NASCAR country in NC so turning a wrench has long been an enjoyable hobby." He also builds his own computers, enjoys collecting books, target shooting, and is a published author on firearms, Boy Scout patches, and theology. He hopes to publish a book with over 42 years of his own poetry. He is also a SKYWARN weather spotter, and chased his first tornado in May of 1996, one month before *Twister* was released in theaters.



FATHER ROBERT RAMSER – OUR LADY OF ANGELS

Father Robert Ramser has served at Our Lady of Angels Parish for a little over two years. He describes his call to become a faith leader as one that he has always had. "I felt called at a young age to consider the priesthood and toward the end of

my time at John Carroll for my undergrad I contacted the Seminary for the Diocese of Cleveland. I was ordained for the Diocese in 2015 and the rest is history." Originally a seminary for the Franciscan Friars, Our Lady of Angels has been a part of West Park for over 100 years. "This is a wonderful parish community and dedicated and faithful people who want to grow closer to The Lord and serve those in need both spiritually and physically. They are parishioners who want to see their faith in action and want to help others know the goodness of God by sharing their talents and

faith." As a non-West Parker, Father Ramser still has come to call West Park home. "The West Park Community is both close-knit in its traditions and values while being open to new people coming into the neighborhood and adding to the mosaic of the area." Outside of work, Father Ramser enjoys spending time in nature, reading, and relaxing with friends and family. He is also a big *Star Wars* fan!



BETHANY ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH SAYS FAREWELL TO PASTOR ROBERT FERRO

After faithfully serving as the Senior Pastor of Bethany English Lutheran Church for 23 years, Pastor Robert Ferro has decided to begin a new adventure with a new congregation

in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Pastor Ferro felt the call to become a faith leader while in his hometown of Boardman, OH. "I felt called to share God's love with people through worship, music, education, service, and fellowship." Pastor Ferro moved to West Park with his family to a house on Marwood Avenue in March of 2001. He previously served at St John's Lutheran Church in Anchor, IL. Pastor Ferro describes West Park as "a great community to raise a family" and "very accessible to all the wonderful activities and opportunities in Cleveland." Bethany English Lutheran Church has been a part of the West Park community for 95 years. Pastor Ferro has enjoyed the wonderful people of Bethany that he has ministered to and befriended over the last 23 years. He also appreciates the various music programs of Bethany, including the organ and organist, as well as the Chancel Choir, the Rainbow Ringers children's bell choir, and the many musicians who have come and played at Bethany for holidays and special services. Pastor Ferro has a deep love of education and has taught many adult forums, confirmation classes, and bible studies, including The Bethel Series. Outside of work, he enjoys "watching classic movies, traveling, reading, and going to Blossom Music Center to hear the world-renowned Cleveland Orchestra." Pastor Ferro has been a faithful leader within the West Park community, and we wish him well in his future endeavors.

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Checking in on West Park Pollinator Pathways: A Year Later

By Emily Pikturna

In the fall 2023 issue, the West Park Green Team shared their latest initiative called the West Park Pollinator Pathways. This project resulted in 23 households receiving 290 native plants total to plant in their yards. Keep reading to learn how three residents' gardens are doing a year after they were planted.



The Torres family with their pollinator garden.

MEGHAN TORRES

The Torres family has lived in West Park for a decade surrounded by wonderful neighbors. Meghan resides with her three children, dog, and cat. Her corner house, adorned with expansive grass, prompted her desire to reduce lawn maintenance time while creating a welcoming habitat for pollinators.

Meghan had been interested in native plants and pollinator gardens for many years, yet had never known where or how to start her own garden. The opportunity arose when she stumbled upon a post on the neighborhood page about a free pollinator garden. Applying with hopeful anticipation but tempered expectations, Meghan was overjoyed when she received the news of her selection.

Her excitement was shared with her 5-year-old daughter, her enthusiastic partner in weeding and watering, as well as her sons, aged 9 and 7, who delighted in the newfound wildlife visitors such as birds, bees, bugs, and butterflies. In their garden are Black-Eyed Susan, Blanket flower, Coreopsis, Milkweed, Blue Vervain, Cornflower and more!



SAM RADEL

Sam and her family had a lot of fun participating in the pollinator pathways program. The garden was especially a new adventure for Sam's husband, who enthusiastically took on the task of planting all the plants. Even though it was his first venture

into gardening, he thoroughly enjoyed his new hobby. The garden quickly became a hub for large bumblebees, providing the family with a delightful reason to spend more time outdoors with their 9-month-old son.

Sam and her husband have lived in West Park for about two years, and welcomed their son last October. Many neighbors have likely seen Ryan, her husband, walking with the stroller multiple times a day. Sam's decision to join the pollinator program stemmed from her desire to adopt a more environmentally supportive approach to landscaping. Watching their garden thrive has been a source of excitement and fulfillment for the whole family. Sam planted Bee Balm, Blue Vervain, Black-Eyed Susan, Wild Bergamot, amongst others!

CAITLIN WALSH

Caitlin Walsh and her family adore their pollinator garden, which attracts an array of bees and butterflies to their yard, benefiting their vegetable garden as well. The garden's vibrant, colorful flowers bring them immense joy. Caitlin has Swamp Milkweed, Butterfly Milkweed, Black-Eyed Susan, Blanket flower, Purple Coneflower, Wild Bergamot, Cup Flower, Prairie Blazing Star and Cardinal Flower. ■



The bees have found a home in Caitlin Walsh's Blanket Flower

Middle Neighborhoods Program Invests in West Park

By Councilman Charles Slife



In the holiday 2023 issue, I introduced a new program targeting Cleveland's middle neighborhoods, one of which is West Park, with investments in residential, retail, and public space improvements. The middle neighborhood plan is aimed at creating growth in areas of the city that have been viewed as stable and not needing attention. With over \$10 million committed from multiple funders and multiple projects underway, Cleveland's middle neighborhood program is now in motion.

On the residential side of the program, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, who is administering the program, has be-

gun purchasing and doing gut rehabs of homes in middle neighborhoods to attract home buyers. On June 28, crews began the rehab work on the first of many homes to benefit from this program, and it happens to be in West Park! This home, like many in the neighborhood, is solid, but on the older side. These investments will help incentivize buyers to choose Cleveland over surrounding suburbs since homes will be move-in ready with modern amenities.

At the same time, the middle neighborhood program will be renovating retail spaces to attract small businesses who are looking for a move-in ready space today. Oftentimes, businesses are expected to complete renovations and improvements to a space themselves. Too often our available commercial spaces don't meet the needs and expectations of the market. For small busi-

nesses just starting out, this expected investment can make or break them. In my opinion, places like Lorain Avenue and Rocky River Drive are ripe for these types of projects. West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development is working with property owners and Cleveland Neighborhood Progress to identify specific storefronts to invest in.

Middle Neighborhoods are important corners of our large city. They have stable housing stocks and solid retail districts that offer a strong quality of life while also contributing tax funds to the city budget, CMSD, and more. I frequently hear concerns that City Hall doesn't focus enough attention on neighborhoods like West Park — great neighborhoods that we want to keep strong. The middle neighborhood program will help to ensure that Ward 17 is positioned for continued success. ■

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Heart surgery – close to home at Fairview Hospital.



Inderjit Gill, MD

When it comes to heart surgery – from common procedures to highly advanced surgical techniques for more complex conditions – the multidisciplinary team at Cleveland Clinic Fairview Hospital has the ability to take patients through their operation and provide outstanding clinical results.

“Open heart surgery is a highly successful surgery that enables patients to live longer and lead more active, productive lives,” says Inderjit Gill, MD, a cardiothoracic surgeon at Fairview Hospital.

Dr. Gill and other Fairview Hospital heart surgeons specialize in:

- **Coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG)** – Also known as heart bypass surgery, CABG is a procedure to restore blood flow to areas of your heart. CABG creates a detour around artery blockages using blood vessels from other parts of your body.
- **Surgical aortic valve replacement (SAVR)** – This surgery treats aortic valve disease, or problems with the “door” connecting your heart

to your aorta. SAVR gives you a new aortic valve that is either mechanical (made of carbon and steel) or bioprosthetic (made of tissue).

- **Transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR)** – This less invasive procedure is an alternative to SAVR. In TAVR, a new manufactured valve is inserted into your existing aortic valve.

“At Fairview Hospital, Cleveland Clinic heart surgeons work with cardiologists to assure that patients benefit from the latest procedures and treatments,” says Dr. Gill. “As a result, cardiac surgery at Fairview Hospital contributes to Cleveland Clinic’s 3-star ranking from The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), which reflects outcomes that are better than expected for CABG and aortic valve replacement.”

Visit FairviewHospital.org/Heart to learn more about heart care services at Fairview Hospital. For an appointment with a heart surgeon at Fairview Hospital or West Valley Medical Building, call 440.333.8600.

PAIN IN YOUR HAND, WRIST OR ELBOW? KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP.



Youssra Marjoua, MD

Pain is your body’s way of telling you something is wrong. But it doesn’t always tell you exactly what’s wrong and whether you need medical treatment.

Orthopaedic surgeon Youssra Marjoua, MD, explains what to look for when experiencing pain in your hand, elbow or wrist and when to contact a healthcare provider for further evaluation.

“There are many causes of pain, and in the absence of injury you may develop pain from inflammation, arthritis or an underlying metabolic issue like gout or diabetes-related neuropathy,” says Dr. Marjoua. “In the setting of overuse, pain may be due to other conditions, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, tennis or golfer’s elbow, muscle strains and ligament sprains.”

To help narrow down the cause of your pain, start by asking yourself these questions:

- Does it hurt if you press on it?
- Does it hurt to move?
- Is it inflamed (reddened)?
- Is it swollen or stiff?
- How would you rate your pain on a scale from 1 to 10 (with 1 being minimal discomfort and 10 being extreme pain)?

If you answered “yes” to these questions or rated your pain a 6 or above, then it’s time to call the doctor.

For less serious symptoms, try treatment at home using the RICE method: Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation. You may also want to take over-the-counter pain medication like ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

Dr. Marjoua sees patients at Cleveland Clinic Fairview Hospital. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Marjoua, call 216.444.2606.

West Park Ward 17 Homeowner Resources



Need assistance with the expenses of homeownership or are looking to make home improvements? **Reach out to WPKND. We can help!**

Visit westparkkamms.org/live/maintain-a-home.

The **Healthy Homes Initiative** is a partnership between the City of Cleveland and community development corporations to improve the quality of life of residents and the city's housing stock. Through the program, West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development works closely with residents and landlords in Ward 17 to connect folks with resources, education, and training to help support safe and quality housing for all. **indicates income qualifying programs*

For General Housing Support, contact:
CJ Demchak, 216-252-6559
or CJ@westparkkamms.org

For Senior Home Repair grants, contact: Allison Woods,
216-252-6559
or allison@westparkkamms.org

| | |
|---|--|
| Homestead Water/ Sewer Discount* | Secure a lower fixed charge and consumption rate for seniors and/or permanent disabled individuals. |
| Senior Service Program (Ward 16 & 17)* | Schedule services such as gutter cleaning and lawn care for senior and disabled residents. |
| Water Affordability Program* | Offers a 40% discount on all standard water charges. |
| Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)* | HEAP assists eligible low-income residents with their winter home heating costs using natural gas, electric, oil, kerosene, or wood. |
| Lead Hazard Control Program (LHC) | Provides lead risk assessments, identifies lead-based paint and provides grants to control lead-based paint hazards. |
| Delinquent Tax Payment Plan | Payment plans are available for homeowners who live in their homes. Landlords may be eligible for installment plans (up to 24 months). |
| Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP)* | Offers energy efficient measures designed to decrease utility bills & improve energy deficiencies. |



PAINT DISCOUNT
WPKND has teamed with our local Sherwin-Williams store in Kamms Plaza to offer discounts on paint and painting supplies. All residents of Ward 17 are eligible for the discount. To receive a voucher, contact WPKND at 216-252-6559, limit one per household.

SMOKE ALARMS
Be sure your home is safe with smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. The Cleveland Division of Fire has teamed up with the Red Cross Operation Save-A-Life Program to offer smoke detectors and fire safety information.
Contact 216-361-5535 for assistance



| | |
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| Cleveland 50/50 Sidewalk Residential Replacement | Partnership between the city and residents. Eligible repairs include sidewalks, driveway aprons, & curbs at the end of driveways. |
| Cleveland Restoration Society (CRS) | A low-interest (under 2%), fixed-rate, equity-based loan for maintaining & improving homes 50+ years. Interior & exterior projects qualify. Plus, free technical assistance on questions related to home conditions or repair. |
| Housing Enhancement Loan Program (HELP) | Provides home improvement loans, at 3% points below normal bank rates, for homeowners. No restrictions on a borrower's income and few limitations on what improvements can be made to a property. |
| West Park Sherwin-Williams Paint Program | Discounts on paint and painting supplies. All those living in Ward 17 are eligible. Limit one per household. |
| Senior Home Repair* | Small exterior repair grants of up to \$500 for seniors and adults with disabilities. Grants and grant size are income-qualifying. |
| Contractor List | Looking for help with a project at home? WPKND has a list of local contractors and tips for hiring one. |
| Cleveland Exterior Paint Program* | Provides free vouchers for paint and supplies to Cleveland homeowner-occupants and renters to paint the exterior of their house. |
| Senior Homeowner Assistance Program (SHAP)* | Grant available to low-income senior/disabled homeowners with houses in need of health, safety, and maintenance repairs such as roofs, porches, ramps, electrical or plumbing work. |
| Age-Friendly Home Improvement Program (AFHIP)* | Program for seniors/disabled homeowners to address critical home repair or maintenance projects. |
| Healthy Home Production Program (HHP) | HHP provides a grant to moderate-income Cleveland residents who have 80% of the Area Median Income and reside in (and own) single or two-family homes in need of health and safety repairs. |

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Cleveland Police, District 1 Office: 216-623-5100

Cleveland Police, Non-emergency: 216-621-1234

Cleveland Fire, Non-emergency HQ: 216-664-6800

Cleveland Fire, Smoke Alarms: 216-361-5535

Cleveland Refuse: 216-664-3717

Cleveland Animal Control: 216-664-3069

Councilman Charles Slife's Office: 216-664-4239

Cleveland Water Department: 216-664-3130

Cleveland Department of Aging: 216-664-2833

Gunning Recreation Center: 216-420-7900

Cuyahoga County Auditor Call Center: 216-443-7452

Cuyahoga Co. Real Property Office: 216-443-7010

Social Service Referral: 211

Send a Love Letter to Your Community – Volunteer!

By CJ Demchak

Want to become a volunteer?

Reach out me – CJ Demchak at 216-252-6559 or email CJ@westparkkamms.org.



Growing up in rural Arkansas, volunteering has always been something close to my heart. The phrase, “It takes a village” was more than an old adage, it was how folks got stuff done. Whether it was raising a barn for Mrs. Helen Crossnose or digging a ditch for the new French drain at the church — the whole community showed out. I didn’t understand the

significance of what we had done until I was older, but as a boy, I knew that I had fun doing it. Nowadays, I give a lot of my time to volunteering both in West Park and other places, but if there is one truth I have come to know in my time working in this neighborhood: West Park has the best volunteers. It is a testament to the real sense of pride that many have that so many folks are

willing to put in time and effort to help their neighbors and the neighborhood.

Over the past few years, I have had the pleasure of organizing and overseeing groups of proud residents and community members who come together to make a real change in their neighborhood. From the tearing down and disposing of a large above ground pool, scraping and painting a half a dozen porches and a couple of garages, dozens of yard clean-ups, litter clean-ups, flower plantings and driveway shovelings. Not to mention the volunteers setting up and tearing down the Farmer’s Market every Sunday, the Hooley, or Pop-Ups in the Park. Oh, and don’t forget the Green Team who spent last summer planting pollinator gardens around the neighborhood.

This is all to say — our volunteers help make it all happen. So, the next time you’re out at Pop-Ups in the Park or grabbing a beer from our tent at The Hooley — Thank a volunteer, because sometimes it really does take a village. ■

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From Dull to Dazzling: Seniors' Home Gets a Fresh Coat

By Allison Woods

At West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development, one of our neighborhood development initiatives is the Senior Home Repair (SHR) program. This program offers up to \$500 in grant funds to low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities for exterior home repairs. This past summer, Susan, a senior resident of West Park, reached out for assistance with repainting her porch, ramp, and handrails. Struggling to find an affordable solution on her fixed income and unable to complete the sizable task herself, Susan found herself in a bind. Our SHR program stepped in to help, purchasing quality paint and supplies and providing labor at no cost to her. After the project was completed, Susan shared, "I highly recommend this program to any senior or disabled person." If you are an older adult or



Susan's porch before (left) and after.

an individual with a disability and are interested in learning more about our SHR program, please reach out to Allison Woods at 216-252-6559 to see if you qualify! ■

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WPKND Housing Team Transforms Senior's Yard

By CJ Demchak and Allison Woods

A summer staple for West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development is hosting housing volunteer projects. These projects allow for us to provide support and aid to residents who do not qualify for existing programs or whose issues fall outside the scope of those programs. With our new Executive Director starting in May, it seemed like the perfect time to kick off the summer with a volunteer project doubling as a team building activity. Sally, a senior resident, called in late spring to ask if she could get some help with her front flower beds and landscaping. She told us that the landscaping was installed and always kept up by her husband, but since he became sick, she just hasn't been able to keep up with them on her own. When we arrived, it quickly became apparent that



Sally's front yard before our team tackled the overgrown landscaping.

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Your tax-deductible donation helps continue programming and events like the Kamm's Corners Farmers Market, Pop-ups in the Parks, The Hooley™, and Explore West Park Walks. Together we can support our most vulnerable residents by assisting seniors in our community through the senior home repair program and connecting those in need to the resources essential to their well-being. By helping existing businesses to thrive and fostering new business growth, we can ensure our commercial corridors have a vibrant future.

On behalf of the staff and board of West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development, we are thankful for your contribution! You can donate online with the QR code or mail back the form below!



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simply pulling weeds wasn't going get it done. Thankfully, WPKND received a small grant from Union Home Mortgage allowing us to complete this transformative landscaping project.

This funding bought mulch and weed-blocking fabric, which made the whole project possible in an afternoon. In just under three hours, the group was able to rework the frontage of this home. When it was all done, Sally told us, "It looks like a brand new yard!" We

WPKND received a small grant from Union Home Mortgage allowing us to complete this transformative landscaping project.



were happy to help complete this project and are thankful to Union Home Mortgage for helping us achieve such a drastic change for a resident in need! If

you would like to sign up to volunteer with us on housing projects like this one, contact CJ Demchak at cj@westparkkamms.org or call 216-252-6559. ■

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