

60 YEARS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The History of Kennedy Heights Community Council: Part 2

by John Bange

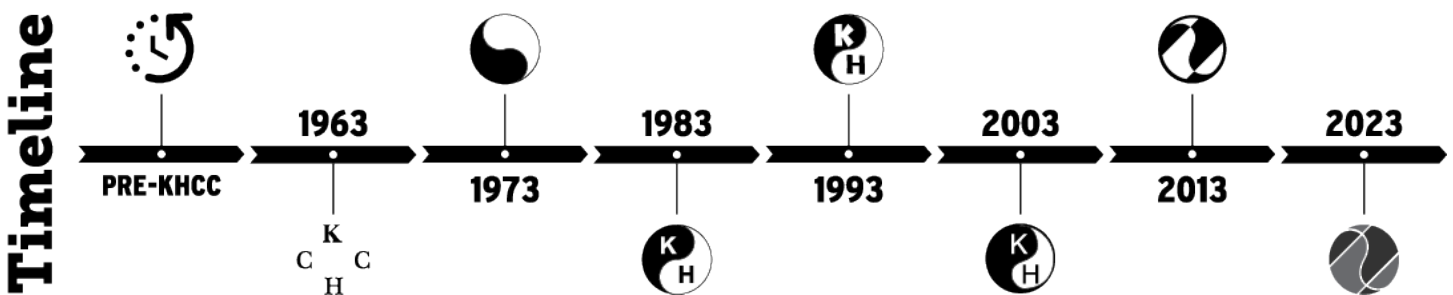
The Kennedy Heights neighborhood has a long tradition of community activism. Near the end of World War II, as Cincinnati made plans for the post-war reconstruction, an agricultural area ripe for development between Kennedy Heights and neighboring Eastwood Circle was seen as a potential industrial site. General Motors, with its Norwood Fisher Body plant three miles to the west, took out options on the land with plans to build a stamping facility there. Opposition rose as the surveyor's flags went up. A coalition comprised of upper middle-class homeowners from Kennedy Heights and Eastwood Circle, along with respective leaders of the Children's Home Orphanage and the private Hillsdale Girls School came together to oppose industrial use for the site. After a hard-fought political and public relations battle, General Motors withdrew.

Concerned about future industrial development in the area, Kennedy Heights and Eastwood Circle residents formed the Kennedy Heights Eastwood Development Company (KHEDC), purchased ninety-eight acres of the land, and planned to develop the area with single family homes. Eventually, KHEDC sold the land to the Warner-Kanter Corporation of Birmingham, Alabama. Warner-Kanter built the Stratford Manor (later named Eastwood Village), an FHA financed apartment village of one thousand apartment units that opened in 1951. Working with city planners and the KHEDC, Warner-Kanter succeeded in

getting the Cincinnati Board of Education to build a school on the development's periphery, the Eastwood School.

Throughout the 1950's, single family home construction was also greatly accelerated in the remaining open space in Kennedy Heights and in the unincorporated area adjacent to the community. At the end of the 1950's, housing related incidents aroused community concerns in Kennedy Heights. In February 1959, a home was bombed in an apparent dispute between numbers racketeers. In response, residents in the "normally law abiding" area established an interracial civic association. Melvin Thurman, an African American policeman, and William Funck, a white businessman, became co-chairs. Thurman asserted that the aim of the group was "simply to keep people in the rackets from moving into our community." He said, "We'd like to form a covenant among property owners . . . our main purpose is to keep our neighborhood clean and respectable." Newspaper reporter Betty Donovan wrote that "Everyone agrees the bombing had nothing to do with any racial dispute."

When the newly established Kennedy Heights Civic Association failed to take root, Ann Magorian, a Kennedy Heights resident and a member of the MFRC, urged staff members from the Committee to do something to help revive the organization. The 1959 bombing and the failure to establish a functioning community council contributed to the acceleration of white flight from the neighborhood. Continued real estate development kept alive efforts at community coalescence. Real estate developers, filling the demand for housing, continued apartment construction along Montgomery Road and along Kennedy Avenue, (continued on page 3)



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A Letter From Our President



Sharifah Tafari

Greetings neighbors,

It's that time of year for families to prepare for the end of the school year, graduation ceremonies and parties in May; the coming of summer, summer camps, vacations and Play in the Park in June. Also, June is the beginning of the new term for KHCC board members—congratulations! And thanks to everyone who voted in our elections last month. We look forward to continuing to serve you.

We hope that everyone who joined us at the Sap Run had a great time running, walking, biking or just enjoying the delicious breakfast with neighbors. Thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and energy to help make it a fun and successful event!

This month, join us for Green Up Day to help keep Kennedy Heights Park beautiful. And while we're in the beautification vibe and hopefully spending more time outdoors, maybe once a week or once a month, let's pick up any trash that we see around our yards, along the curbs, or on our block to help keep our whole neighborhood beautiful. "Many hands make light work." (African proverb)

And if you haven't attended a KHCC monthly meeting in a while, consider joining us either in person, virtually or by phone. We will continue to offer these hybrid meetings for the foreseeable future in order to provide accessibility to all of our neighbors. So, let's stay connected as we continue to live together in beloved community.

We'll see you in the Heights!

Peace,
Sharifah Tafari

Play in the Park Returns! Wednesdays, 6:30-8:00 PM at Kennedy Park

Celebrate summer with a series of six FUN and FREE events at Play in the Park! Through a partnership between local residents, Kennedy Heights & Pleasant Ridge Community Councils, Kennedy Heights Arts Center, Cincinnati Parks and Cincinnati Police, this annual summer tradition enriches community by bringing together our diverse residents and maximizing the use of our parks as safe places to connect with neighbors, friends and family.

Join your neighbors on Wednesdays, June 14, 21, 28 and July 12, 19, 26 from 6:30 – 8:00 PM in Kennedy Heights Park. These free events will feature live music, art-making, dance and other fun activities for all ages.

KHCC History (cont'd)

the two main thoroughfares in the neighborhood. Additional apartment construction occurred on a small lot in the heart of the expanding black section of the neighborhood. This development triggered a response from newly arrived African-American residents in the vicinity. Led by Cecil Wesley, Paul Henry, and George Rowe, they set up an ad hoc group determined to prevent further apartment development in Kennedy Heights. With the legal and political assistance of Theodore Berry*, a former city councilman and prominent African American attorney, they counted eighty vacant lots in the neighborhood and circulated a petition to upgrade all of the vacant lots outside of the business district to Residential-2, medium

density single family residences. Three hundred people signed the petition, enough to convince city council to upgrade their zoning.

**Mr. Berry was also Mayor of Cincinnati from 1972 to 1975*

Part 3 will tell the story of how the activists in Kennedy Heights worked together to build stability as people were forced to move due to several development programs.

Ernie Barbeau's Lifetime Achievement Award

by Amber Ziegler

Longtime Kennedy Heights resident Ernie Barbeau was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by Invest In Neighborhoods at the 2023 Neighborhood Summit on March 11, 2023. Among Ernie's numerous contributions to Kennedy Heights—too many to include here—are serving as the president of Kennedy Heights Development Corporation, serving as the president of Kennedy Heights Community Council, and serving on all three planning committees for the Kennedy Heights Community Plan, including the updated community plan that was approved by City Council in 2022.

This annual award recognizes "an individual, inside or outside of a

community organization, whose life and work has benefited all of Cincinnati, through creating inclusiveness, increasing the viability of community activities and organizations, and supporting neighborhoods and neighborhood leaders." Ernie was nominated by our Community Council.



Ernie accepting his award in March.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Green Up Day

5/20 - 9a-12p @ KH Park

Play in the Park

Wednesdays 6:30-8p, starting 6/14 @ Kennedy Heights Park

Discover Summer Kick Off

6/3 1-4p @ PR Library. Gia's Balloon Buddies 1-2. Family Storytimes 2-2:30. Lawn Games & more.

Storytime

Tuesdays @ PRLibrary. 10:30a (toddler), 11:15a (preschool). Craftivity 11a (all ages).

Adult Book Club

2p @ PR Library. 5/11 (Fuzz by Mary Roach). 6/8 (Title TBD).

Fantasmagoria Book Club

5/3 - 7p @ FERMETORIUM. Horror themed. Registration required.

Genealogy for Beginners

5/23, 6/2 - 7p @ PR Library. (Adults)

Paint Cafe

5/27 - 10:15a @ PR Lib. (Adult/Teen)

Sad, Sinister, and Seamy Side of Cincy

5/2 - 6:30p. @ PR Lib. (Adult)

Teens Create

5/1, 6/5 - 3:30p @ PR Library

Community Day

5/20 - 2-4p @ KHAC

KHAC Galleries

All That Jazz 6/2 - 8/24 @ Lindner
Color Breathing 6/10 - 8/12 @ KHAC

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Find more community news at:
kennedyheights.org





Lydia Morgan. Organizer of our Juneteenth celebrations.
Photo credit: Amanda Rossmann, Cincinnati Enquirer

about 350 people. She was the oldest of three, her siblings both brothers. She remembers it being fun growing up and was always outside. As the oldest, by nine years old she often found herself babysitting. But even before that she had other responsibilities that included cooking for the family. By the age of seven, she was cooking corn fritters and country ham. She'd feed the boys and leave food for her father when he would come in from working. She didn't know until she was older that her mother would get up and fix him a proper meal.

She went on to Bennett College in Greensboro, NC, and then to Montclair State University in New Jersey for her Masters. While going away to college on its own can be very exciting, it was particularly so for Lydia as she was able to receive the new wardrobe she had been promised if she went.

Lydia admired her parents. The Bible was foundational to the home, and on Sunday mornings she and her brothers had to recite a Bible verse, and they were not allowed to repeat. They were also given fourteen rows of their father's tobacco farm and all of the money that came from those fourteen rows was theirs to keep.

As a child, Lydia was president of the Home Ec. Club for three years, even though she only took it one year. She was the student council treasurer, a grader of math papers and entrusted to collect the monies from the popcorn machine. With all of the positive influence she had in her early school years, including experiencing her father's participation on the Black board of School, it is no wonder she became a teacher. She taught fifth graders in the sycamore School district and volunteered at Woodward for a while and was the council representative at Woodford LMDSC twice.

As a resident of KH, Lydia remembers that the Council grew out of a need due to redlining. The community was divided at that time by Montgomery Road. The Progressive Dinner was created to help that divide and she worked to get hosts for the dinner and also hosted almost every year. Lydia has served as the treasurer of Community Council, worked on the Sap Run and other fundraising events.

Lydia and Noel have been married 51 years and have two children.

Notable Neighbor: Lydia Morgan

by Christina Miller

Juneteenth only became a national holiday two years ago this June. However, Kennedy Heights has been celebrating it since 1988 and for more than 33 years our City's celebration of this historical event has been due to the untiring work of one of our own residents, Lydia Morgan. In our upcoming July edition of this newsletter, we'll share more about the event, but for now we want to tell you a bit about Lydia.

Lydia and Noel (Noel is a former editor of the Kennedy Heights newsletter) moved to KH around 1975. They have lived in their home on Orchard for about 46 years.

Lydia grew up on a farm in the small town of Bolivia, NC where there were three or four churches and only

History of the Kennedy Heights Landscape Awards

by Michele Dragga

The Kennedy Heights Landscape Awards has been showcasing some of the most beautiful front-yard gardens in the neighborhood for 35 years. Joyce Hibbard, a long-time resident and active member of the community, started the awards in 1988 and chaired the committee until 2006. She and three other judges would evaluate gardens that had been nominated by members of the community. Each of the five chosen winners would earn the honor of displaying a colorful yard sign designating their landscape as an award winner.

Judy Barbeau took over as chair of the committee after Joyce moved out of the neighborhood. To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the KH Landscape Awards in 2008, she established the Kennedy Heights Landscape Hall of Fame. Anyone who has won an award three times, automatically becomes a member, a tribute to the effort they put into consistently maintaining their beautiful landscapes. As of 2023, eighteen families or individuals have been honored with membership in the KH Landscape Hall of Fame.

Judy retired from the committee after the 2012 awards; but thanks to her efforts, the committee continues on. Annette Delany took over the helm for two years, then Michele Dragga took over in 2015. She and her committee of Carolyn Thompson, Jane Patty, and Diane Magill look forward each year to judging your nominations to determine the five outstanding landscapes of the year.



2023 Landscape Awards Nominations

May is certainly one of the prettiest months in Kennedy Heights. As you're out and about enjoying it, keep an eye open for any especially striking landscapes. Yes, it's that time of year again when the Landscape Awards Committee is calling for nominations of particularly beautiful, well-maintained landscapes in Kennedy Heights. You may nominate yourself or someone from the neighborhood. If you don't know the name of the homeowner, that's okay. You may submit just the address for your nomination. Judging will take place in early July.

Any landscapes that were winners within the last three years, or that are in the Kennedy Heights Landscape Hall of Fame are not eligible.

Submit all nominations to:

Michele Dragga

Michele@kennedyheights.org or (513)984-6867

Deadline for nominations:

June 30, 2023

Green Up Day is May 20

Join your neighbors and Parks staff for a morning of service and fun on Saturday, May 20 from 9am to 12pm at Kennedy Heights Park (6039 Kennedy Ave).

This year's Green Up day will include weeding and planting annuals and perennials in the entrance flower beds, picking up litter, and mulching tree circles. KHCC will provide coffee, water, and sweet treats. New for 2023, we will have a family art activity from the Kennedy Heights Art Center.

Bring your favorite weeding tool and work gloves. Note that this event will go on rain or shine, unless dangerous weather conditions are expected. Please consider walking to the park or riding your bike, as parking in the area is limited.

Follow "Friends of Kennedy Heights Park" on Facebook for updates.



Volunteers tending to a KH Park flower bed.

PLEASANT RIDGE RECREATION CENTER

Visit the Rec Center on a Saturday! From 9:00am - 2:00pm enjoy the weight room, shoot hoops in the gym, or play pickleball. The CRC also has rooms that can be reserved for Neighborhood Watch meetings or other community uses. Call (513) 731-7894.



MEMORIES & TRADITIONS ♦ MAY/JUN 2023



MEMORIES & TRADITIONS ♦ MAY/JUN 2023





Ellen Muse-Lindeman
KHAC Executive Director

KENNEDY HEIGHTS ART CENTER
6546 Montgomery Road, Cincinnati, OH 45213

Gallery Hours:
Tues., Fri. 10am – 5pm
Sat., 11am – 4pm



Mallory Feltz,
Dir. Exhibition &
Public Art

Color Breathing: The Work of Lyric Morris-Latchaw and Casey Dressell
June 10 - August 12, 2023

Local artists Lyric Morris-Latchaw and Casey Dressell create an immersive environment that engages the senses through painted imagery, natural materials, and thoughtful color.

Opening Reception: Saturday, June 10 from 6-8pm. Free, open to the public, light refreshments served.

Gallery Talk: Saturday, June 24 at 1pm. Free, open to the public, light refreshments served.

Join us on Wednesday, June 21 from 6:30-8pm at Kennedy Heights Park as Lyric and Casey lead participants in a nature-based community art project at Play in the Park.

All That Jazz: Cincinnati Jazz Hall of Fame Exhibit
June 2 - August 24, 2023

Explore Cincinnati's rich and storied jazz evolution as historical photos, memorabilia, music, and anecdotes take you back in time.

Opening Reception: Friday, June 2 from 5-7pm. Free, open to the public, light refreshments served.

For information on ticketed performances visit kennedyarts.org or call 513-631-4278.

Community Day @ KHAC
Sat. May 20, 2-4 pm

Join our Teen Artists for Change (TAC) group as they unveil their collaborative mural in the Kennedy Heights Arts Center studio. Led by artist Cedric Michael Cox, students are designing and painting a large scale mural that is sure to inspire creativity in our busiest art making space.

On May 20, they invite everyone to see the mural and take part in art making projects for families in the studio. Guests are encouraged to also explore the 15th Annual Student Art Show and enjoy light refreshments from 2:00-4:00pm.

Summer Art Camps for youth ages 11-13

Did you know that Kennedy Heights Arts Center offers a range of camps specially designed for youth ages 11-13? Students can explore their creativity, build skills, and collaborate with professional artists and peers in rap/poetry, fiber art, photography, stop motion animation, and public art. Camps run Monday through Friday, 9am – 3pm.

Several different weeks to choose from. Sliding scale fees are available for those with financial need. More information at kennedyarts.org or call

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For a full list of events & activities, visit: kennedyarts.org

Pleasant Ridge Library Re-Opening

by Amber Ziegler

The Pleasant Ridge Branch Library re-opened on March 31 after being closed since October 17 for renovations. The repairs were mostly structural, so the library doesn't look much different, but there are some noticeable improvements, as there had been a lot of damaged plaster and peeling paint that has now been fixed.

Additional library improvements still to come this spring include new entry doors, completion of cupola repairs, a new bench for the entryway, new display furniture, an additional book return, and new carpeting around the main desk.



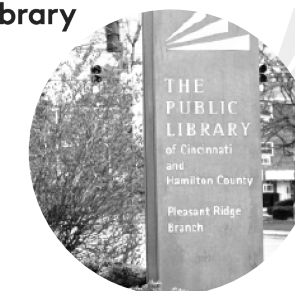
Free Business Coaching Services Available in Kennedy Heights

KHCC is teaming with Alloy Development, a nonprofit economic development company, to help businesses in Kennedy Heights grow and achieve their goals. The Alloy Small Business Assistance Program includes free, one-on-one coaching from an experienced professional. This program is made possible by a generous grant from the Duke Energy Foundation. For more information or to get started, contact Caitlin Siegel Hartzler at csiegelhartzler@alloydev.org or (513) 458-2227.



Eric Brueggemann
Customer Advisor

cincinnati
public
library



Mon. & Tues., 10-8pm
Wed. thru Sat., 10-6pm

NEWS

Welcome back to the refreshed and reopened Pleasant Ridge Branch. We are happy to once again hosting several events (listed on page 3).

The library will be closed for Memorial Day (5/31) & Juneteenth (6/19).

Available services:

- curbside service
- take & make activities
- browsing
- computer access (limited)
- assistance with faxing/copying/scanning & printing

Erik Brueggemann
Library Customer Adviser, Pleasant Ridge
erik.brueggemann@chpl.org

For branch offerings and questions, call us at 513-369-4488, or go to www.chpl.org





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Members-at-Large



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Brandon Nixon



Amber Ziegler

COUNCIL MEETINGS

In person at Kennedy Heights Presbyterian Church, 6312 Kennedy Avenue 45213
Join by computer at: meet.google.com/amo-fjbm-bgq
Join by phone: Call +1 574-241-1036 and then follow the prompts. PIN: 453 185 950#

Find us at kennedyheights.org or check us out
on the Kennedy Heights Community Council Facebook page.