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101ST YEAR

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2023

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FREE

Maple Heights, Newburgh Heights mayors weigh in

**MAPLE HEIGHTS MAYOR
ANNETTE BLACKWELL**

The overwhelming support that the voters of Maple Heights showed me on election day has again encouraged and inspired me to keep advancing forward, together in ways that will continue to enhance the quality of life for the people that live and do business here.

On the agenda is more infrastructure repairs; roads, sewer and water, new residential construction, home repair assistance, access to affordable wellness programs at local hospitals, exciting economic development projects, more local shop owners and national businesses' expansions, offering a variety of activities for the city's youth, including classes, camps, summer employment, special events and improving playgrounds, updates and new equipment. And there are plans to explore and partner with over 60 educational programs at local colleges and organizations for more senior engagement.

And our safety forces will continue to seek qualified candidates to fill critical vacancies and implement advanced technology for crime prevention.

**NEWBURGH HEIGHTS MAYOR
TREVOR ELKINS**



Thank you Newburgh Heights, the community that is our home. My family and I are grateful for the honor you've shared with us. I will make you proud.

Repairing the relationship between the mayor's office and the council comes first.

(Continued on Page 2)

Voters voices heard loud and clear on Nov. 7th

Voters flocked to the polls on Nov. 7th in record numbers for an off-year election that saw major support for open access to abortion in Ohio and recreational marijuana.

Locally, Newburgh Heights residents overwhelmingly voted to return former Mayor Trevor Elkins to office, as was Mayor Annette Blackwell in Maple Heights. Three new councilpersons were elected in Garfield Heights, and a variety of levies passed in local school districts while others failed.

The following is a breakdown of the unofficial results of candidates and issues in The Neighborhood News readership area for the Nov. 7th general election.

BEDFORD

In the Bedford Council race, Steve Salvi won in Ward 2, Frank E. Smith, Jr. in Ward 4, running unopposed, and Anthony Longino-Thomas in Ward 6.

Eva Boyington and Angelic M. Carter were elected to the Bedford Board of Education over Joseph V. Mestnik.

Nick Papa ran unopposed for judge in Bedford Municipal Court.

A proposed bond issue for the Bedford City School District passed 4436 to 4048.

CUYAHOGA HEIGHTS

Winners in the Cuyahoga Heights Village Council election were Renato Contipelli, Rick Centa and Matthew J. Schoeffler.

Jennifer Deka and Gary Suchocki were elected to the Cuyahoga Heights Board of Education, running unopposed.

A proposed additional tax levy for the Cuyahoga Heights Local School District failed 1036 to 995.

GARFIELD HEIGHTS

The two judges in Garfield Heights Municipal Court will remain the same, as incumbent Judge Sergio DiGeronimo received 12128 votes to Jessica E. Alvis's 9996, with presiding Judge Deborah J. Nicastro running unopposed.

Three new representatives will take seats on Garfield Heights Council. Tenisha Mack beat incumbent Councilman Chuck Donahue in Ward 2, 386 to 339. In Ward 3, Mark Smith bested incumbent Councilman Jason Seither 444 to 264. And Jennifer Newrones ran unopposed for the Ward 7 seat of retiring Councilman Tom Vaughn. Stacey Collier in Ward 1, Avery Johnson in Ward 4, Rachelle Tonsing in Ward 5, and Clifford Kelley, Jr. in Ward 6 were unopposed.

Thandeka Cox and Ashley Thomas were elected to the Garfield Heights Board of Education, running unopposed.

INDEPENDENCE

Mayor Gregory Kurtz will remain in the city's top job in Independence, running without opposition. Finance Director Vern Blaze will also remain in his position, beating challenger Chris Zamborsky by a vote of 2122 to 1323.

Winners in the race for Independence Council At Large were: Kevin Day, John DiGeronimo, Thomas Narduzzi, Anthony L. Togliatti, Jim Trakas, Dale A. Veverka and Chris Walchanowicz.

Anthony Avila and Katie Day Hill were elected to the Independence Board of Education.

A proposed renewal of a tax levy for the Independence Local School District passed 2565 to 1314. A second school levy on the ballot in Independence failed by a vote of 2110 to 1749.

MAPLE HEIGHTS

In Maple Heights, Mayor Annette Blackwell handily bested challenger Stafford L. Shenett, 3857 to 1438.

In Maple Heights Council District 2, Toni Jones won over Rosalind Moore by a vote of 486 to 291. In District 4, Dana D. Anderson beat Deonte Abrams 401 to 252. And in District 6, it was Tina Stafford-Marbury over incumbent Richard Trojanski by a vote of 362 to 305.

Rachel Cheeks and Wendall C. Garth, Jr. were elected to the Maple Heights Board of Education. Sherria Granger was also elected to the Maple Heights Board of Education, running unopposed.

NEWBURGH HEIGHTS

Former Mayor Trevor Elkins was victorious over incumbent Mayor Gigi Traore by a vote of 347 to 127, with challenger Laura Childers coming in a distant third with 22 votes.

The top five winners who will make up Newburgh Heights Village Council are: Bill Dunman, Michelle Graora, Steve Moran, Dorene Kray and Linda Giersz.

VALLEY VIEW

In the Valley View mayor's race, Matthew R. March will replace retiring Mayor Jerry Piasecki with a vote of 576 to 482 over challenger Daniel J. Westfall.

Mary Snyder will be the new clerk-treasurer in the village, running unopposed.

And Valley View Village Council representatives will be: Julie Ann Mayne Jakubczak, Tina Paulson, James Spieth, Charles Wilson and Jeffrey O. Wyatt.

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**NEWBURGH HEIGHTS MAYOR
TREVOR ELKINS**

(Continued from Page 1)

This is necessary to get us moving forward again. We will end the secrecy, returning to openness, collaboration and transparency. We cannot work for the village if the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing.

We must also restore our reputation with the Garfield Heights Municipal Court. They are our working partners, not adversaries.

Finally, we will prove to our residents that we are laser

focused on their needs. We do this by ensuring our safety forces are well staffed. That our other departments can deliver on their responsibilities. And that we restore fiscal stability to our budgets, restoring our rainy day fund.

I want to once again thank the residents, council, our employees, and my family for their support. We've got a big job to do. The beauty of Newburgh Heights is that we've got the grit to get it done. There's not a person in our village that's afraid of a hard day's work!



**From the
Mayor's Desk**

By Garfield Heights Mayor Matt Burke

I can't believe I am half way through my term as Mayor of our great city. I want to talk about what it means to serve the residents of the city of Garfield Heights. I couldn't ask for a better group of neighbors. Whether it's at the local grocery store or the bank or a city function, I have learned from many of you how you feel about our neighborhoods. As a City Councilman I often would hear questions as to why not Garfield Heights? People would say, "Why don't we have

what other cities like Westlake, Berea, Shaker Heights and a few other communities have?" I have been repeatedly told, "We would like a sit-down restaurant in our city."

When I became the Mayor I soon realized that the reason for some of this is because we didn't have some of the programs in place to allow for these types of situations. So my team and I set out to put the very things in place to get us to where we need to be to allow for these questions to be answered. The start of the zoning rewrite will allow Garfield Heights to have Commercial Mixed-Use development, which could someday provide us with more "sit down" restaurants.

All of this is a direct result of conversations with the residents of our city. That is what it means to me to be the people's Mayor. I listen! Plain and simple. The city's and our residents' best interest is my priority every day. That is what serving the community is all about.

I have spoken to so many residents when they have called. I return emails when I get them. My staff knows that when they respond on my behalf, I expect nothing but the utmost professionalism. Are we perfect? Not always, but we strive to be.

Recently I received an email from a resident who was trying to show me a situation with a neighbor. The pictures they sent were not a good representation of their issue. I jumped in the car and showed up on their doorstep so I could get better clarification of the problem. I work very long hours because I only want to see our city grow. I work those long hours to set an example to members of this administration. If I don't work those hours, how can I ask them to do so. It's called serving the community. Together we have all worked hard to serve the residents, and have many accomplishments to celebrate. We will continue to work with the same intensity to provide the best level of professionalism as we can.

I want to leave you with this thought. Let's all put community first! Let's all continue to help one another like we see happening with groups like Neighbors on Duty, the Kiwanis Club, and the block watches we see throughout the city. Let's support the non-profits like MyCom, and Boys Hope Girls Hope. It's all about serving and respecting our community. Garfield Heights is growing. There is a buzz going on about the city. It's our time. Let's work smart and be respectful to one another. Let's keep going because although we have seen a lot of progress so far, we're not done yet!

Thank you for allowing me to serve you. I enjoy representing all of the people in Garfield Heights.

**The City of Maple Heights will have a
Mobile Food Pantry
on Thursday, November 16, 2023 at
St. Andrew Eastern Orthodox Church
16029 Maple Park Drive,
Maple Heights, Ohio 44137
from 9:30 - 11:30 AM**

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Apple, Apricot and Prune)

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MHPD investigating homicide on Fairway Ave.

Shootings in a home on Fairway Ave., in Maple Heights, left one man dead and another injured early Monday.

The Maple Heights Police Department responded to Fairway Ave. in Maple Heights, around 1 a.m. Monday, Nov. 13, for a caller reporting someone had been shot. Another caller stated he was shot in the head and was walking down the street on Fairway Ave.

Officers arrived and found one male in a home on Fairway Ave. with gunshot injuries that were fatal. A second victim was located at the intersection of Fairway Ave. and Camden Rd., with gunshot wounds to the head. He was given medical aid and transported to MetroHealth Medical Center.

An MHPD investigation preliminarily indicated there were multiple people in a house on Fairway Ave. when an argument started. Two males produced handguns and started firing. The fatally injured victim was a 38-year-old black male who died on scene. The other victim struck by gunfire is a 37-year-old black male. He was able to leave the scene and walk down the street where he was found by police. No one else was injured in the shooting.

MHPD detectives are investigating the case. The Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office responded to the scene to assist with the investigation.

Anyone with information related to this case is urged to contact the Maple Heights Detective Bureau: 216-587-9624 or Detectives@mhp-dohio.com. As always, information can also be supplied to Crime Stoppers.

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New Garfield Heights Council chooses officers

By Ellen Psenicka

The recently installed Garfield Heights Council chose its new officers for the present term at its meeting Monday night, with Ward 4 Councilman Avery Johnson voted in as council president, replacing retired Councilman Tom Vaughn.

Ward 1 Councilwoman Stacey Collier was chosen president pro tem, and will serve as council president when Johnson is not able to attend a meeting. And present council clerk, Lottie Overby, will continue to serve in that position.

In his report to council, Mayor Matt Burke announced that a New York City real estate developer had purchased TurneyTown Shopping Center for \$6.5 million and is interested in "dressing it up and making it viable."

"It's very exciting to see someone making that kind of investment in Garfield Heights," Burke said.

There were only two ordinances on Monday's council agenda and both passed unanimously.

The first one authorizes the sale and disposal of various city-owned computer equipment which has been determined the city no longer needs.

The second ordinance amends Chapter 183 of the Codified Ordinances of the city regarding municipal income tax, updating it to comply with recently passed state regulations.

The next council meeting is scheduled for Monday, Nov. 27.

Newburgh Heights Employees, Residents, Businesses, and Partners,

We, the Newburgh Heights Council and Mayor-Elect would like to thank all of our Employees, Residents, Businesses, and Partners for their support and confidence during the November 7, 2023, election cycle.

Your patience, backing, and understanding have meant the world to each of us. Without your assistance and votes, our Village would have sustained additional, and perhaps irreversible damage. Thankfully, it stops now!

We, your Village Council and Mayor-Elect, will begin the task of getting back on track, repairing relationships with residents, businesses, and the court community. We are committed to governing responsibly for our Village.

Please continue to stay involved, attend meetings, watch online, and communicate with your elected officials. We want your input; we appreciate your patience; and we look forward to returning Newburgh Heights to the communicative, collaborative, and cooperative community it was 18 months ago.

Sincerely,

Mayor-Elect Trevor K. Elkins,
Newburgh Heights Village Council Members
Michelle Graora, Dorene Kray, Steve Moran, Bill Dunman

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Meet newest councilpersons in Garfield Hts!

TENISHA MACK, WARD 2

Dr. Tenisha Mack, originally from Cleveland, Ohio, established her residence in Garfield Heights in 2008. Graduating from East Technical High School in 1999 marked the beginning of her academic journey, leading to the attainment of a Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice from Walden University, where she was honored with the 2021 Doctoral Leadership Excellence Award.

Her other multiple accomplishments include being an Adjunct Criminal Justice Professor, Author, Qualified Mental Health Specialist, College Now Mentor, Founder of the Ward 2 Garfield Heights Community Club, Central Committeewoman, and Business Owner of M.A.C.K. Community Support Services LLC. She also conducts Anger Management courses as a Certified Anger Management Specialist (CAMS-II).

She successfully completed the Citizen Police Academy class with the local police department, and served as the Girl Scout Troop leader for Troop 70522. She has organized and led various events including the Winter Wear Giveaway, the Garfield Heights Firehouse Christmas & First Responders Christmas Event, providing gifts and dinner to local firefighters, police officers and dispatchers. Her initiatives also encompass Breast Cancer & Lupus Awareness Walks, Easter Dinner Giveaways, Mother's & Father's Day Giveaways, and Senior Citizen and High School Graduate Card Giveaways.

In addition to her community contributions, Dr. Mack is a dedicated mother to four children and a grandmother.

"I envision prioritizing mental health, assisting with PIPP/HEAP applications, aiding in Substance Use Disorder treatment enrollment, and connecting individuals

with counselors and therapists in Garfield Heights' future. As councilwoman, I'll host bi-monthly Resource Gatherings and conversations evolving into a Resource Clinic for Ward 2, starting on January 20, at the Garfield Heights Library from 2:15 to 4:15 p.m. Further details will be shared next month. For inquiries, contact me at 216-800-8559 or tmack@garfieldhts.org."

JENNIFER NEWRONES, WARD 7

My name is Jennifer Newrones and I have lived in Garfield Heights for 25 years. I am a proud graduate of the Trinity High School class of 1994 and married my husband, Philip, in 1998. We were married at St. Monica's Church where I have been an active, lifelong member. I have volunteered for many of their fundraising events, including the Lenten fish fry, and I am a member of the St. Vincent DePaul Society of St. Monica serving as their treasurer for the past three years.

My husband and I have two sons, Paul and Jack, who both attended Garfield Heights schools. Paul is a 2017 graduate of Garfield Heights High School, and Jack is a junior at Trinity High School, where I am currently employed as the Director of Transportation.

I love the city of Garfield Heights and I have always done my best to be an active part of my community. I have been the proud chairman of the Garfield Heights Memorial Day Parade for the past five years, and I look forward to making the parade bigger and better in the years to come! I have been a leader in the Cub/Boy Scouts in Garfield Heights for almost 20 years, where I am able to work with the youth in our community to teach them to be trustworthy, kind and become better citizens through service projects and participation in community events.

I have been an active member of the Ward 7 Block Watch working closely with my neighbors to try to make our community a safe and friendly place to live. I have also participated in the Garfield/Maple Heights Citizen's Police Academy so that I can better understand our amazing police force and the reasons why they do the things that they do.

I am committed to not only working to make things better for Ward 7, but also for the city of Garfield Heights as a whole. I look forward to unifying our community and doing my best to help residents find solutions to the issues that they are fac-



Garfield Heights Mayor Matt Burke, second from left, is shown with newly elected council members Jennifer Newrones, at left, Mark Smith and Tenisha Mack.

ing. I hope to get to know my neighbors by participating in community meetings and city events throughout the year. I would be happy to meet and talk with any residents so that we can work together to make our community a stronger, safer and friendlier place to live.

MARK A. SMITH, WARD 3

Mark A. Smith was born in Hartford, Connecticut, where he attended Hartford Public Schools and graduated from Thomas Snell Weaver High School. In 1980, he relocated to Cleveland, Ohio, where he attended Cuyahoga Community College, Cleveland State University and Dyke College. In 1986, he obtained his Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management with a minor in Marketing. In his spare time, he took online theological courses, because of his Biblical interest.

During his college years he worked part time in sales becoming one of the first men to sell women's cosmetics for Higbee's department store. In 1989, he was hired by United Parcel Service, starting as a driver then into management. One of his many positions in his approximately 30-year career at United Parcel Service was to serve as a Congressional Liaison. In that position he worked directly with Congressman Louis Stokes, Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones and Congresswoman Marcia Fudge. In 1994, he and his wife built a home in Garfield Heights for three reasons: Location, Location, Location.

In 2005, Smith was installed as the pastor of the Sanctuary Baptist Church in Cleveland. Under his leadership the church has grown immensely, offering computer classes for seniors, esports for the youth and a monthly food pantry serving over 400 families per month.

In 2017, he lost his son to street violence and months later lost his wife to illness. He has been quoted as saying, however, that in spite of these devastating experiences in his life, "I'm still standing."

Known for his advocating abilities and a true love of people, Smith says he "never meets a stranger," and he is ready and eager to serve his Ward 3 constituents.

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Jones Road Church
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Community Lunch at 12 Noon

The Lutheran Church of the Covenant
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JOIN US!

Free Community Meal

A free Community Meal will be held on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 23, from noon to 2 p.m., at Garfield Heights United Methodist Church, 4977 Turney Rd.

All are invited to come and "Have Thanksgiving With Us!" For take-out orders, call 216-641-4149.

Garfield Holiday Lighting

Garfield Heights will have its annual Holiday Lighting program from 3 to 6 p.m., this Sunday, Nov. 19, at the Garfield Heights Civic Center, 5407 Turney Rd.

The family-friendly event will include entertainment, crafts and cookies. Santa will be available for guests to take pictures from 4 to 5:30 p.m., and will join Mayor Matt Burke outdoors to turn on the holiday lights at 5:45 p.m.

There will also be an Open Skate at the Dan Kostel Recreation rink during the Holiday Lighting program hours.

For additional details, call 216-475-1100 or visit www.garfieldhts.org

Community Police Reports

(All information is preliminary and subject to change pending investigation.)

GARFIELD HEIGHTS

Attempted Auto Theft

On Oct. 28, at about 10:40 a.m., officers were dispatched to a home in the 4900 block of E. 110 St., for a woman who had just seen someone trying to steal her Kia Soul. The woman said she saw a black male, about 16 years old, dressed in a dark-colored hoodie with a black mask on break out her driver's door window and get inside her car. The vehicle was parked on Wadsworth at E. 110 St. She yelled at the suspect to "get away from my car," at which point he ran west on Wadsworth and north on E. 110 St. Another witness told police they saw the suspect enter a gray van and drive away. Officers toured the area for the suspect with negative results.

Suspicious Person

On Nov. 3, at 7:40 p.m., police responded to Walgreens,

5090 Turney Rd., for a report of a black male wearing different colored shoes asking employees and customers for sexual pleasures. Officers arrived and located the male by the front door. The suspect was mumbling incoherent things such as, "Are you here for the porno,?" Checking his eyes, police suspected he may be under the influence of a narcotic. The store manager asked police to escort the suspect from the store. Due to his preventing and delaying the investigation of the officers, he was taken into custody. His intoxicated behavior resulted in him being placed into a detox cell. LEADS revealed he had active warrants along with aliases he typically was reported to use. He was issued a criminal summons for obstructing official business and was turned over to Cleveland Police for his warrant.

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Tom Strunk Benefit set for Saturday

A benefit for Tom "Batman" Strunk will be held on Saturday, Nov. 18, at the new location of the Hungarian Business Tradesmen Club, 3403 Croton Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44115, from 6 to 11 p.m. Tickets are \$25 and include dinner with tap beer only, rigatoni, meatballs and sausage, salad, dinner roll and dessert, and are available for purchase at Bum's Saloon, Margie's 66, Browns Tavern and at the door. There will be a cash bar, Chinese raffle and 50/50 raffle. All proceeds will go to Tom's final expenses.



VETERANS DAY IN GARFIELD HTS.

Veterans Day ceremonies were forced inside by the weather Saturday but couldn't dampen the patriotic spirit of those attending.

Shown above representing American Legion Post 304 at the observances are, from left: Bill Glover, Bob Foster and Otis Cesco.



Photo by Wendy Walters

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FOOD PANTRY DISTRIBUTION, (Garfield Hts. Only)

Saturday, Nov. 18, 10am-Noon, Inside

The Rock Community Church, (9403 Garfield Blvd.), will have a food pantry distribution for Garfield Hts. residents only (income limits apply) on Saturday, Nov. 18, from 10am-Noon.



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COMMUNITY CHURCH

We will be inside the building with an expedited distribution with some choice of product. Numbers and sign-up sheets will be distributed at the parking lot entrance starting at 8:00 am.

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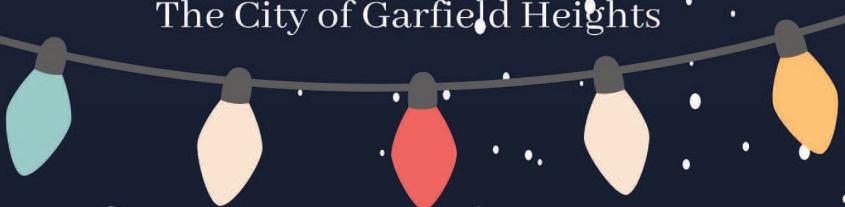
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The City of Garfield Heights



Holiday Lighting

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 Garfield Heights Civic Center
 5407 Turney Road, Garfield Heights

Please join us for family fun, entertainment, crafts and cookies.
 Santa will be there for pictures from 4 to 5.30 p.m.!!!
Santa will light the Holiday Lights at 5:45 p.m..

216-475-1100  <https://www.garfieldhts.org/>