

# The Neighborhood News

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102nd YEAR NO. 40

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 2026

PHONE: (216) 441-2141 • EMAIL: NNEWS1923@AOL.COM

FREE

## County partners with G.H. on cost of Granger upgrades

Granger Road in Garfield Heights will get badly needed improvements thanks to a partnership with Cuyahoga County, the city announced yesterday.

"We have been notified by County Executive Chris Ronayne that our request for funding has been approved," said Mayor Matthew Burke. The project cost will be split 50/50 between the city and Cuyahoga County, pending approval by county council members.

"We are excited to partner with the city of Garfield Heights on this project as part of the county's 2027-2028 50/50 Program," Ronayne said. The road will be resurfaced from I-480 to the east corporation line. The county will contribute 50% of the cost, up to \$250,000, for the project.

Mayor Burke said the city continues to seek funding for improvements from a variety of eligible sources to maximize its funding for infrastructure investments.



See Page 5 for Local Celebrations

## SVD holds annual meeting with Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb as a keynote speaker



Slavic Village Development held its annual meeting Monday evening with a packed house on hand at the Polish American Cultural Center to welcome keynote speakers Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb and Calley Mersmann, director of the Cleveland Planning Commission, and newly appointed SVD Executive Director Mark Rantala. Shown above are Polish American Cultural Center board members with Mayor Bibb. From left are: Julian Boryczewski, Sophie Kazimierzczak, Board President Raymond Vargas, Bernadette Zubel, Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb, Wiesia Foremski, Jola Stepien, Maggie Wnek and Tony Brancatelli. Photo by Pam Shelley

## Suspect wanted in shooting death of local rapper arrested in Cleveland

Last Thursday members of the U.S. Marshals-led Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force arrested Steven Smith, 27, on Cleveland's east side. He was wanted by the Cleveland Division of Police for aggravated murder in the death of local rapper Carlos Banks at an apartment in the North Broadway area, according to a press release from the U.S. Marshals last week. Banks performed under the stage name of KashBankx.

On Dec. 29, 2024, officers with Cleveland's 3rd District Police responded to an address in the 5100 block of Broadway Ave., for a shooting. When officers arrived they located Banks, 28, who had suffered multiple gunshot wounds to the head and upper torso.

The victim was pronounced dead on scene by Cleveland EMS. After an investigation led by the Cleveland Division of Police Homicide Unit, it was determined that Smith was involved in this deadly shooting and a warrant was issued for his arrest.

The Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force adopted the fugitive investigation for Smith earlier this month and vetted multiple leads. On Thursday, June 25, members of the Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force arrested Smith at an address in the 15900 block of Invermere Ave.

U.S. Marshal Pete Elliott stated, "This arrest is the result of the relentless dedication and outstanding investigative work of the Cleveland Division of Police Homicide Unit. This arrest demonstrates that those responsible for acts of violence in our community will continue to be held accountable. We remain committed to seeking justice for the victim and the residents of Cleveland."

Anyone with information concerning a wanted fugitive can contact the Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force at 1-866-4WANTED (1-866-492-6833), or submit a web tip. Reward money is available and tipsters may remain anonymous. Follow the U.S. Marshals on Twitter: @USMSCleveland.

The Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force – Cleveland Division is composed of the following federal, state and local agencies: U.S. Marshals Service, Cleveland Police Department, Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Office, Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority Police Department, Euclid Police Department, Ohio Adult Parole Authority, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Independence Police Department, Parma Police Department, Aurora Police Department, Solon Police Department, Cleveland RTA Police Department, Westlake Police Department, Bedford Police Department, Middleburg Heights Police Department, Newburgh Heights Police Department and the MetroHealth Police Department.

# Torso Murders explored at Cleveland History Days event at Bohemian Hall; discussion held on unsolved crimes

During Cleveland History Days last Saturday, Bohemian National Hall was the scene of a film screening of "Kingsbury Run Murders" and an expert panel discussion of the gruesome Torso Murders, as they were called by news media, that took place in the 1930s very near Bohemian Hall.

Over 200 guests attended the event, hosted by author and historian Tom Kaschalk, which included several crime podcasters and mystery buffs, as well as a 100-year-old woman who was in the neighborhood when the series of unsolved murders actually occurred.

Local civic leader Tony Brancatelli, somewhat of a historian himself, said he was excited that many of the Cleveland History Days events in Slavic Village were sold out, and that the tours and showcasing of the area's many historic buildings were very well received.



Shown above at the podium at Bohemian National Hall during the panel discussion of the Kingsbury Run Murders event last Saturday is host Tom Kaschalk, with panel members Mazie Adams, Jon Price and D.M. Pulley seated nearby. Photo by Tony Brancatelli

Save the Date! Just Pluckin' Around On the Patio Aug. 2, 2-5pm

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13 Meatball Sub \$7	14 Chicken Bowl \$8	15 House Breaded Fried Chicken Sammie	16 Polish Boy \$6	17 Hot Dog Cart Starting at \$3 No Discounts
20 Meatball Sub \$7	21 Meatloaf and Taters \$8	22 COLD PLATE \$8	23 Polish Boy \$6	24 Hot Dog Cart Starting at \$3 No Discounts
27 Meatball Sub \$7	28 Chicken Paprikash \$8	29 SUB BOX \$10	30 Polish Boy \$6	31 Hot Dog Cart Starting at \$3 No Discounts

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## Free Community Meal

Garfield Heights United Methodist Church, 4977 Turney Rd., Garfield Heights, will hold its monthly Community Meal on Sunday, July 5, from noon to 1:30 p.m. All are welcome.

## NN will close Friday for long holiday weekend

The Neighborhood News will be closed this Friday, July 3, which is a federal holiday because Independence Day falls on a Saturday this year. Normal deadlines will apply.

The NN staff and management wish everyone a happy July 4th holiday and urge everyone to celebrate safely.



## 4.50 MI ROAD CYCLING

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1 | 6:00 PM

JOIN US FOR A COMMUNITY RIDE THROUGH GARFIELD HEIGHTS!

**POSTPONED TO AUGUST 31 DUE TO HEAT ADVISORY**



Garfield Heights

COMPLIMENTARY HOT DOGS (WHILE SUPPLIES LAST) WILL BE SERVED AFTER THE RIDE.

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REGISTER NOW FOR A T-SHIRT!



For more information:  
**www.GarfieldHTS.org**




# Garfield Heights AMERICA 250 Birthday Bash!

**JULY 4 & JULY 5**

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The Cleveland Press, January 18, 1937

# Early Cuyahoga Valley history rediscovered

Just in time for America's 250th birthday, newly discovered documents have been unearthed that shed new light on the Southeast Cleveland area around the time of the nation's founding.

Charles Gliha, a member of the Slavic Village Historical Society, recently purchased at auction several rare, 90-year-old copies of The Cleveland Press that include a front page story announcing the discovery of the Moravian settlement in Valley View called Pilgeruh, which, according to The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, was the first modern settlement in the Cleveland area. Pilgeruh is a Native American word for "pilgrims' rest."

The January 1937 edition reports that archeologists with the Western Reserve Historical Society had in the latter half of 1936 pinpointed the location of the long-rumored site of the Moravian missionary settlement, at the convergence of several brooks near the intersection of Canal and Hathaway roads in Valley View. Western Reserve based their findings on period maps in their possession as well as detailed diaries kept by members of the settlement which together make their story "about as complete as if Pilgeruh had published a daily newspaper."

The news story says that the settlement was short-lived, occurring in a brief period around 1786, a decade after the Declaration of Independence was signed and 10 years before Moses Cleaveland came from Connecticut to the Lake Erie mouth of the Cuyahoga River to survey the Western Reserve, an event which opened up Northeast Ohio to modern development.

Pilgeruh was a joint venture of Christian missionaries and Native American converts who built temporary structures on the low plain just east of Canal Road, a few hundred yards from where the stream now known as Tinkers Creek spills into the Cuyahoga River. The acquisition of a map drawn by one of Pilgeruh's founding missionaries, John Heckewelder, convinced the histori-

cal society they had found the exact site. Previous theories had placed it farther west, closer to the Cuyahoga River.

Subsequent excavations in late 1936 revealed foundations for three round chimneys and numerous wood posts buried underground. (Later research has questioned this location, pinpointing nearby sites at Canal and Schreiber roads or Stone and Schreiber roads. Changes in topography over centuries make definitive identification difficult.)

The importance of the 1937 news stories is highlighted by the fact that The Press followed it up with two additional stories in later editions, detailing entries in the diaries. These editions are also part of the recent Slavic Village acquisition.

The year 1786 was a very different time for the Cuyahoga Valley than 1937, and even more different than today, 240 years later. The diaries paint a picture of a true wilderness, "so dense a forest that one can hardly see ahead several paces."

The War of Independence had been settled in America's favor just three years earlier. But the fledgling nation was still just 13 states along the Eastern seaboard, and Ohio's virgin forests - and Native American wars - were far from over. The decision of Pilgeruh's missionaries to

camp here was driven by real apprehension, according to the diary reports: "Many people, Indians and white people, believe there will be another Indian war... I feel we should be much better off here on the Cuyahoga than on the Muskingum where all the warriors march through."

During their time at Tinkers Creek, whites and natives learned from each other, dividing their time between hunting, building huts and farming the fields. Deer, elk, bear and fish were plentiful, but hunger was still a constant threat. Wolves were a menace.

All this risk made Pilgeruh a short-lived phenomenon, as Native Americans and white settlers kept moving, often on waterways, in search of civilizational stability that was still decades away.

The Cleveland Press documents are being studied by the staff of the Slavic Village Historical Society and will be placed on public display at their Lansing Ave. museum at a future date.

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## HAPPY 250TH BIRTHDAY AMERICA!



Wishing Everyone a Happy  
and Safe Fourth of July!  
Enjoy the Summer!!



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East 49th and Broadway, produced by Pastor Lewis's Foundation of Grace Recovery Church along with Sokol Greater Cleveland

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Include Contact Name and daytime phone number

The Neighborhood News Advertising deadline is **Mondays at 5:00pm**  
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# Law enforcement warns public of nationwide imposter scams

The U.S. Marshals Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation are alerting the public of several nationwide imposter scams involving individuals claiming to be U.S. Marshals, court officers or other law enforcement officials. They are urging people to report the calls to their local FBI office and file a consumer complaint with the Federal Trade Commission, which has the ability to detect patterns of fraud from the information collected and share that data with law enforcement.

During these calls scammers attempt to collect a fine from their victims in lieu of arrest due to a claim of identity theft, failing to report for jury duty, or other offenses. They then tell victims they can avoid arrest by withdrawing cash and transferring it to the government, purchasing a prepaid debit card such as a Green Dot card or gift card and read the card number over the phone to satisfy the fine, or by depositing cash into bitcoin ATMs.

Scammers use many tactics to sound and appear credible. They sometimes provide information like badge numbers, names of actual law enforcement officials and federal judges, and courthouse addresses. They may also spoof their phone numbers to appear on caller IDs as if they are calling from a government agency or the court.

One of the most recent scams works like this: Someone impersonating a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer calls the potential victim stating CBP has acquired packages containing illegal substances sent from Mexico and Colombia that are addressed to the victim. Additionally, the victim is told some of the packages are addressed to two locations in El Paso, Texas, which are also deeded to the victim. The scammer then proceeds to tell the victim that multiple bank accounts in the victim's name with Bank of America, Chase, TD Ameritrade, and Wells Fargo indicate the victim is wiring money to Mexico and Colombia.

The scammer then provides identity confirming information to the victim by reading old residential addresses, phone numbers and other personally identifying information that seems to make their claims legitimate. The scammer then provides his personal ID#, case number for the investigation and warrant number, and then notifies the victim that the State of Texas is investigating this illegal activity. They are then told the State of Texas is holding the victim responsible unless the victim can prove the criminal activity associated with them is the result of identity theft. The call then ends with the scammer advising the victim that they will be re-contacted by an investigating official.

A short time later, the victim is contacted by another individual identifying himself as a United States Marshal who is looking into the case. The scammer reviews the previous conversation the victim had with the scammer posing as a CBP official, and tells the victim there are two ways to resolve the issue: Option 1) hire a criminal lawyer

to represent the victim in front of a court in Texas. Through the court process, the victim will either be exonerated or convicted. If convicted, the victim will face approximately a year in jail and pay a \$10,000 fine. Option 2) Complete an Alternate Dispute Resolution where the victim could verify which funds in their bank accounts are actually theirs. The victim is instructed to stay on the phone so the conversation can be recorded and used as proof of the victim's compliance.

The victim is then instructed to withdraw "80% of their physical assets" and deposit them into a personal digital wallet (Bitcoin) while saving withdrawal receipts and deposit receipts to be reviewed by the investigating official once a meeting can be established. The victim is then told their money will be held for 24 hours while the victim is issued a new Social Security Number, if their identity was, in fact, stolen.

The victim is then told their money will be transferred back to them once the process is completed and the victim will be cleared of any criminal wrongdoing. The number appearing in the caller ID displays as the office number of the U.S. Marshals Service, and maybe a specific judicial district. The victim is instructed to confirm the authenticity of the caller by visiting the U.S. Marshals Service website.

The scammer instructs the victim to send a photo of their driver's license to a phone number provided by the scammer. The victim is then instructed to send the QR code scanned at the Bitcoin deposit kiosks.

There have been many victims with losses in the tens of thousands of dollars. The U.S. Marshals Service receives inquiries daily from victims and potential victims of this scam.

If you believe you were a victim of such a scam, you are encouraged to report the incident to your local FBI office and to the Federal Trade Commission.

## Things to remember

- The U.S. Marshals Service WILL NEVER ask for credit/debit card/gift card numbers, wire transfers, or bank routing numbers, or to make bitcoin deposits for any purpose.
- NEVER divulge personal or financial information to unknown callers.
- Report scam phone calls to your local FBI office and to the Federal Trade Commission. You can remain anonymous when you report.
- Authenticate the call by calling the clerk of the court's office of the U.S. District Court in your area and verify the court order given by the caller.

Independence



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Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz

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# UPCOMING

Events

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For more information, call Mary at 216-441-2141

The Neighborhood News

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# Local Independence Day Celebrations

## CUYAHOGA COUNTY

### Spirit of America Celebration, Wednesday, July 8

Celebrate our freedom and be part of history in the making! Join communities across the country in the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence. On July 8, we'll gather at the Soldiers' & Sailors' Monument on Public Square in downtown Cleveland for a powerful reading of this historical document. The celebration kicks off at 5 p.m.

## BEDFORD

The City of Bedford has joined the America 250-Ohio Commission and has planned several events to share stories of our rich past and Ohio's unique contributions to America's history and future!

### 4th of JULY PARADE

On Saturday, July 4th, the cities of Bedford and Bedford Heights are hosting their 41st annual Independence Day Parade beginning at 10 a.m. The parade starts at Columbus Rd. and Washington St., proceeds east on Columbus Rd. to Perkins Rd., and disbands at Bedford Heights City Hall.

### MOVIE ON THE SQUARE: "HAMILTON"

Friday, July 10, Bedford Commons, 730 Broadway Ave. Pre-Show 4:30 p.m., Movie 7 p.m. Free event and parking! Bring a blanket and enjoy an evening of film and fun with friends and family. Pre-show activities and music. Movie projected on a large video wall.

### AMERICA CELEBRATION ON THE SQUARE

**Saturday, July 11, Bedford Commons, 11 a.m. to 9:40 p.m. finale.**

11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Food Vendors. Bedford Rotary will host a beer truck with proceeds going to academic scholarships for Bedford High School students.

11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Music and interactive games from Terry Macklin Entertainment.

11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free carnival games and activities hosted by the Bedford Senior Club and Bedford Parks & Recreation.

11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Bedford Historical Society Museum open for guided tours. View the American Flag exhibit.

12 to 3 p.m.-Balloon Twister. 12 to 6 p.m.-Carvings by Chris. 2 to 4 p.m.-America 250 mural artist, living Statue of Liberty. 3 to 6 p.m.-Airbrush artist. 3:30 to 9:30 p.m. Live music. 6 to 8 p.m.-Free Euclid Beach Rocket Car rides.

8 p.m. Bring your chairs/blankets for concert.

## GARFIELD HEIGHTS

### AMERICA 250 EVENTS

Wednesday, July 1, 6 p.m. BIKE WITH THE MAYOR - **POSTPONED UNTIL AUGUST 31ST DUE TO HEAT ADVISORY.**

Saturday & Sunday, July 4 & 5: **AMERICA 250 POOL BASH.** Reduced pool rates, complimentary America 250 bags and cups giveaway. Free popsicles.

## INDEPENDENCE

Friday, July 3, Elmwood Park, 2:50 to 10 p.m.

**MUSIC: 2:50-4 p.m.**

3 p.m. ICAN! Chorus Kicks Off Celebration

4-6 p.m. Hometown Concert Band, Kiwanis Pavilion

6-7 p.m. DJ Dave Synek

7-10 p.m. Caliber Band

10 p.m. National Anthem

### MORE FUN & FREE REFRESHMENTS

3-4 p.m. Dr. Awesome Bubble Presentation

3-5:30 p.m. Chef Steve with hands-on food prep demos

3-6 p.m. Inflatables & Games - Diamond #1

3-6 p.m. Free Face Painting, Free 250th Tattoos

### FREE ROCKET POPS & COTTON CANDY

5-8:30 p.m. Tap SNAP Photo Booth - Free 4x6" prints

### 10 p.m.: ENHANCED FIREWORKS SHOW!



## SLAVIC VILLAGE

Slavic Village celebrates

USA's 250th on Friday

Two patriotic events on Friday will put the red, white and blue on Broadway Ave., as Slavic Village joins the nation in celebrating America's 250th birthday.

The Iron Ward music festival will again produce its annual Old Fashioned Independence Day Spectacular at Dan Kane Park beginning at 7 p.m., on Friday, July 3. The park is located at the corner of E. 65 St. and Kenyon Ave., just south of Broadway.

The evening will begin with a recitation of the Declaration of Independence and the singing of patriotic tunes. Historic documents from the nation's Bicentennial celebration 50 years ago will be on display. Musical headliner is Donny Jones's Infinity house band, playing a blend of classic American jazz, blues and pop.

There'll be free hot dogs, ice cream, plus red, white and blue balloons for kids, and patriot handouts to all attendees. Climaxing the evening at dusk will be a dazzling pyrotechnic performance by Ohio Burn Unit.

Earlier in the day at 5 p.m., the America 250 Party will take place at the Bohemian National Hall, 4939 Broadway Ave., Cleveland, produced by Pastor Lewis's Foundation of Grace Recovery Church in collaboration with Sokol Greater Cleveland. It will include music, food and field games for all ages.

Both events are free and open to all residents and friends of Slavic Village. Please bring lawn chairs to the Iron Ward event, as seating may be limited. For more information call 216-469-4806.

# Maple Hts. police investigate shooting at McDonald's

Last Friday, June 26, around 5:54 p.m., officers from the Maple Heights Police Department responded to McDonald's Restaurant at 5114 Northfield Rd., for a report of a shots fired. When officers arrived they were advised that there were approximately 10 shots fired and possibly two shooters. Dispatch said that callers described one of the shooters as being in an all gray Nike outfit with a ski mask. Another shooter was possibly associated with a red sedan.

Maple Heights police learned that two males had been shooting at each other in the parking lot at McDonald's and the suspects had fled the scene prior to police arrival. A red vehicle that may have been involved in the shooting also fled the scene. Two vehicles parked directly in front of McDonald's had been struck by gunfire.

There were no injured persons located at the scene. It was later learned that a male had been located at a

hospital with non-life-threatening injuries related to the shooting. Officers determined that a newer model gray Honda Civic had been directly involved with the shooting. That gray vehicle of interest was later located in Shaker Heights and one male was taken into custody and later released.

This case remains under investigation. Anyone with information related to the case is urged to contact the Maple Heights Detective Bureau: 216-587-9624, or [Detectives@mhpd-ohio.com](mailto:Detectives@mhpd-ohio.com)

Information can also be supplied to Crime Stoppers at its Hotline, 216-252-7463; submit a tip online at [WebTips](http://WebTips.com); or text message anonymously to: Text TIP657 plus your message to CRIMES (274637).

High temperatures have a more drastic effect on people in vulnerable populations including the elderly, children and those with preexisting medical conditions.

"As temperatures climb, we encourage everyone to take simple precautions to stay safe," said Cuyahoga County Director of Public Safety and Justice Services Brandy Carney. "Stay hydrated, limit time outdoors during the hottest parts of the day, keep a close eye on small children and older people, and ensure that pets have adequate shelter from the heat."

For cooling station options, call or visit the nearest Senior Center in your area. Slavic Villagers can also access information at University Settlement, 5115 Broadway Ave., Cleveland 44127, or call 216-641-8948.

The city of Cleveland has also announced it will serve lunches at the city's recreation centers to youth 18 and under from 12 to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

All available Cleveland spray parks / basins will be in operation any day of the week when the temperature is 80 degrees or higher. All available outdoor Cleveland pools are open from 12 to 7 p.m.; playground programs and youth outdoor sports will be cancelled.

## Heat Advisory issued for Cuyahoga County

Cuyahoga County is experiencing its first major heat wave of 2026. The National Weather Service has issued a heat advisory for Cuyahoga and several other Northeast Ohio counties from Tuesday, June 30, at 12 p.m., through Thursday, July 2, at 8 p.m.

The forecast estimates temperatures will reach the upper 80's to 90's; however, a heat index in the 105-degree range is expected. Extreme heat can be very dangerous and can cause heat-related illnesses including heat stroke, exhaustion, cramps and dehydration.

## Blood donor opportunities

### Cleveland

7/14/2026: 6 a.m. - 12 p.m., Dave McCall Union Hall, 3421 Independence Rd.

### Garfield Heights

7/10/2026: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Cuyahoga County Public Library, Garfield Heights Branch, 5409 Turney Rd.

### Independence



7/6/2026: 12 - 6 p.m., Independence Community Theater, 6652 Brecksville Rd.

(Continued on Page 7)



*Happy 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday, America!*

*Happy 4th of July*

**MAYOR PHIL STEVENS**  
City of Bedford Heights

*Have a Safe Summer!*

Have a Safe & Happy 4th!  
Happy 250<sup>th</sup> America!



**MICHAEL WILLIS**  
Councilman - Ward 3  
Council President



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# Slavic Village Dev. names new executive director Blood donors - Cont. from Page 6



**Mark W. Rantala**

Mark William Rantala has been named the new executive director of Slavic Village Development (SVD), which has had an interim director since Shauna Sanders stepped down from that position on May 15, 2026.

Rantala joins SVD with over 25 years of commercial real estate experience and over 12 years of economic development experience. He began his commercial real estate career in CBRE Group's Cleveland office,

where he led the Retail Practice Group and represented shopping centers, developers and retail tenants across Northeast Ohio as a first vice president.

His CBRE retail colleagues recognized him nationally with the Larry Perrish Leadership Award. He was a six-time member of the Cleveland office's Top 5, received the CBRE Tradition of Excellence Award, and authored the annual CBRE Retail Market Report. He later served as broker for his retail brokerage firm, Rantala & Co.

His economic development career started as director of the Nederland, Texas Economic Development Corporation. He was the executive director of the Lake County, Ohio Port and Economic Development Authority for eight years serving in Lake County's Economic Development Department and providing support to 230,000 residents of

Lake County and the 23 cities, villages and townships it encompasses.

He was responsible for the development of the Miracle League Field and Playground, "where every kid can play baseball" in Eastlake, Ohio. He was also responsible for the redevelopment of a 1960s land bank bungalow to serve as a model to showcase ideas for the conversion into an open concept plan.

He was the founder and principal advisor for his economic development consulting firm, Economic Development Opportunity Advisors, and provided consulting services for the development of new single-family housing.

He is a graduate of Columbia University where he played varsity football. He is married and has two daughters.

Submit Community events to NN via Email: [nnews1923@aol.com](mailto:nnews1923@aol.com)

7/15/2026: 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Crown Centre II, 5001 Rockside Rd.

7/17/2026: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Independence Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library, 6361 Selig Blvd.

### Maple Heights

7/6/2026: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., City of Maple Heights Senior Center, 15901 Libby Rd.

### Valley View

7/14/2026: 12 - 6 p.m., Valley View Community Center, 6828 Hathaway Rd.

7/16/2026: 12 - 6 p.m., Teamsters Local 507, 5425 Warner Rd., Unit 7

For more information or to schedule an appointment, download the American Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) or call 1-800-733-2767.

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Dr. Ringo is a Cleveland native who graduated from Bedford High School and was inducted into the Bedford High School Hall of Fame in 2003.

She served for 30 years in the Ohio Army National Guard and is the first African American female to reach the rank of Colonel.

Contact Exclusively Skin at 216-508-6500 or visit website: [www.exclusively-skin.com](http://www.exclusively-skin.com).

Happy 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday, America!

Have a Happy and Safe 4th of July



Mayor Annette M. Blackwell  
City Council and Staff  
City of Maple Heights



Wishing All our Neighbors and Friends in Ward 4 A Safe & Happy Fourth of July!



Councilman Avery Johnson and wife, Rochelle Johnson  
Garfield Heights Councilman Ward 4

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Mayor Matt Burke AND FAMILY

# Best Ever Letter to the Editor

This July 4th, America celebrates 250 years. An amazing feat, still the greatest Country in the world. Let freedom ring.

The best way to celebrate is by kindness to everyone, lend a helping hand. Give to the less fortunate. Be courteous on the road. Don't drive intoxicated or buzzed. Don't fire guns into the air - someone could get hurt.

Respect all life and put our differences aside. We are not just Republicans, Democrats or Liberals or Socialists. We are Americans. We have religious freedom and Freedom of speech.

I have lived 66 years in Garfield Heights and hope to last another 24. Garfield Heights is named after a President. Let's step up and show Ohio and our country that America is and always will be the best Country in the World and set an example for the rest of the World.

Exercise your freedom to vote. Cherish your fellow man - brothers and sisters we all are.

Happy Birthday Americans!

God love and protect us all.

Sincerely,  
Greg Skuta,  
Resident of Garfield Heights

# America 250 Walkathon kicks off celebrations in Garfield last Sunday



Garfield Heights kicked off its America 250 celebration last Sunday with an America 250 Walkathon, a family-friendly event led by Mayor Matt Burke and several councilpersons who joined residents to honor our nation's 250th birthday. The walk began at noon at Ss. Peter & Paul Church and traveled down Garfield Blvd., ending up at Donovan Park.

The top photo was taken in front of The Neighborhood News on the Boulevard, with the bottom picture showing the walkers at their park destination. Photos by Wendy Walters

# Cleveland Metroparks happenings

All programs are free unless marked otherwise. For questions or to register for programs, please visit [clevelandmetroparks.com](http://clevelandmetroparks.com) or call CanalWay Center at 216-206-1000. Also, call or visit the website to confirm that the program you wish to attend has not been changed or cancelled.

## GARFIELD PARK RESERVATION

**July 2: Kayaking and Stand Up Paddleboarding Demos.** Paddling is a fun way to explore Cleveland Metroparks. Drop-in and climb into an available kayak or onto a stand up paddleboard. Instructors will be on shore to assist with securely putting on a lifejacket, learning to use a paddle and to safely launch. 5 – 8 p.m. Garfield Park Program Center. Free.

**July 15: Garfield Park Walking Club.** Join our new walking club as a naturalist leads you on an exploration of the many scenic and tranquil pathways and trails of Garfield Park. Joining the club is easy and free - just show up in your favorite walking shoes, bring a water bottle and be ready to meet new people! 10 – 11 a.m. Garfield Park Pond.

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# Every Lot Has a Memory: 6305 Fleet Avenue

By Tom Kaschalk

At the corner of E. 63 St. and Fleet Ave. stands one of the neighborhood's most recognizable buildings. Many Clevelanders remember it as the longtime home of Seven Roses Polish Deli & Restaurant, a beloved neighborhood institution that operated there until 2021. Long before Seven Roses, it was known as the Rutkowski Building, a landmark in the heart of Cleveland's historic Polish community.

But this story isn't about that building. It's about the vacant parking lot next door.

Today, 6305 Fleet Ave. is easy to overlook. Cars come and go, and few people give the narrow strip of pavement a second thought. Yet for more than a century this small parcel witnessed the growth of the neighborhood around it. It was a place where families lived, merchants did business, political meetings were held, music was sold, drinks were poured and a dramatic gun battle once made headlines across Cleveland.

County property records date the building at 6305 Fleet Ave. to 1898. Like many commercial buildings constructed along Fleet during the neighborhood's boom years, it featured a storefront at street level with apartments above. This building was also owned by Joseph Rutkowski, who operated a dry goods business from the location as Fleet Ave. emerged as the commercial center of the city's growing Polish population.

The address quickly became more than a place to shop. By at least 1908, meetings of the Central Polish Republican Club were being held there, reflecting the growing civic and political influence of the neighborhood's immigrant residents. Fleet Ave. was becoming a place where newcomers not only built businesses but also established a voice in public life.

As the decades passed, the building adapted to changing times. One tenant operated a music store, selling Columbia phonographs and records during the early years of the recorded music revolution. Later occupants included a shoe repair business and a printing operation. Like many neighborhood storefronts, the building evolved with the needs of the community, housing a variety of small businesses that served local residents.

By the 1920s, the storefront had become associated with another activity common on Fleet Ave. during Prohibition. Newspaper accounts reveal at least one police raid involving the possession of liquor. Such incidents were hardly unusual in an immigrant neighborhood where social halls, taverns and informal gathering places remained an important part of community life despite federal restrictions.



**This parking lot, next to the former Seven Roses Polish Deli and Restaurant, was once the home of Casey's Tavern, 6305 Fleet Ave., one of many establishments the building housed over the years.**

Photo by Tom Kaschalk, 2026

The most dramatic chapter in the history of 6305 Fleet Ave. unfolded on the night of March 22, 1933.

A young girl ran from the store seeking help after three armed men attempted a robbery. Off-duty Cleveland patrolman Anthony Kalasinski happened to be nearby and rushed to the scene. Confronting the suspects outside the building, he exchanged gunfire with the robbers in a battle witnessed by neighborhood residents. Kalasinski was struck multiple times but continued fighting, killing one of the assailants before the others escaped. The story made front-page news throughout Cleveland. Weeks later, while recovering from his wounds, Kalasinski was awarded a Distinguished Service Medal for his actions.

Following the end of Prohibition, the building settled into what would become its longest and perhaps most familiar role: a neighborhood tavern.

Over the years it operated under several names, including the Henlaw Tavern, before settling in as Casey's Tavern. For generations of Fleet Ave. residents, it was one of the countless corner taverns that served as an extension of the neighborhood living room. Friends gathered after work, local news was exchanged, and familiar faces occupied the same stools year after year.

During the tavern years, the address became associated with Walter "Wally Chips" Czepczynski and his wife



**Casey's Tavern, 1959.** Photo from the Cuyahoga County Archives Property Tax Appraiser

Charlotte. Wally became well known throughout Northeast Ohio as a polka musician and entertainer. His band, Wally's Polka Chips, performed across the region, and he appeared on local television programs that brought polka music into thousands of homes. In many ways his story reflected the cultural traditions that helped define Fleet Ave. and the surrounding community.

As the neighborhood changed, so did the building. By the late 20th century, a pet store occupied the storefront. Eventually, after standing along Fleet for more than a century, the building was demolished in 2006.

Today only a parking lot remains. Most people driving past see empty pavement beside the former Seven Roses building. What they don't see are the generations of residents who lived in the upstairs apartments, the shoppers who visited neighborhood merchants, the political meetings, the music store customers, the tavern regulars, or the patrolman whose courage turned an ordinary storefront into front-page news.

That is the thing about empty lots. They often appear forgotten.

But every lot has a memory.

*(Tom Kaschalk is an author, volunteer researcher, historical consultant and native Clevelander who writes a monthly column for The Neighborhood News.)*



## The Neighborhood News

Since 1923 - Published every Wednesday

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