

# Beachwood Buzz

January 2026

Every Resident Every Month.

MAGAZINE

# MARGARET KONECKY

## A LIFE IN MUSIC, MEDICINE, AND SERENDIPITY

*Also inside:*

*City of Beachwood Insider*

Beachwood City Schools

BCC Spirit of Success Awards

Danielle Kaufman Saddles Up for Success

JFSA's Chesed Center

Fencing Finds a Foothold in Beachwood

Beachwood Men's Softball Celebration

*... and so much more!*



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## Letter from THE EDITOR

By Debby Zelman Rapoport



"The key to longevity is not intensity, but consistency."  
– Dan Buettner

"Action is the foundational key to all success."  
– Pablo Picasso

"Longevity isn't just about adding years to life – it's about adding life to years."  
– Dr. Peter Attia



## A Blue Zones Approach to the New Year

**A**s we step into a new year, I find myself pausing, reflecting, and asking what I can do differently this year to obtain better overall health and happiness. I'm not looking for grand resolutions that fade by February. Instead, I envision implementing sustainable habits that will help me live with more purpose, ease, and joy.

Over the past year, I've spent time exploring the science of the Blue Zones – the places Dan Buettner has brought to life through his research on how people live vibrantly well into their 90s and 100s. What inspires me most isn't just their longevity, it's that their well-being is seamlessly woven into the fabric of daily life. Their habits aren't forced. They're lived, loved, and are beautifully simple.

As 2026 unfolds, I'm choosing to begin my year with small, intentional actions inspired by the Blue Zones.

### Move Naturally

Focus less on exercise and more on natural movement. Park a little farther away, Take the stairs, go for short, mindful walks, or stretch between projects. Movement doesn't have to be dramatic to be meaningful, it just needs to be consistent. Our bodies were built to move, and regular movement keeps us more flexible, energized, and resilient.

### Eat Wisely

The Blue Zones teach us that food is both nourishment and connection, emphasizing plant-forward meals, smaller portions,

and the simple joy of cooking at home. The Okinawan principle of *hara hachi bu* encourages stopping when you're about 80% full, cultivating mindfulness and a natural sense of slowing down.

### Find Purpose

In Blue Zones, people wake up each day with a clear sense of purpose. For me, that purpose is rooted in community, creativity, and learning opportunities – connecting with people who inspire me, creating with intention, and staying curious as I continue to grow and evolve.

### Belong to Something Bigger

Whether through family, faith, friendships, or community, we are wired for connection. Showing up, being present, and truly caring for one another takes intention. In a world that glorifies busy, it's worth remembering that relationships are not a distraction from health – they are its foundation.

### Manage Stress Gracefully

Every Blue Zone centenarian has a way to unwind – through meditation, prayer, gardening, music, laughter, or simply slowing down. Stress is inevitable; how we release it is

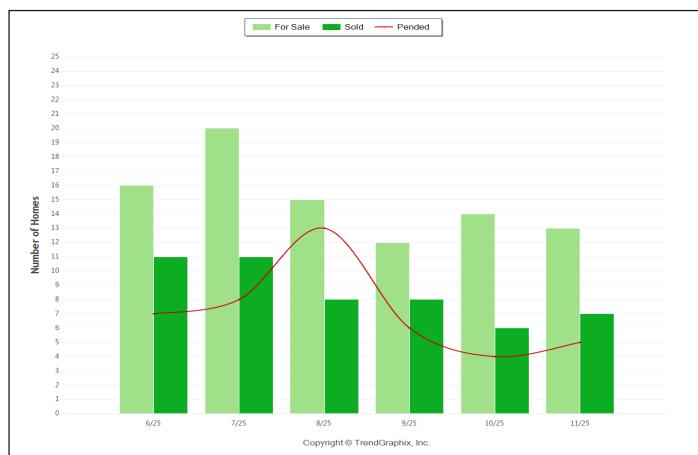
a choice. A deep breath, a quiet moment, a walk outside, or a calming conversation can make all the difference.

### Surround Yourself With the Right People

Our social circles shape us more than we realize. When we spend time with people who lift us up, encourage healthy choices, and see us clearly, it becomes easier to show up as our best selves. The right community doesn't just support wellness – it makes growth, balance, and possibility feel natural.

The Blue Zones remind us that a meaningful life isn't defined by the number of years we live, but by how intentionally we live within them. They show us that daily choices – made with consistency rather than perfection – build stronger foundations for good health, connection, and purpose.

Here's to beginning 2026 with clarity, intention, and an awareness of what we're creating – one meaningful choice at a time.



Happy New Year as we welcome in 2026! Last year ended on a positive note for home sales. The number of sold listings in November rose by 17% in comparison to the prior month. Current inventory decreased by 7% over the previous month, while market time was down 35%. Average list price to sale price held steady at 98%. Northeastern Ohio continues to be a desirable location attracting new residents from out of state, while Beachwood remains very competitive due to the quality and age of the housing stock, excellent schools, community amenities, and a stable commercial tax base!"

— Sharon Friedman

## Homes SOLD in Beachwood

Sept. 15, 2025 – Dec. 14, 2025

Street	Days	List	Sold	LP/SP%	Bed	Bath	Built
Glenhill	6	\$297,000	\$320,000	108%	4	2	1953
Halburton	6	\$377,000	\$333,000	88%	4	3	1956
Cedar	16	\$349,900	\$340,000	97%	3	2	1956
Fairmount	54	\$367,500	\$350,000	95%	3	3	1954
Halburton	51	\$399,900	\$375,000	94%	4	3	1937
Edgehill	82	\$379,900	\$375,000	99%	4	2	1954
Halburton	70	\$399,000	\$385,000	96%	4	4	1975
Ramsay	23	\$389,900	\$389,900	100%	3	2	1970
E Groveland	25	\$418,000	\$397,000	95%	3	3	1960
Halcyon	67	\$439,900	\$400,000	91%	4	3	1965
Campus	26	\$406,500	\$406,500	100%	4	2	1952
E Silsby	4	\$419,000	\$427,500	102%	3	3	1951
Halburton	5	\$499,000	\$505,000	101%	4	3	1956
Richmond	153	\$624,900	\$589,050	94%	3	3	2022
Penshurst	118	\$675,000	\$640,000	95%	4	3	1958
Wendover	162	\$650,000	\$650,000	100%	4	4	1959
Richmond	130	\$720,000	\$661,500	92%	3	3	2017
Green	4	\$625,000	\$686,000	110%	3	4	1956
Penshurst	7	\$720,000	\$694,000	96%	4	4	1958
Bryden	38	\$739,000	\$730,000	99%	4	4	1956
Fairwood	64	\$750,000	\$760,000	101%	3	4	2006
Bernwood	45	\$799,000	\$799,000	100%	5	6	1985
Deptford	68	\$1,395,000	\$1,280,000	92%	5	6	2016

### Beachwood Market Update

This data was provided by Sharon Friedman, courtesy of NEOHREX. Data provided was accurate at the time of reporting. The source for the spreadsheet is MLS Now. The market data is from Trendgraphix, Inc. Information is believed to be accurate, but not guaranteed. Data does not reflect sales of property not included in MLS. Consult a Realtor® if you have questions about the market.

## SHARON LISTS AND SELLS BEACHWOOD!



5 Hampshire Ct in The Village  
List price \$599,000  
2 Bed, 2.5 Bath TOWNHOME



25219 Duffield Road  
List price \$665,000  
4 Bed, 2.5 Bath SPLIT LEVEL



2500 Deborah Drive  
List price \$550,000  
3 Bed, 2.5 Bath RANCH



2172 Lyndway Road  
List price \$450,000  
3 Bed, 2.5 Bath COLONIAL



### Sharon's Recent Beachwood Sales & Listings

**NEW PRICE/RENT:** 25111 S Woodland Rd list \$499,000  
**NEW PRICE/RENT:** 23100 E Groveland Road list \$399,900  
**JUST SOLD 12/25:** 27500 Cedar #305 in Point East list \$349,900  
**JUST SOLD 11/25:** 23420 Wendover Drive list \$650,000  
**JUST SOLD 11/25:** 23105 E Groveland Road list \$418,000  
**JUST SOLD 11/25:** 24335 Fairmount Blvd list \$367,500  
**JUST SOLD 11/25:** 3194 Richmond Rd Wedgewood list \$325,000  
**JUST SOLD 10/25:** 26701 Bernwood Road list \$799,000  
**JUST SOLD 9/25:** 25106 Duffield Road list \$745,000  
**JUST SOLD 9/25:** 27500 Cedar #T8 in Point East list \$475,000  
**JUST SOLD 9/25:** 2152 Campus Road list \$406,500  
**JUST SOLD 9/25:** 3152 Richmond in Wedgewood list \$299,000  
**JUST SOLD 8/25:** 2834 Meldon Road list \$479,900  
**JUST SOLD 7/25:** 2449 Beachwood Boulevard list \$975,000  
**JUST SOLD 6/25:** 2560 Buckhurst Drive list \$925,000  
**JUST SOLD 6/25:** 25515 Halburton Road list \$585,000  
**JUST SOLD 6/25:** 4 Stratford Ct in The Village list \$499,000  
**JUST SOLD 6/25:** 3212 Richmond in Baywood list \$369,900  
**SOLD 4/25:** 25102 Wimbledon Road list \$524,900  
**SOLD AT LIST 3/25:** 24701 Wimbledon Road list \$539,900

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# Beachwood Buzz

Every Resident. Every Business. Every Month.

MAGAZINE

## Cover Story:

Margeret Konecky

A Life in Music, Medicine, and Serendipity



Margaret Konecky is a Beachwood resident whose life moves to its own unmistakable rhythm – one shaped by perfect pitch, intuitive insight, kindness, generosity, and a steadfast belief that nothing happens by accident. As Margaret shared her story, it unfolded like a beautifully orchestrated composition.

Full story, by Debby Zelman Rapoport, starts on page 7.

Cover image: Margaret, in her former Beachwood home. Photo by Marina Neyman.

## Who We Are

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Please send information about clubs, organizations, events and meetings to [beachwoodbuzz@gmail.com](mailto:beachwoodbuzz@gmail.com). The deadline is the 10th of each month.

### Article Submissions

If you have a story idea or photos you would like to share, email [beachwoodbuzz@gmail.com](mailto:beachwoodbuzz@gmail.com).

### Subscriptions

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### General Information

Beachwood Buzz is a privately owned, independent community magazine that supports the City of Beachwood and Beachwood Board of Education. We reserve the right to accept or decline any advertising or content.

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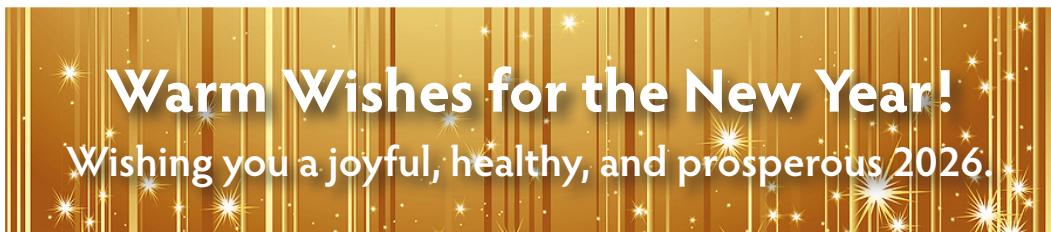
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# Jewish Clevelanders Raise a Record \$39,035,018 in This Year's Campaign

The Jewish Federation of Cleveland announced that a record \$39,035,018 has been raised by 9,036 gifts representing 12,094 donors in the 2026 Campaign for Jewish Needs. The Federation's annual Campaign provides the critical dollars necessary to help keep our diverse, local community safe, strong, vibrant, and welcoming, as well as serve the needs of the global Jewish community.

Additionally, the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation matched all new gifts dollar for dollar, and matched every additional dollar when gifts were increased by 10% or more from Sept. 7 – Nov. 1. Likewise, Brunswick Companies donated an additional \$1,000 to the 2026 Campaign in honor of every donor who upgraded to the next Giving Society during a Campaign event.

All of these totals were shared at the Campaign Closing event at Hebrew Academy of Cleveland on Dec. 8.

"This Campaign isn't the work of one person, but of an entire community standing shoulder to shoulder, showing up for one another and choosing, once again, to build a stronger Jewish future together," said Amir Jaffa, general Campaign chair. "Every gift, every phone call, every hour volunteered becomes safety, dignity, compassion, and hope for someone in need. Thank you to our community for their tremendous generosity."

In addition to celebrating the community's accomplishments in the 2026 Campaign, attendees welcomed special guest Eli Sharabi, Israeli author and hostage survivor. After 491 days in Hamas captivity, Eli returned home on Feb. 8, 2025. His bestselling memoir, *Hostage* – the first published by a survivor of Hamas captivity – shares a story of extraordinary resilience, courage, and hope.

Attendees also recognized Allison Brandon, recipient of the 2025 Ambassador Milton A. and Roslyn Z. Wolf Young Campaigner of the Year Award.

A dynamic and dedicated leader, Allison embodies the spirit of repairing the world (tikkun olam) through her service as YLD Campaign co-chair and Super Sunday Kickoff co-chair.

Finally, attendees expressed their gratitude to outgoing Campaign Chair Amir Jaffa for his leadership over the past two years. In this volunteer role, he has provided the

vision, strategy, and guidance behind the Federation's annual fundraising efforts.

"Amir led our community's annual Campaign with clarity, courage, and heart during one of the most challenging moments our community has faced," said Jeffrey J. Wild, Federation board chair. "He empowered new voices, embraced innovation, and modeled what it means

to lead with humility and conviction. Because of his unwavering dedication, our Campaign is stronger, our community is stronger, and the impact of his leadership will be felt long after his tenure."

For more information about the Jewish Federation of Cleveland and the Campaign for Jewish Needs, visit [www.jewishcleveland.org](http://www.jewishcleveland.org).



*Pictured, from top:*

- Author and hostage survivor Eli Sharabi shares his powerful story of resilience after 491 days in Hamas captivity.
- Dr. Nancy G. Wolf, daughter of Milton A. and Roslyn Z. Wolf, presents the 2025 Amb. Milton A. and Roslyn Z. Wolf Young Campaigner of the Year Award to Allison Brandon.
- Amir Jaffa reflects on his two-year tenure as general campaign chair.
- Federation staff pose with a slide of the 2026 annual Campaign for Jewish Needs grand total.



# MARGARET KONECKY

## A LIFE IN MUSIC, MEDICINE, AND SERENDIPITY

By Debby Zelman Rapoport

**M**argaret Konecky is a Beachwood resident whose life moves to its own unmistakable rhythm – one shaped by perfect pitch, intuitive insight, kindness, generosity, and a steadfast belief that nothing happens by accident. When we sat down to talk, Margaret was wearing piano-printed pants and a sparkly sweater, a visual echo of her vibrant spirit within. As she shared her story, it unfolded like a beautifully orchestrated composition – woven with music, medicine, deep connections, enduring friendships, creativity, and a lifetime of purpose and accomplishment.

"It all started at age 4," she began. "But honestly, I think I was born hearing the world in perfect pitch."

Margaret grew up in the Bronx with a piano-playing mother who was also a nurse, a sax-playing father who worked as a lithographer, and two sisters who played cello and clarinet. Long before she took a single piano lesson, she could hear a melody and reproduce it flawlessly. During her sister's piano lessons, she absorbed each piece by ear and played it back without ever seeing the score. When she told her teacher about a game she and her sisters played – naming every note she heard – her teacher smiled and said it wasn't a game at all. It was perfect pitch, one of music's rarest gifts.

When she was 8 years old, she composed her first song. "I had a crush on a boy at school and I wrote a song about him. Nobody will ever hear it," she said.

At age 12, Margaret auditioned for the New York Youth Symphony and was



Margaret, in the music room of her new home, resumed cello lessons after 50 years.  
Photo by Marina Neyman.



Margaret and Carl Topilow met in Breckenridge, Colorado, in 2018. In 2025, they celebrated her music, which was performed by Cleveland Pops Orchestra. Photo on left by Larry Osher. Photo on right by Marina Neyman.

accepted as a cellist, performing at Carnegie Hall under the baton of Leonard Slatkin. "My mother saw the open call in *The New York Times*," she said. "I was 12, walking into Carnegie Hall with a cello. It was surreal."

Throughout her school years, Margaret immersed herself in every ensemble available: band, orchestra, dance band, and chorus accompanist. A pivotal mentor, Michael Feldman, taught her how to accompany singers – a skill that continues to serve her well.

Margaret's musical journey accelerated when she auditioned for The Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art (from the movie *Fame*). Although technically a year too young, she was accepted with one condition: Don't tell anyone. "My friends thought I moved," she said with a smile.

Margaret auditioned on piano, cello, and clarinet, and became known for her accompanist skills – the only way to get her hands on a piano at LaGuardia. In college, she took tap dancing as well, studying under Jeanette Roosevelt, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's granddaughter. While helping as an assistant dance teacher, she got an ingrown toenail, which unexpectedly set the stage for the next chapter of her life.

"It got so bad that I went to see a podiatrist," she said. "How he treated me was a miracle. It was painless. That's when I thought I'd like to become a podiatrist, with the ability to relieve the pain of others."

After earning her degree from Barnard College, Columbia University, Margaret attended the Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine. While living in a dorm at Case Western Reserve University, she spent hours at the piano and continued her musical training with well-known teachers. She also returned to tap dancing, studying with Shirley Morgenstern, the late wife of Cleveland Pops Orchestra music director and conductor Carl Topilow. Although Margaret and Carl had not yet met, this connection would later mark the beginning of a friendship that would shape her musical path.

After earning her doctorate, Margaret built a respected career as a podiatrist, first establishing a private practice and then working in nursing homes throughout the region. Known for her skill, compassion, and unwavering dedication, she treated patients with a gentle touch and a deep commitment to improving their mobility and comfort. She retired in 2013.

Her reawakening to music continued in 1993 when pediatric neurologist, Dr. Morris Levinsohn, a marathoner and medical director of the Revco Marathon, asked her to compose a piece for the event.

"He knew of my musical inclinations and asked if I was up for the challenge," Margaret said. "So I asked him, 'If I write it, will they play it?'"

After he said "yes," Margaret disappeared into her studio for five days and emerged with *Runner's Fanfare*. "I've never done anything like this," she recalled. "I'm a classical pianist and was amazed at what I could do under pressure."

She then relived the moment as she told me what a thrill it was to hear her music broadcast during the race as she crossed the 10K finish line.

Margaret had found her niche and was off to the races, soliciting opportunities to compose theme songs for other marathons and races. "This was a passion project that I did for the love and joy of music," she said. "I already had a profession and never charged a fee. It was payment enough to stand in a crowd of thousands with my music filling the air."

She then told me that she gladly accepted a poster or T-shirt to document each event.

What followed was the creation of the following compositions:

- *Runners Glory* – New York City Marathon • New York, NY • 1993-1995
- *Northern Glory* – Anchorage Midnight Sun Marathon • Anchorage, AK • 1995
- *Running Rock* • Rock and Roll Hall of Fame 5k Race • Cleveland, OH • 1995
- *Eternal Hope* – Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure • Cleveland, OH • 1995
- *Walk With Me* – Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk • Cleveland, OH • 1995
- *Runners Pride* – Marine Corps Marathon • Arlington, VA • 1995
- *Runners Dream* – Boston Marathon (100th Anniversary) • Boston, MA • 1996
- *Triple Victory* – ITU Triathlon World Championships • Cleveland, OH • 1996

# ♪ Nothing happens by accident. ♪

- *Pacific Coasting* – Big Sur International Marathon • Big Sur, CA • 1996
- *River Run* – Cooper River Bridge Run • Charleston, SC • 1997
- *Emua Hawaii* – Great Trans Koolau Trek • Honolulu, HI • 1997
- *Rock 'n' Run* – San Diego Rock 'n' Roll Marathon • San Diego, CA • 1998

In 1995, *The Plain Dealer* featured Margaret on the front page of its Living section. The headline read *Maestro of the Marathons*, Margaret's nickname for inspiring runners with her original scores for many competitive races and charities.

In 2018, serendipity stepped in again. While taking a class on the afterlife, taught by Rabbi Shmueli Friedman, Margaret was asked to watch a five-minute video, titled *A Hole in Heaven*, a miracle story about Shmueli's father, and to then write a song. Although she initially collaborated with a lyricist, *The Promise*, in the end, was strong enough to stand on its own without lyrics.

A month later, while in Breckenridge, Colorado, for a podiatry conference, Margaret spotted a copy of *The Summit Daily* newspaper entertainment section on a nearby table, with Carl Topilow's photograph on the cover. By coincidence – or by destiny – Carl was rehearsing in the symphony hall, just a few feet away.

Margaret walked in to introduce herself – a simple act that sparked a rich friendship. When Carl learned about *The Promise*, he offered to arrange and record an orchestral version at the Cleveland Institute of Music with 50 of Cleveland's finest musicians.

"This was surreal," Margaret said. "Once it was arranged and recorded, it felt as though my soul had been woven into that piece."

Margaret's life dream was to have a live orchestra play something she wrote. In August 2024, that dream came true when the Cleveland Pops Orchestra premiered *Aspire*, in Elyria, a custom piece created for this show, with orchestration by Chris Neiner.

Then, on May 31, 2025, another dream was fulfilled when Carl conducted *A Marine's Salute*, with an incorporated anthem called *Pride's Salute*, sung by Connor Bogart O'Brien. This composition was performed at Severance Hall during the Cleveland Pops Orchestra's final concert of the season.

"I am so honored to have this song performed. This is the biggest event of my life – other than marrying my husband, Larry (Osher)," Margaret said on stage during a pre-concert conversation with Carl.



Millie LaRue, Tulip Cherie, and Addie Mae get cozy on one of Margaret's hand-made cashmere beds. Photo by Darsey Mitchell, their mother.

"What Margaret has accomplished is quite something," Carl said. "It has been pure joy to be a part of the process of bringing Margaret's beautiful music to life."

#### Rediscovering Her Roots

In 2020, after Margaret's mother passed away, she spent six months in her mother's New York apartment sorting through boxes of documents and memorabilia. "My mother kept everything," Margaret said, "And I inherited her instinct to carry on the tradition of saving."

As a result, Margaret dusted off articles and programs with information about people in her past with whom she would later reunite: a former teacher, Michael Feldman, who she hadn't communicated with in 57 years; a doctor with whom she did research 50 years ago; and former classmates. Previously she reconnected with her high school French teacher as well as with her kindergarten teacher.

"If you think of someone from your past, try to find them – or one of their relatives – to tell them what a wonderful influence they were on your life. Never give up on looking for someone because you just might find them."

"Music brought many of us together and the internet keeps us together," she added.

#### Never Give Up

Margaret's philosophy – rooted in her mother's wisdom – guides her daily life:

Never give up.

Notably, when Margaret served as project coordinator for a featured exhibit of Cleveland Photo Fest, titled *The Mayors, Managers and Trustees: A Portrait of Cuyahoga County Officials*, she was determined to achieve 100% participation. The goal of this initiative, created by photographer Herb Ascherman, was to coordinate 25 photographers with 65 participants – mayors, trustees, and officers – who represented every municipality in Cuyahoga County.

The exhibit was a collection of creative portraits that showcased a snapshot of each leader's personality as an individual, as seen through the lens of the photographer.

"I was instructed to call each office a couple of times and then give up," Margaret said. "I couldn't do that. I kept calling and following up with letters until everyone agreed to participate. I thank the secretaries and assistants with whom I worked for getting everyone on board."

**♪ You are never  
too old to realize  
a dream. ♪**



Margaret and her husband, Larry Osher, at a BlueWater Chamber Orchestra concert at Church of the Covenant in Cleveland. Photo by Molly Dumm.

Margaret paused, then added, "Never take no for an answer."

The exhibit opened on Sept. 6, 2024, at The Bostwick Design Art Initiative in Cleveland. At the opening, Herb said, "We would not be here tonight without the efforts of Margaret." He then placed a crown on her head and presented her with roses. "If it wasn't for you, none of us would be here tonight."

#### Cashmere for a Cause

In 2013, after retiring, Margaret partnered with seamstress Raffaella "Raffi" Peric to create cashmere sweaters for pets. Together, they built a business – The Elegant Hare – with distribution in New York and beyond. They participated in pet fashion shows, and were featured in a top NYC boutique and *Hamptons Dog Magazine*.

When Raffi retired to care for her ill husband, Margaret shifted her focus to repurpose cashmere sweaters into cashmere beds for small dogs. Combining her love of crafting with her passion for helping animals, she began to make these beds for friends. "I don't charge for them," she said. "Instead, I ask recipients to make a donation to a local rescue. When my creations help an animal or bring someone joy, that's all I need."

#### Beachwood Photography Group

Eleven years ago, when the Cuyahoga County Library system received a grant to sponsor artists in public spaces, Herb Ascherman was hired to teach an eight-week photography class. At the end of this course, the Beachwood Photo Group was created as an artistic outlet for photographers to continue working together.

"The Beachwood Photo Group morphed from a class I led at the Beachwood Library 11 years ago," Herb said. "Margaret, one of the class members, encouraged me to continue the experience and helped shape it into what it is today. Thanks to her endless energy, dedicated efforts, and stalwart support, we have become a vital organization. In a word, Margaret keeps us going."

The group's current show at the South Euclid Community Center runs through January.

#### What's Next?

Margaret is currently working on three books:

*The Box Under the Bed* - Inspired by a metal box under the bed in which Margaret's mother saved everything. "It's like going on a treasure hunt," she said.

♪ **Music created so many relationships in my life. Those relationships led me to where I am now.** ♪

*Coincidence, I think NOT* – A collection of serendipitous stories that underscore Margaret's belief that everything happens for a reason.

*Dr. Joseph Garrison Parker, the Artist No One Knew* – A story about Margaret's uncle, a brilliant physician and artist whose life was lost to leukemia at age 29.

Margaret continues to take lessons with Marshall Griffith, "the greatest piano and theory teacher in the world," and Kent Collier, "the greatest cello teacher in the world." She also continues to compose.

As she reflects on her journey from the Bronx to Carnegie Hall to Severance Hall – with unexpected twists and turns along the way – she smiles. "Music created so many relationships in my life and those relationships led me to where I am now."

In her new Beachwood home, she has a dedicated space for her 1925 Wm. Knabe baby grand piano, which was a gift from her cousin, and another room as her music studio, where her music-themed wardrobe hangs.

Margaret's story is one of extraordinary talent, perseverance, and connection. Through music, she has forged enduring friendships, inspired communities, and created works that continue to resonate. Her life is a testament to following passion, embracing opportunity, and finding harmony between professional achievement and artistic devotion. In closing, she said, "Stay curious. Reconnect when someone crosses your mind. And remember, you are never too old to realize a dream."

She added, "Nothing happens by accident – even if I can't always make sense of the bad things. Serendipity reminds me that some moments simply aren't coincidences; they're too perfectly aligned to be chance."

*Special thanks to Brian Sokol for introducing me to Margaret, making it possible to share her story with the Beachwood community.*



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January 2026 ■ Beachwood Buzz 11



## START 2026 STRONG



Address Pain, Dizziness,  
and Movement Issues  
Before They Slow You Down

### Empowering Your Health, One Step at a Time.

**As a new year begins, many people in Beachwood and surrounding communities set health goals -**

exercise more, move better, lose weight, or simply feel stronger. But one of the most overlooked steps to achieving these goals is addressing the physical limitations that are already present. Lingering pain, stiffness, dizziness, or poor balance often hold people back long before they start a new fitness routine.

Physical therapy is one of the most effective ways to correct these underlying issues before they become bigger problems. At Balance Solutions Physical Therapy in Beachwood, our team specializes in helping individuals move better, feel better, and stay active throughout the year.

Let's be honest - most of us tend to brush off those "little" aches and quirks our bodies throw at us. A stiff back in the morning? "I slept funny." A twinge in the knee? "Probably the weather." A moment of dizziness when standing up? "Just getting older." But those small annoyances have a habit of growing louder over time. When we ignore early warning signs, our bodies often compensate in ways that create even bigger problems. Taking care of these minor issues now is like giving your future self a gift - one wrapped in comfort, strength, and fewer surprises.

**Here's to a Stronger,  
Stadier New Year!  
Make This the Year You  
Feel Your Best!**

And what better time than right now? Winter in Beachwood may have us moving a little slower, but spring is right around the corner—and with it comes gardening, golf, pickleball, long walks outside, vacations, and far more activity. The best way to enjoy all of that without pain or hesitation is to start preparing your body now. Think of physical therapy as your pre-spring tune-up. A little focused work today means more freedom, more comfort, and more fun once the weather warms up. Address the small issues before they become big ones, and you will step into spring stronger, steadier, and ready for anything.

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# Address Pain, Dizziness, and Movement Issues Before They Slow You Down



## Prevent Falls and Improve Your Sense of Stability

Falls are not just a problem for older adults. Subtle changes in strength, coordination, or inner-ear function can affect anyone. Many people write off dizziness or unsteadiness as “just getting older,” but these symptoms often have treatable causes.

Our Doctors of Physical Therapy assess cervical issues, vertigo, BPPV, chronic dizziness, visual motion sensitivity, and balance deficits. Through targeted exercises, manual techniques, and specialized vestibular rehabilitation, we help patients regain stability, reduce fall risk, and move with confidence.

## Relieve Common Orthopedic Aches and Pains

Back pain, shoulder irritation, knee stiffness, or recurring muscle tightness can significantly interfere with daily life - and often worsen when ignored. Our Doctors of Physical Therapy identify the root cause of these limitations and create individualized treatment plans using strengthening, mobility training, hands-on manual therapy techniques, and movement correction.

Whether you are recovering from an injury, preparing to return to exercise, or trying to stay active without pain, early intervention ensures a safer, healthier start to your year.

## Start Your Year Strong with FOUR FREE Add-On Interventions

To celebrate the start of 2026, Balance Solutions is offering an exclusive promotion for new and returning patients:

Complete your physical therapy evaluation and receive **ALL FOUR** of these add-on interventions **FREE**:

- A 30-minute massage
- A 15-minute dry needling session
- A 15-minute deep tissue laser therapy session
- A 45-minute TRX class

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Mention “The New Year Buzz” when scheduling to receive your special offer.

**Make 2026 the year you invest in your health - and let Balance Solutions be your partner in the journey.**



## Your Wellness Hub for Movement, Strength, and Recovery

Balance Solutions is more than a traditional physical therapy clinic. We provide a comprehensive range of therapeutic and wellness-based services to support whole-body health:

- Myofascial Release & Manual Therapy: Helps improve mobility, reduce muscle tension, and improve alignment.
- Therapeutic Massage: Encourages circulation, flexibility, and relaxation to complement your recovery.
- Dry Needling: Reduces muscle trigger points, improves range of motion, and decreases pain.
- Deep Tissue Laser Therapy: Supports tissue healing by reducing inflammation and promoting cellular repair.
- Personalized Exercise Programs and TRX-Based Strengthening: Build strength and stability safely under professional guidance.

This integrated approach allows patients to address pain, prevent injury, and maintain long-term wellness.

**If you are ready to move better, feel stronger, and start the new year with fewer limitations, schedule your physical therapy evaluation today!**

# Spirit of Success Awards Celebrate Leadership, Innovation, and Community Impact

**O**n Wednesday, Dec. 10, the Beachwood Chamber of Commerce hosted the 2025 Spirit of Success Awards at the Mandel Theatre on the Tri-C East Campus, honoring individuals and organizations whose achievements strengthen the Beachwood community.

"The Spirit of Success Awards highlight individuals who exemplify excellence in their workplaces and contribute to the vitality of our city," said Mayor Justin Berns. "These honorees go above and beyond, strengthening connections among businesses, employees, and civic partners and helping foster a culture of collaboration and progress."

Beachwood Chamber director David Lapierre echoed the sentiment: "Tonight, we gather to celebrate the extraordinary individuals and organizations whose dedication, leadership, and passion strengthen the fabric of our community and elevate Beachwood as a place to live, work, and thrive."

Beachwood Chamber president Scott Morrison added, "To our award winners, congratulations on this well-deserved recognition. Each of you has demonstrated outstanding commitment – whether through innovation, service, mentorship, or community impact. Your achievements inspire us, set new standards of excellence, and reflect the very best of what our business and nonprofit community can accomplish."

This year's keynote speaker was Destiny Burns, owner and founder of CLE Urban Winery. After graduating high school in 1982, she enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a Russian Linguist, beginning a 20-year military career that culminated in her retirement as a Cryptologic Officer. She later built a second career as a defense-industry executive and served her Northern Virginia community as a volunteer firefighter/EMT.

At age 50, newly divorced and with her adult daughter launched, Destiny moved back to Cleveland

to pursue a bold new vision: opening a "craft brewery-style" urban winery that will celebrate its 10th anniversary in July 2026. Destiny has since reinvented herself again as an author, coach, and speaker. Her book, *My Why and I: A Rebel's Guide to a Why-Centered Lifestyle*, was published in 2023. She also serves as an adjunct faculty member at Baldwin Wallace University, teaching Innovation & Entrepreneurship.

Special thanks to Ohio State Rep. Eric Synenberg, who presented Ohio House proclamations signed by the elected officials who represent each recipient's community.

The 2025 Spirit of Success Awards were sponsored by Austin Powder Company, City of Beachwood, Civista Bank; plus, community sponsors Crestmont Automotive, and Dollar Bank.

Congratulations to this year's recipients!

## Young Professional Award **Lauren Shew**

Lauren Shew brings four years of human resources experience across the manufacturing and healthcare sectors. As manager of training at ERC, she oversees training schedules, collaborates with expert facilitators, and manages assessments and consultative services. Previously, Lauren served as an HR generalist at Ramco Specialties, where she managed the HRIS system, full-cycle recruiting, and employee benefits, including 401(k) programs. She holds a bachelor's degree in health services administration from Ohio University. Outside of work, Lauren enjoys hiking, biking, cooking, and attending concerts.

## Healthcare Hero Award

### **Rabbi Shalom Plotkin**

Rabbi Shalom Plotkin, CEO of Right at Home, is a dedicated community advocate with a deep commitment to supporting the senior population. Focused on helping individuals maintain independence and receive care in the comfort of their homes, Shalom and his team provide compassionate services ranging from meal preparation to 24-hour assistance. With years of experience, they prioritize safety, dignity, and overall well-being, consistently going above and beyond to deliver exceptional, personalized care to the community.

## Nonprofit of the Year **Jewish Family Services Association**

Since 1875, JFSA Cleveland has provided progressive, comprehensive support to individuals and families, helping them navigate life's challenges with confidence. The organization works closely with clients to identify the right solutions, offering services that address mental illness, developmental disabilities, aging, domestic violence, homelessness, financial hardship, and more.

*Award accepted by Patty Rubin, board chair.*

## Economic Development Impact **Austin Powder Company**

Founded in 1833 in Akron, Austin Powder Company is Ohio's oldest manufacturing company and one of the world's longest-standing producers of industrial explosives. In 2024, the company deepened its commitment to sustainability by appointing its first Global Sustainability Director to advance environmental

responsibility across its operations. Later that year, Austin Powder was partially acquired by American Industrial Partners, a private equity firm specializing in industrial businesses. Today, the company operates in more than 27 countries and employs more than 5,200 people worldwide.

*Award accepted by John Rathbun, CEO.*

## Chamber Bright Star Award

### **Tina Turick**

Each year, the Northern Ohio Area Chambers of Commerce recognize an outstanding chamber member who is making a meaningful impact in their community through their local chamber. This year, Tina, City of Beachwood administrator, was honored for her dedication, leadership, and significant community impact. Tina's commitment to strengthening local businesses, fostering connections, and supporting initiatives that drive growth and collaboration distinguishes her as a true leader. A shining example of service and excellence, she inspires others and helps elevate the entire Beachwood community.

## Community Partner Award **Tri-C Eastern Campus**

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) is a public institution serving Northeast Ohio through multiple campuses and centers. Offering associate degrees, certificates, workforce training, and professional development across more than 200 programs, Tri-C is committed to providing accessible and affordable education for all learners.

The college plays a vital role in workforce development,



Beachwood Chamber of Commerce 

with many graduates living and working in the region. As a dedicated community partner, Tri-C strengthens the area by equipping individuals with the skills, knowledge, and opportunities needed to thrive.

*Award accepted by Meagan Gibson, community liaison.*

#### **Extra Mile Award** **Sadigoh Galloway**

Founded by Sadigoh Galloway, Your Recovery Counseling is dedicated to helping individuals build healthier, more fulfilling lives. The organization provides compassionate support for those navigating emotional challenges and substance use, guiding clients toward meaningful behavior change, happiness, and long-term well-being. Committed to ethical, evidence-based care, Your Recovery Counseling promotes dignity, self-worth, and positive outcomes for every client. By delivering high-quality behavioral health services and consistently going above and beyond, Sadigoh and her team meet the needs of individuals, families, and the broader community.

#### **Small Business of the Year** **Apex Skin**

Founded by Dr. Jorge Garcia-Zuazaga, Apex Skin is dedicated to transforming lives through healthy skin. The practice empowers

patients by treating conditions such as skin cancer, psoriasis, and acne, helping individuals regain both health and confidence. Apex combines medical expertise with a patient-centered approach, creating a friendly, efficient, and welcoming environment. By reducing wait times, offering accessible care, and prioritizing meaningful patient experiences, Apex has become one of Northeast Ohio's most trusted and valued dermatology practices.

*Award accepted by Johanna Tanno, marketing director.*

#### **Business of the Year** **Crestmont Automotive**

Crestmont Automotive stands out for its professional team and commitment to delivering a seamless car-buying experience. Supported by an expert service department that professionally handles everything from routine maintenance to complex repairs, Crestmont ensures quality and convenience at every step. Additionally, Crestmont is celebrated for its unwavering community support, consistently giving back and making a meaningful impact. Its commitment to both customers and the community solidifies its reputation as a premier business in Northeast Ohio.

*Award accepted by Alex Park, president.*



Photos, by Scott Morrison, Discovery Photo, pictured from top:  
 • Back row: Sadigoh Galloway (Your Recovery Counseling), Tina Turick (City of Beachwood), Patty Rubin (JFSA), and Alex Park (Crestmont Automotive). Front row: Johanna Tanno (Apex Skin), Meagan Gibson (Tri-C), John Rathbun (Austin Powder Company), Rabbi Shalom Plotkin (Right at Home), and Lauren Shew (ERC).  
 • Ohio State Rep. Eric Synenberg presents proclamations to each awardee.  
 • David Lapierre, Beachwood Chamber director; Mayor Justin Berns; and Scott Morrison, Beachwood Chamber president.  
 • Keynote speaker Destiny Burns energizes a packed Mandel Theatre as Beachwood's Spirit of Success Awards celebrates the leaders and changemakers who strength our community.

# Danielle Kaufman Saddles Up for Success

**W**hen Danielle Kaufman, Beachwood High School graduate, class of 2018, rolled into the Devon Horse Show last spring, she hadn't slept in nearly three days. She had hauled six horses from Texas over 37 hours, fueled by determination and grit. Her homebred pony, AB Designer Debut – nicknamed Scarlet – won Best Young Pony, one of the most prestigious titles in the country. "It wasn't luck," Danielle says. "It was hard work paying off." And she's only 24.

The Devon Horse Show & Country Fair, founded in 1896 in Pennsylvania, is the oldest and one of the highest-ranked horse shows in the United States. Only the most elite horses and riders qualify to compete, making a win at Devon a defining milestone for breeders, trainers, and competitors.

Danielle grew up riding hunters and jumpers at Maypine Farm, spending every spare minute in a barn – cleaning stalls, teaching lessons, running camp programs, and competing on the Interscholastic Equestrian Association team. Even as a teen, she felt a different spark: breeding. Helping deliver her first foal shaped her future and ignited a passion that would guide her decisions for years to come.

After studying Animal Science and Horse Production at The Ohio State University, Danielle applied for breeding jobs across the country, even those outside her English-hunter background. One opportunity changed everything. She flew to Fort Worth for an interview at Double Dove Ranch, a top-tier cutting horse operation, and was hired on the spot. A week later, she moved to Texas, ready to manage some of the most elite mares and stallions in the world.

For three and a half years, Danielle ran much of the operation on her own in a fast-paced, high-pressure environment. She cared for dozens of horses across multiple disciplines – cutting, reining, reined cow horse, and hunter pony. Her work included sale fitting, embryo transfers, foal watch, ranch maintenance, halter breaking, and riding. During that time, she was part of a team

achieving major milestones: All Spice, an NCHA Futurity winner in 2020 and Horse of the Year in 2021; Smooth Talkin Style, the leading freshman sire; and working alongside Gail Holmes, one of the top quarter horse breeders in the world.

"It was grueling, high-pressure, and sometimes lonely," Danielle said. "But my passion for learning and excelling outweighed the long hours and tough treatment."

Eventually, Danielle took the leap to start her own operation. She purchased a small farm in Azle, Texas, just under three acres, and founded Alef Bet Farm, a name honoring her Jewish identity and the values instilled by her parents and community in Beachwood.

Today, she runs the farm entirely on her own, managing about 20 mares, performing reproductive work, developing young horses, and raising her own hunter ponies for top-tier competition. Scarlet, her Devon winner, was her first homebred – a pony she describes as "a little spicy, but fiercely loyal."

"There's no reason I should be able to do this," Danielle said. "I don't have family down here; I'm doing it on my own. I've worked hard because I wanted this badly. People told me it would take 40 years to go to Devon with a homebred. I did it on my first try."

Danielle told us that her drive comes from her parents' work ethic and problem-solving mindset – along with her Beachwood upbringing, where ambition wasn't a dream, it was a standard.

"Growing up, no one ever told me I couldn't," she said. "I was always taught to figure it out."



*Top:* Danielle proudly stands in the winners circle during her first-time win at the Devon Horse Show with Morgan Shortt, her mentor, and Charlie Brown, the horse's handler.  
*Bottom:* Danielle lovingly works on her farm.

Breeding horses is emotionally and physically brutal. Mares lose pregnancies, foals struggle, and millions of dollars rest on Danielle's decisions. Spring breeding season means working 4 a.m.–11 p.m. shifts, since horses don't plan their foals around human schedules.

"It's the hardest job – physically, mentally, emotionally," Danielle admits. "You have to love the animal more than the outcome."

Her clients trust her because she cares deeply about every horse, every detail, and every outcome. It's not about financial

gain – it's about excellence, passion, and ensuring the next generation of champions.

With one Devon champion under her belt, Danielle is looking ahead to breeding the next generation of hunter ponies as well as breeding a futurity winner in the cutting, reining and reined cow horse – proof that you really can live the best of both worlds.

"If you want something bad enough, it can happen," Danielle says. "You just have to be willing to do the work. Dreams don't arrive by invitation, they show up when you do."

# What's New at JFSA's Chesed Center: Expanding Support, Services, and Community Impact

Jewish Family Service Association (JFSA) offers crucial support to Cleveland's Jewish community through the Cleveland Chesed Center, which merged with JFSA in 2021.

The Chesed Center provides kosher food, clothing, and school supplies, and serves as the central access point for other culturally sensitive JFSA programs, including Forward Focus financial literacy programs, the Hebrew Shelter Home, employment support, domestic violence services, Israel seminary financial aid, Holocaust Survivor Support, Jewish summer overnight camperships, and more recently, services for children with special needs. In fact, the Chesed Center provides substantial food stipends to hundreds of families every month.

Today, amid financial uncertainty and changing community needs, Jewish Family Service Association's Chesed Center remains a vital source of stability and compassion. Recent renovations and program enhancements have expanded the Center's ability to provide not only food assistance, but also holistic, wrap-around support that addresses the broader challenges families face.

The updated space now includes private offices that allow staff to meet confidentially with clients,

strengthening intake, referrals, and coordination with services such as budgeting and debt counseling, mental health care, senior support, and family advocacy. This integrated approach ensures a more dignified experience and recognizes that food insecurity rarely exists in isolation.

Renovations have also enabled new health initiatives, including medical and dental screening clinics that connect clients – especially seniors – to timely, affordable care through the primary care resources of JFSA's Alyson's Place Medical Clinic.

The Center's responsiveness was especially evident during the recent SNAP disruption, when it distributed hundreds of additional food packages to families facing sudden shortages, with support from key partners, including the Jewish Federation of Cleveland.

As the Chesed Center continues to grow, its mission remains unchanged: to promote dignity, health, and access to essential resources so every community member can thrive.

To access the Chesed Center's resources, call 216.932.3115.



## He's always been your pillar of strength.



## Let us help support him now.

JFSA's **Caring at Home** services can help you help your parents with cooking, shopping, laundry, housekeeping, as well as their bathing, grooming, and dressing needs. We can also help with post-hospital recovery and rehabilitation. You don't need to do this alone.

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Call **216.378.8660** today for a free assessment, or visit [jfsa-cleveland.org](http://jfsa-cleveland.org).



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*Attention camps and summer programs:  
Check out details about our February and March advertising promotions. For details, see page 27.*

JFSA Cleveland helps individuals and families with **solutions** to face life's **challenges** with **confidence**.



## Goodbye, 2025

By Jennifer Stern

**G**oodbye, 2025. What a year! 2025 will always be the year that my faith in humanity, democracy, and human decency was challenged. Do unto others took on a whole new meaning. As did the Ten Commandments, the Constitution, and any other liturgy that encourages us to do and be better. To care about others. To do no harm.

My nightly prayers have become more pleading. Please let us choose peace, compassion, and integrity. Please do not let the efforts of those who came before us (what they stood for, marched for, fought for, voted for) regress, disappear.

May 2026 be a year of restored reason, respect, compassion, integrity, honor and collaboration for the greater good, for all humanity.

Amanda Gorman, the first U.S. National Youth Poet Laureate, captures my prayer for 2026 beautifully:

"So we lift our gazes not to what stands between us, but what stands before us.

We close the divide because we know to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside.

We lay down our arms so we can reach out our arms to one another, we seek harm to none and harmony for all."

~ Amanda Gorman

As we welcome 2026, may we lean into compassion, choose understanding over division, and rediscover the goodness in one another. Wishing all of us a year guided by hope, integrity, and love.

*Jennifer Stern, LISW, is a Loss and Bereavement Specialist at Ellen F. Casper, PH.D and Associates in Beachwood. For more information, call 216.464.4243, or visit [www.transformativegrief.com](http://www.transformativegrief.com) and sign up for monthly posts.*

## Yarn Over Beachwood

Participants of Yarn Over Beachwood knit, crochet, and loom items for several places and organizations throughout Northeast Ohio.

The group shares ideas, patterns, projects, websites, links to patterns, and more.

Meetings are held the first Friday of each month from 10-11:30 a.m. at the Beachwood Library. Upcoming meetings are Jan. 2 and Feb. 6.

Participants create varied projects, including hats, scarves, bunnies, bears, lapghans, soap sacks, and more. Winter items are needed and yarn donations are always welcome.

For more information or to donate yarn, contact Iris November at 216.375.9111 or [lbryclub@gmail.com](mailto:lbryclub@gmail.com).

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# The Missed Opportunity of Property Tax Reform

By State Senator Kent Smith

**W**hen the Ohio legislature first tried to implement property tax reform in the 2025 operating budget, Gov. Mike DeWine vetoed nearly every property tax measure lawmakers sent him as part of the state's budget.

"I felt these ideas were thoughtful," DeWine told reporters at the time. "But I was also concerned that imposing them now, all of them at once on our local schools, would create a huge, huge problem."

Gov. DeWine wasn't the only Republican who thought that the collection of GOP-sponsored bills to fix the property tax crisis would cause more problems than provide solutions.

Sen. Bill Blessing of suburban Cincinnati made several predictions in a speech on the Senate floor following the adoption of the package of bills. These are his words:

"First, we're going to see an increase in the number of levies

over the coming years. ... Second, we'll see more districts in fiscal watch and fiscal emergency. ... Third, local governments and school districts will direct their ire at the state when they go to the ballot. ... Fourth, bond ratings for local governments and school districts will go down, which will lead to increased borrowing costs. ... Fifth, services will almost certainly be cut if levies fail to pass. ... Sixth, the electorate is likely to be underwhelmed by these changes. They don't amount to immediate tax relief, and they may very well still be angry even after the fact."

Sen. Blessing concluded his predictions with the following statement, "If this is all correct, what does a long-term

fix look like? I really think it's as simple as boosting state-level school funding."

Both Gov. DeWine and Sen. Blessing thought that the collection of newly adopted property tax pieces of legislation would hurt schools and not deliver meaningful relief to property owners.

What would have delivered a better solution? Two things – one of which both Gov. DeWine and Sen. Blessing all but said: Ohio should have fully funded the Fair School Funding plan. The best thing the state can do to relieve the increasing burden of property tax is do a better job of paying for the cost of public education. Period.

The second thing is to adopt a property tax circuit breaker, which 29 states have already implemented. Simply put, it states that if owners or renters are paying beyond a certain percentage of their income in property tax, the state pays the balance.

Having the state pay its portion of the true cost to educate our kids, along with targeted property tax relief for those who need it most, is what Ohio needs. We did not get either this time, which means property tax reform has not yet come to Ohio.

*State Senator Kent Smith represents Ohio's 21st Senate District which includes most of the East Side suburbs of Cuyahoga County and about 33% of the City of Cleveland.*

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# The Insider

CITY OF  
Beachwood  
Mayor Justin Berns

Keeping you connected to The City of Beachwood!

January 2026

## The Mayor's Message Advancing Our Community in 2026

Dear Beachwood Residents,

Happy New Year! As we enter 2026, I am optimistic about what lies ahead. I look forward to working alongside residents, businesses, and city staff to ensure Beachwood remains a forward-thinking, collaborative city where progress is shared by all. Together, I am confident we will strengthen what makes us exceptional and achieve new milestones throughout the year.

*"As we enter 2026, I am optimistic about what lies ahead. I look forward to working alongside residents, businesses, and city staff to ensure Beachwood remains a forward-thinking, collaborative city where progress is shared by all."*

Over the past several months, my administration has reviewed the many community and special events that make Beachwood such a welcoming place to live. After evaluating participation, logistics, and resource allocation, we identified opportunities to improve efficiency and enhance convenience for residents and stakeholders. I am pleased

to share several updates that reflect our commitment to delivering meaningful, engaging, and accessible programming for all.

To best serve our community during the winter months, we have decided to retire the annual February Freeze event and introduce two new indoor programs tailored to our younger residents and their families. These events will encourage creativity, connection, and fun — without the unpredictability that often comes with Ohio's winter weather.

On Jan. 25, from 12:00–2:00 p.m., we invite families to join us inside the Beachwood Community Center for our Winter Warm-Up: Disney Edition. This festive afternoon will feature crafts, games, and hands-on activities



for children ages 12 and younger. Registration is required, and we look forward to seeing many of our young residents enjoy this new winter event.

Then, on Feb. 12, we are excited to launch our Teen Night Glow Dance Party for ages 13–17. This high-energy event gives our teens a space of their own to connect, celebrate, and enjoy a night of music and fun — registration is required. Together, these new programs allow our Community Services team to focus on impactful indoor activities while ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for all participants.

In addition to updates to our winter programming, my administration is making a meaningful change to the 2026 State of the City Address. This year, we will combine the State of the City with the Mayor's Business Reception to create a unified event that brings together residents, business owners, and community partners. This combined format will foster dialogue, collaboration, and a shared vision, strengthening the connection between our business community and the residents who help Beachwood thrive. More details will be shared next month across all city information channels.

Thank you for your continued engagement and support. I look forward to working alongside each of you to make 2026 a productive, positive, and inspiring year for Beachwood.

Sincerely,

**Mayor Justin Berns**  
MayorBerns@beachwoodohio.com

## Beachwood City Council



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Council President  
216.291.2797



Danielle Shoykhet  
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**How To Email A Council Member:** FirstName.LastName@BeachwoodOhio.com

**Beachwood City Hall**  
25325 Fairmount Blvd.  
Beachwood, OH 44122

**216.464.1070**



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**CLERK OF  
COUNCIL**  
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SERVICES**  
216.292.1970

**ECONOMIC  
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**LAW**  
216.595.5462

**MAYOR'S OFFICE**  
216.292.1901

**POLICE**  
216.464.2343

**PUBLIC WORKS**  
216.292.1922

**EMERGENCY**  
Dial 9-1-1 or  
216.464.1234

# Legislative Update

**Nov. 17, 2025 - Dec. 1, 2025**

The city is focusing on six key areas essential for the city's advancement, which serve not only as a roadmap, but as a guiding light for our city's progress. Each legislative update highlights these areas.

## Nov. 17 City Council Meeting

### Fiscal Responsibility:

City Council has approved the City of Beachwood's 2026 budget, along with all related appropriations and expenditures. This approval follows a series of in-depth committee meetings between City Council and the Administration, during which leaders evaluated each department's budget proposal to ensure responsible stewardship of public funds and alignment with the city's long-term priorities.

## Dec. 1 City Council Meeting

### Public Safety:

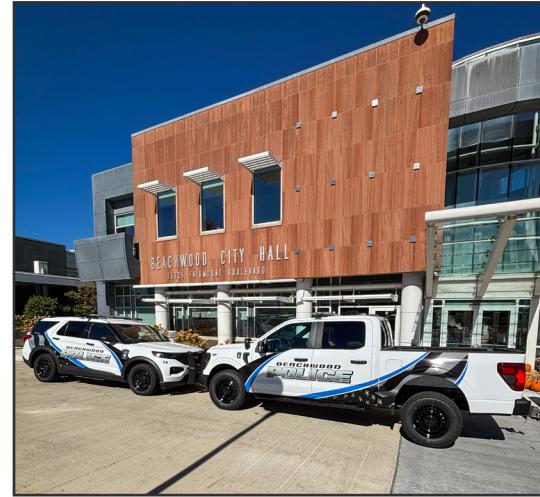
City Council has authorized funding for 12 new ballistic vests for Beachwood Police Officers, ensuring our officers are equipped with up-to-date, life-saving protective gear. Each vest has a five-year service lifespan, after which it must be replaced to maintain safety standards. The city will pursue a 50% reimbursement through the U.S. Justice Department's Bulletproof Vest Partnership program, contingent on its continued availability.

### Community Engagement:



City Council has approved funding to refresh and modernize the graphics on all Beachwood Police vehicles. This rebranding initiative, led by Chief Grispino and Lt. Kevin Owens, strengthens both internal identity and community-facing visibility.

The updated design aligns with the department's strategic plan and replaces graphics that have been in place for over a decade.



*Right: New Beachwood Police Department vehicle graphics on display in front of City Hall.*

**STAY ENGAGED IN  
YOUR COMMUNITY:**



Meeting agendas, minutes including legislation, live and recorded meetings are available on our website at [BeachwoodOhio.com](http://BeachwoodOhio.com) or please attend an upcoming meeting.

# Protect Your Home and Family: Smoke Alarm Safety Tips

Working smoke alarms are a critical part of home safety. A properly functioning smoke alarm can cut your risk of death or injury in a home fire by half! Unfortunately, nearly all smoke alarm failures are caused by missing or dead batteries. Regular maintenance and proper placement can save lives, so here's what every Beachwood resident needs to know:

### Installation and Placement

- For the best protection, install a combination of hard-wired alarms with battery backup.
- If you are unsure where to install smoke alarms, use the Safety Corner guide located on First Alert's website: <https://www.firstalert.com/blogs/safety-corner>
- If anyone in your home is hard of hearing, consider alarms with strobe lights or bed shakers.

### Maintenance Tips

- Test Monthly:** Press the test button on your alarms every month to ensure they work properly.
- Change Batteries:** If your alarms use regular batteries, replace them at least once a year. A chirping sound means it's time for a fresh battery.
- Replace Alarms:** Smoke alarm sensors wear out over time. Replace each alarm at least every 10 years or sooner if there's no manufacturing date on the label.
- Keep Them Clean:** Dust and cobwebs can interfere with the sensors.



## UPCOMING CITY MEETINGS

**City Council:**  
Jan. 5 at 7:00 p.m.  
Jan. 20 at 7:00 p.m.

**Planning & Zoning:**  
Jan. 29 at 6:30 p.m.

**Architectural Board of Review:**  
Jan. 5 at 4:30 p.m.  
Jan. 20 at 4:30 p.m.

# Work - Live - Learn - Thrive

## Beachwood Earns State Auditor's Award with Distinction and Top Transparency Rating

The City of Beachwood is pleased to announce it is one of only 27 municipalities in Ohio to receive the Auditor of State Award with Distinction, recognizing outstanding financial management and a clean audit report. This honor, presented by Auditor of State Keith Faber, reflects the City's strong commitment to accuracy, accountability, and transparent service.

In addition, Beachwood earned a four-star rating—the Highest Achievement in Open and Transparent Government—through the Auditor of State's STAR Rating System. This program highlights public entities that excel in meeting Ohio Sunshine Law best practices.

Beachwood achieved all recommended standards for transparency, including:

- Tracking public records requests
- Using standard request forms and acknowledgment procedures
- Identifying and training a public records custodian
- Completing certified public records training
- Maintaining accessible online information on events, operations, and official documents

These accomplishments highlight the dedication of Beachwood's Finance Department and leadership in maintaining the highest levels of fiscal responsibility and open government.



Left to right: Harvey Rose, Audit Director; Mayor Justin Berns; Larry Heiser, Finance Director

**HOLIDAY RUBBISH COLLECTION:** Due to New Year's Day (Jan. 1), Thursday rubbish and recycling will be picked up on Friday, Jan. 2. Due to Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Jan. 19), collection will be delayed one day for the entire week.

## County Alerts Residents to ReadyNotify Security Breach; Users Urged to Update Passwords

Cuyahoga County is notifying residents of a nationwide cybersecurity incident affecting the OnSolve CodeRED platform, the third-party system used to distribute emergency alerts through the ReadyNotify app. The County's Office of Emergency

Management learned in early December that CodeRED had been breached, potentially exposing personal information of ReadyNotify subscribers.

While Crisis24 — the firm contracted by the County to operate the platform — has not disclosed the full extent of the breach, the ReadyNotify database contains only basic subscriber information: names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and alert subscription lists. It does not store Social Security numbers, financial details, or other sensitive personal identifiers. County officials also emphasize that the CodeRED system is not connected to any Cuyahoga County IT networks.

Because emergency alert platforms play a critical role — delivering urgent notifications about severe weather, evacuations, missing persons, and other life-safety events — cybersecurity experts stressed the importance of maintaining trust and system reliability.



Residents currently enrolled in ReadyNotify are urged to take the following precautions:

- Change passwords for ReadyNotify accounts
- Update passwords for any other accounts that use the same or similar credentials
- Enable multi-factor authentication wherever possible
- Monitor financial accounts for unusual or suspicious activity

Any concerning activity should be reported promptly to local law enforcement. Subscribers who have questions or need assistance may contact CodeRED by Crisis24:

- 24/7 Support Line: 866-939-0911
- Email: [crsupport@crisis24.com](mailto:crsupport@crisis24.com)

# BPD Snow Day Fun

Beachwood Police Department Officer Liz Ryan stopped by to make a snow day memorable with some of our young residents. Friends don't let friends play in the snow alone!



Officer Liz Ryan helping residents build a snowman.

## Recycle Your Broken Holiday Lights & Cords

Drop off broken holiday lights and power cords for recycling in January, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m., at the Public Works Department, located at 23355 Mercantile Rd.



2026 HOLIDAY COLLECTION

# Beachwood

CITY OF  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Rubbish and recycling will not be collected on the following 2026 recognized holidays:

<b>JAN. 01</b>	New Year's Day
<b>JAN. 19</b>	Martin Luther King Day
<b>FEB. 16</b>	Presidents Day
<b>MAY 25</b>	Memorial Day
<b>JUNE 19</b>	Juneteenth
<b>JULY 03</b>	Independence Day
<b>SEPT. 07</b>	Labor Day
<b>NOV. 26</b>	Thanksgiving Day
<b>NOV. 27</b>	Day After Thanksgiving
<b>DEC. 25</b>	Christmas

- Please note that Juneteenth, Independence Day, and Christmas all fall on a Friday. Regular rubbish and recycling will not be affected.
- For Thanksgiving, if your normal collection day is Thursday, your collection will occur on Wednesday, Nov. 25, for that week only.
- For Monday holidays, collection will be delayed one day for the entire week.

**Questions:** Call Public Works at 216.292.1922.

## Hometown Hero Nominations Open

The Beachwood Historical Society and the City of Beachwood are proud to announce that nominations are open for the 2026 Hometown Heroes program! We're calling on the community to help us honor those who make a difference. Nominate your hero today by visiting [BeachwoodOhio.com/HeroNominations](http://BeachwoodOhio.com/HeroNominations). Submissions are open through Feb. 28.

A successful nominee actively displays the following characteristics:

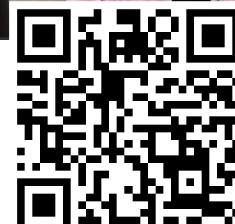
- Must be a resident or individual who works in the city
- Makes a positive impact on the city
- Helps improve the city and society
- Shows dedication to helping others
- Displays courage, care and concern
- Contributions and accomplishments have enhanced Beachwood

Heroes will be celebrated in May with a special ceremony at the Hometown Heroes garden display in Beachwood's City Park West on Shaker Boulevard.

Pictured Right: Rosemary Nemeth recognizing 2025 Hometown Hero, Karen Berger Williams.



Scan here to nominate!



Subscribe to the Beachwood eList for news delivered to your inbox at [BeachwoodOhio.com](http://BeachwoodOhio.com)!

# January Recreation Guide



**CITY OF Beachwood**

# Winter Warm-Up

*Disney Edition*

**Sunday, January 25**  
**12:00 - 2:00 p.m.**

**Crafts**  
**Games**  
**Activities**  
**Snacks**

Beachwood Community Center  
25325 Fairmount Blvd.

**12 & Under with Adult:**  
Residents - \$2/child  
Non-Residents - \$8/child

**Register:**  
[BeachwoodRec.com](http://BeachwoodRec.com)

*Register by Jan. 21!*

**STATEMENT**  
NAIL & WAX LOUNGE

**L**



**Teen Night GOOD BEATS, NEON LIGHTS**

# GLOW DANCE Party

**S STATEMENT NAIL & WAX LOUNGE**

**CITY OF Beachwood**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12**  
**6:00-8:00 PM**  
**BEACHWOOD COMMUNITY CENTER**

**REGISTER:**  
Pre-Registration Required, Ages 13-17  
Residents - \$2/person  
Non-Residents - \$8/person  
[BeachwoodRec.com](http://BeachwoodRec.com)  
Register by Feb. 9.





**BEACHWOOD ART GALLERY:** A Tribute to Black Artistry & Culture | Jan. 7 - Feb. 15 | Reception: Jan. 11, 2:00 p.m. A collection of local artists recognizing the global impact of Black heritage and creativity.

## Amish Country Overnight Trip; Points of Interest & Registration

You're invited to embark on an overnight adventure with Beachwood Community Services in Amish Country on March 24-25! Pricing includes **deluxe motor coach transportation**, world-class accommodations with breakfast at the **Berlin Grande Hotel**, plus all dinners, tours, taxes, fees, and gratuities. Lunch expenses on your own. Register by Feb. 10 at [BeachwoodRec.com](http://BeachwoodRec.com) or 216.292.1970.



Amish Country Trip Pricing:
\$400/person Double Occupancy
\$480/person Single Occupancy

### Day 1: Tuesday, March 24

- Depart Beachwood Community Center at 9:00 a.m.
- Explore Heinis Cheese Chalet & Downtown Berlin
- Behind the Scenes Tour of the Amish Theater
- Authentic Dinner in an Amish Home
- Amish Country Theater's Greatest Hits Show

### Day 2: Wednesday, March 25

- Breakfast at Berlin Grande Hotel
- Visit Broad Run Cheese
- Explore Roscoe Village & Lehman's Hardware
- Dinner at Hartville Kitchen
- Arrive in Beachwood at 8:00 p.m.

# Be The Reason Summer Shines; Summer Camp Job Opportunities

Looking for a summer job that's anything but ordinary? Join the team at Beachwood Summer Camp and make a real impact on our campers! Lead fun activities and games, explore exciting field trips, share plenty of laughs, and help create memories that last a lifetime. If you love a lively, upbeat team atmosphere and enjoy bringing joy to kids every day, we have a place for you.

Don't just take our word for it, hear what our team has to say:



*Madison Gray*

"I've always loved Beachwood Summer Camp, first as a camper and now as a member of the staff. From the fun field trips to the amazing kids, it's an experience I never want to let go of. I plan to be part of this incredible team for years to come. This job has truly made my summers better, and I'm grateful for the fun bosses and great coworkers who make every day enjoyable."



*Seth Guren*

"I love working at Beachwood Summer Camp because I get to reconnect with so many amazing counselors, specialists, and campers. It's incredible to see how everyone grows and changes year after year."

**Applications will be posted in early January online at [BeachwoodOhio.com/jobs](http://BeachwoodOhio.com/jobs).**



"Leave your bingo dauber at the door; this is **Beachwood Bingo!**"

**More Thrills. More Prizes. More Excitement.**

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 15**

6-8 PM at Beachwood Community Center

**Registration Required:**

17 Years & Under - \$5/person  
Adults (18-59 years) - \$8/person  
60 Years & Better - \$5/person



**Register:** [BeachwoodRec.com](http://BeachwoodRec.com)

## Beachwood Summer Camp; Early Bird Discount Ends Feb. 27



Resident registration for Beachwood Summer Camp is currently available online at [BeachwoodRec.com](http://BeachwoodRec.com) or in person at City Hall. Early-bird rates end Feb. 27 at 4:30 p.m. and non-residents may register for any remaining spots beginning March 2.

And of course, don't forget to secure your spot for our resident-only Summer Sendoff Camp to accommodate the 2026 Beachwood school calendar. All camp information, rates, and a registration tutorial video are posted online at [BeachwoodRec.com](http://BeachwoodRec.com).

*Reminder: Residents must upload a utility bill to their account within seven days of registration as proof of residency.*



## Beachwood Seniors

### • Valentine's Day Scavenger Hunt

Friday, Feb. 13, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Community Center

Search for hidden clues around the Community Center, enjoy sweet treats, and celebrate the holiday with friends and laughter. Sponsored by Prosper at Wickliffe. Register for free by Feb. 6.

### • Meditation & Mocktails

Tuesday, March 17, 11:00 a.m., Community Center

Unwind and reset at Meditation & Mocktails. Enjoy a calming guided meditation, led by Julie Konrad, followed by a flight of festive mocktails plus tips and recipes to recreate them at home. Registration opens Jan. 12.

## January Meet & Eat

### Hip to That

Thursday, Jan. 15, Noon, Community Center

Residents \$14, Non-Residents \$17, Program Only \$6

*Register by Jan. 9.*

Hip to That is a Cleveland-based band that has been performing together for nearly a decade. Known for their high-quality musicianship and creative arrangements of songs from a variety of eras, they bring fresh and engaging energy to every performance. Audiences love their playful sense of humor and the lively atmosphere they create on stage!

Meal choices include meat lasagna or vegetable lasagna. All entrees served with a side salad, roll, beverage and dessert.

# WHERE BUSINESS IS BOOMING!

THE LATEST NEWS FROM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Cleveland Clinic Opens New Neurology Outpatient Center

Cleveland Clinic leaders, Beachwood officials, and members of the Beachwood Chamber of Commerce recently gathered to celebrate the opening of the Clinic's new neurology outpatient center at 3050 Science Park Dr. The facility expands neurological services at the Clinic's Beachwood administrative campus and brings 50 new jobs to the community.



The Cleveland Clinic Medical Outpatient Center includes 22 exam rooms, 14 consultation rooms, and advanced diagnostic technology, including MRI, CT, and electromyography. Patients can access a range of specialty services, including sleep medicine, neuromuscular and cerebrovascular care, spine and pain management, and rehabilitation.

The new Beachwood location complements the Clinic's forthcoming Neurological Institute on Main Campus, set to open in February 2027. At one million square feet, it will be the largest building on campus and provide comprehensive neurological care.

Beachwood Mayor Justin Berns commends the Clinic for its continued investment in the community. "This facility represents meaningful progress for patients and families across Northeast Ohio. By concentrating so many neurological services in one central, convenient location, the Cleveland Clinic is making care more accessible, more coordinated, and easier to navigate for patients, caregivers, and our residents," he said.



Left to right: Allan Balaara, Project Manager; Alyssia Ray-Huntington, Facilities Engineer; Tim Gibbons, Director Ambulatory Operations; Dr. Andre Machado, Neurology Institute Chief; Mayor Justin Berns; Dr. Jorge Guzman, Executive Vice President; Jolene Zografos, Executive Director Ambulatory Operations; George Lawrence, Senior Director Neurological Institute; Melanie Cook, Assistant Director of Nursing; Kristen Vargo, Director of Nursing

## Start Strong with Small Business Support



The new year is an ideal time for entrepreneurs to reset — and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is a great place to begin. Through a partnership with the Cleveland State SBDC, the City of Beachwood offers no-cost counseling

and low- or no-cost technical assistance to support hiring, marketing, planning, and access to capital.

As business owners set goals and refine plans, the SBDC provides structure, expert guidance, and practical support, including help with regulatory compliance, exporting, e-commerce, and growth strategies.

To meet with a business advisor, call the Beachwood One-Stop Business Resource Center at 216.292.1915. More information is available at [BeachwoodOhio.com/BusinessResourceCenter](http://BeachwoodOhio.com/BusinessResourceCenter).

## Beachwood Welcomes Farmers National Bank



Left to right: Catherine Bieterman, Economic Development Director; David Lapierre, Chamber of Commerce Executive Director; André Thornton, Board Member; Kevin Helmick, President & CEO; Mayor Justin Berns; Peter Opperman, V.P. & District Manager; Dan Dempsey, Branch Manager

## Always Be An Insider, Stay Connected!

Official Social Media Pages



Facebook Pages:

@BeachwoodOH  
@BeachwoodPolice  
@BeachwoodFire  
@BeachwoodOHRec  
@BeachwoodPublicWorks  
@BarkwoodDogPark

X Accounts:

@BeachwoodOH  
@BeachwoodPolice

Instagram Account:

@BeachwoodOhio

LinkedIn Account:

@CityOfBeachwood

# The Art of the Con: Identity Theft, False Advertising, Scams, and Robocalls

Presented by Case Western Reserve University Siegal Lifelong Learning

Instructor: Jon Miller Steiger, JD • Former Regional Director, Federal Trade Commission

Landmark Centre Building • 25700 Science Park Dr. • Suite 100

Tuesdays, Jan. 27 to Feb. 10 • 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.



In an age when fraudsters are more sophisticated than ever, understanding how to recognize and avoid deceptive schemes has become essential.

*The Art of the Con*, presented by Case Western Reserve University's Siegal Lifelong Learning, offers an insider's look at the tactics used by scammers and the practical steps each of us can take to protect ourselves.

The course is taught by Jon Miller Steiger, JD, who spent almost three decades protecting consumers at the Federal Trade Commission after graduating from Columbia Law School and completing a two-year federal court clerkship. His deep experience equips him with a wealth of knowledge about how scammers operate – knowledge that he's eager to share.

"I spent my career fighting fraud," Jon said. "Now I want to help people understand what to look out for so they can protect themselves, their families, and their friends."

Over the course of this three-part, in-person series, Jon will guide participants through the major categories of modern deception: scams, identity theft, and false advertising. He will share illuminating anecdotes from real cases, compelling statistics that reveal the scope of the problem, and clear red flags that signal something isn't what it seems.

Participants will also learn practical, actionable steps to take when – almost inevitably – bad actors attempt to access personal information or money. Whether you've been affected by a scam in the past or simply want to strengthen your defenses, this course provides the tools you need to stay informed and protected.

## Session 1: A History of Scams and Identity Theft

From ancient times to the digital age, scams have always existed. Jon will introduce participants to the roots of deception, then shift to modern identity theft and how to protect yourself.

## Session 2: Deceptive Advertising

From "miracle" products to misleading claims, Jon will examine how advertising can manipulate consumers.

## Session 3: Scams of All Kinds

The final class focuses on what scams look like, how they work, and what steps to take when something feels off.

## Why This Matters

Scams are not abstract threats, they are happening right here in our community. In just the first half of 2025, Ohioans lost nearly \$150 million to fraud. Identity theft remains the top issue Ohioans report to the FTC, while imposter scams – criminals pretending to be banks, government agencies, charities, or loved ones – are the biggest category of fraud complaints among Ohio residents.

Studies show that one of the best protections is education – especially when shared among family and friends.

"Take the class, learn the red flags, and pass that knowledge on," Jon encourages. "That's how we strengthen our defenses."

When asked for the single best piece of advice he can offer, he doesn't hesitate: "If you get an unexpected call, text, or email, ignore it. Responding will almost never help you, and more often, it will hurt you."

Join Jon, who spent his career focusing on scams and false advertising, for this timely and empowering exploration of how to spot a con before it

strikes. The course fee is \$74 with a 15% discount for Siegal Lifelong Learning members. To register, visit <https://case.edu/lifelonglearning> and enter the course name.

In addition to teaching, Jon, a Beachwood resident, enjoys spending time with his family, serving on the board of Rekindle, and exploring creative writing – fiction, nonfiction, and musicals.

An advertisement for Beachwood Buzz Magazine. The top half shows a group of children and an adult in a swimming pool, with the magazine's logo 'Beachwood Buzz MAGAZINE' and the tagline 'Every Resident. Every Business. Every Month.' The bottom half features a large blue wave pattern with text: 'SUMMER STARTS WITH A PLAN', 'Day Camps • Overnight Camps', 'Sports • Arts • Enrichment', and 'Specialty Programs'. Below this, a paragraph reads: 'Beachwood Buzz is offering camp advertising promotions in our February and March issues – connecting camp programs with Beachwood families during peak planning season.' At the bottom, it says: 'For details or to reserve your space today, contact Adam today at beachwoodbuzzsales@gmail.com or 216.338.7823'. The very bottom line reads: 'Saturate the Beachwood Market. Advertise in Beachwood Buzz.'

# BEACHWOOD CITY SCHOOLS

Developing Intellectual Entrepreneurs with a Social Conscience

## Update on Board District Goals

The Beachwood Board of Education recently hosted a series of community Town Hall meetings designed to gather feedback and input as the district works to refine its goals. Families, staff, students, and community members were invited to participate in open discussions and share their perspectives at these events.

The conversations were based on survey responses from a wide range of stakeholders. These responses were analyzed and organized into key themes, which were discussed during several public work sessions. From this process, a comprehensive set of draft goals was developed and presented at the Town Hall meetings.

At each session, Board members provided context on each goal area: Academic Excellence, Whole Child Development, Supportive Learning Environment for All & Enrichment Beyond the Classroom, Evaluation, and Dissemination & Communication. Attendees then participated in small-group discussions that encouraged dialogue, questions, and the sharing of ideas. Feedback gathered during the Town Hall meetings will play a central role in helping to redefine district goals and the Board will hold another

work session in January to review community input and introduce the finalized goals.

The Board was impressed to see a variety of stakeholders represented, including alumni, parents, elected officials, previous board members, staff and even a Beachwood High School student. Thanks to everyone who was able to attend and contribute to these important conversations. Beachwood remains committed to fostering a collaborative partnership with the community.



## BOARD OF EDUCATION NEWS



### Recent Resolutions

- Approved Paul Chase as Director of Curriculum & Instruction, effective Aug. 1, 2026
- Presentation on 2025 state report card
- Update on Ohio School Boards Association Capital Conference

### Upcoming Board Actions

- Appoint Board of Education President
- Appoint Board of Education Liaison to the Audit Committee
- Update on Bryden move-in/Hilltop progress

### Board Meeting Calendar

- Monday, Jan. 12 @ 6:00 pm
- Monday, Jan. 26 @ 7:00 pm



**VIEW AGENDAS & MINUTES**

[www.beachwoodschools.org/BOE](http://www.beachwoodschools.org/BOE)

## Board of Education to Hold Annual Organization Meeting

The Beachwood Board of Education is preparing for its annual Organizational Meeting scheduled for Jan. 12 at 7:00 pm. The meeting sets the foundation for the Board's work for the year. Under Ohio law, every school board must conduct an Organizational Meeting within the first 15 days of January.

A key component of the meeting is the election of the Board President and Vice President positions. Nominations for both roles are taken during the meeting, followed by the administration of the oath of office to those chosen to serve.

The Board will also review and adopt operational guidelines, set the meeting schedule for 2026, and determine committee assignments, such as finance, policy, and community engagement. These assignments help distribute the Board's responsibilities and allow members to contribute to specific aspects of district operations.

Regular Board meetings are scheduled for the second and fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 pm in the Fairmount Community Room. Agendas, minutes, policies and other information can be found by scanning the QR code.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

Megan Walsh, President · (216) 287-4657 · [mwalsh@beachwoodschools.org](mailto:mwalsh@beachwoodschools.org)  
Kim Allamby, Vice President · (216) 533-3358 · [kimallamby@beachwoodschools.org](mailto:kimallamby@beachwoodschools.org)  
Dr. Josephine Chan · (216) 235-1129 · [jchan@beachwoodschools.org](mailto:jchan@beachwoodschools.org)  
Rini Ghosh · (631) 629-9441 · [rghosh@beachwoodschools.org](mailto:rghosh@beachwoodschools.org)  
Wendy Leatherberry · (216) 409-2211 · [wleatherberry@beachwoodschools.org](mailto:wleatherberry@beachwoodschools.org)



[beachwoodschools.org](http://beachwoodschools.org)

# Beachwood Schools Honor Veterans with Community-Wide Tributes



Students and staff across the Beachwood City Schools marked Veterans Day with meaningful student-centered tributes honoring the men and women who have served our country.

Beachwood Middle School students concluded the day with a Veterans Day ceremony that featured a photo slideshow of veterans connected to Beachwood families. Students also watched a video on the history of Veterans Day and heard from U.S. Navy veteran Jimmy Greenwood, who shared stories and reflections from his time in the military. Mr. Greenwood is a Beachwood parent, employee, and coach. The BMS Orchestra performed the anthems of each military branch and the ceremony concluded outdoors with students creating a "Field of Flags" around the school's flagpole.

At Hilltop, students honored six veterans who are family members of students during a special assembly. Veterans were recognized, received handmade cards, viewed a slideshow of family members who have served, and were celebrated with patriotic songs and a clap-out of appreciation. Later in the month, students packaged boxes with materials and cards that were sent to veterans and troops stationed around the world.

Bryden students continued a long-standing tradition of writing heartfelt letters and cards to service members, thanking them for their dedication and wishing them a joyful holiday season. These letters are sent around the world to help bring smiles and gratitude to the brave people serving our country.

Together, these school celebrations reflect Beachwood's strong community spirit and deep gratitude for those who have served and sacrificed for our nation.

## BHS Student Earns Perfect Score on PSAT/NMSQT



Antoni Hinczewski

Beachwood High School student Antoni Hinczewski has earned a perfect score on the national PSAT/NMSQT, which places him among the top 1% of more than 3.5 million students who took the exam nationwide. Hinczewski earned a combined score of 1520, including perfect scores of 760 in math and reading/writing.

The PSAT/NMSQT is taken annually by 10th and 11th graders across the country and serves as a qualifying test for the prestigious National Merit Scholarship Program.

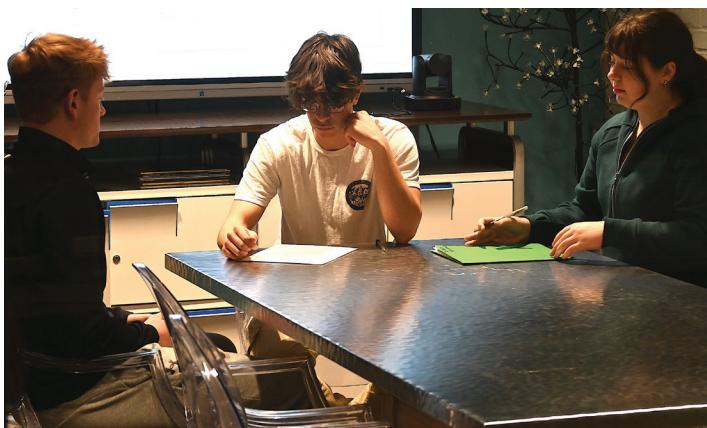
At BHS, Hinczewski serves as the co-captain of the Math Club and Slavic Culture Club. He also participates in Science Olympiad, Model UN, Speech & Debate, Academic Challenge, and Marching Band. Outside the classroom, he enjoys math competitions, playing music, hiking, and searching for rare flora and fauna. He hopes to pursue a future career in botany.



# BEACHWOOD CITY SCHOOLS

Developing Intellectual Entrepreneurs with a Social Conscience

## Excel TECC Marketing Class Launches Hop in my Spot



Beachwood's 2025-2026 Marketing class is excited to launch sales for their student-run company, Hop in my Spot, created by students from 10 local high schools as part of the Excel TECC Marketing/Junior Achievement program at Beachwood High School. Each year, the program allows students interested in business to create a nonprofit company for a chosen cause.

Students manage all aspects of the company, including budget planning, event organizing, and merchandise promotion. These experiences provide valuable hands-on experiences in different aspects of marketing and business.

"I'm very excited about Hop in my Spot," said Andrew Arra, senior at West Geauga High School and Vice President of Communications at Hop in my Spot. "Running a company requires a lot of work but I think that everything will turn out amazing. I'm optimistic about our company's potential."

This year, students decided to continue their support for critically ill children, building on last year's success of Hope Heroes which raised more than \$200,000 to provide facility dogs to local hospitals and enhance volunteer therapy dog programs.

Hop in my Spot strives to alleviate the stress children experience in the hospital by raising funds to create and donate uplifting baskets. The company will generate profits through sponsorships and merchandise. Beyond learning how to navigate entrepreneurship, the Marketing program also provides students with life skills.

"I've learned to be more adaptable to change, and to keep an open mind," said Matthew Dupnock, a senior at Eastlake North High School and CEO of Hop in my Spot. "Marketing has taught me the importance of resilience when things don't proceed as planned, and communication when trying to make sure everyone is on the same page."

## EVENTS CALENDAR



### Elderclass

Jan. 8, 12:00 pm

Beachwood High School, 25100 Fairmount Blvd.

### African American Affinity Group Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

Jan. 19

Beachwood High School, 25100 Fairmount Blvd.

### Lunar New Year Celebration

Feb. 15, 5:00 pm

Beachwood High School, 25100 Fairmount Blvd.



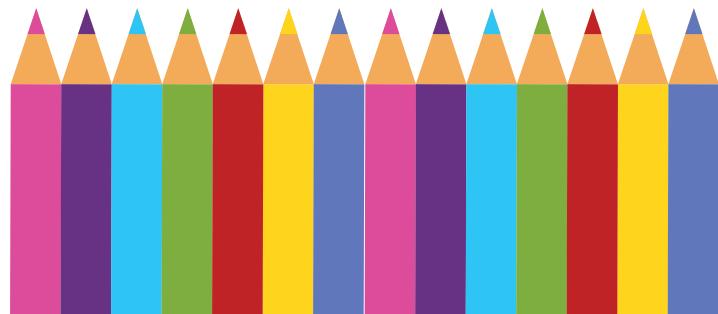
**VIEW THE FULL CALENDAR**  
[www.beachwoodschools.org/calendar](http://www.beachwoodschools.org/calendar)

## Information About 2026-2027 Preschool Program

The Beachwood Early Childhood Center - formerly known as the Fairmount Early Childhood Center - will host a Parent Information Night on Thursday, Jan. 8, at 5:30 p.m. at the new Bryden School (25252 Letchworth Rd.). Beachwood ECC is a private, district-sponsored learning center within the Beachwood City Schools. Bryden School will be the Center's new location beginning in the fall of 2026.

Parents will have the opportunity to learn about preschool, pre-kindergarten, integrated, and Young 5's programs. Resident registration opens on Jan. 14 at 8:00 a.m. for the 2026-2027 school year.

For more information, families may call Preschool Director Karen Leeds at 216-464-2600, or visit [beachwoodschools.org/fairmount](http://beachwoodschools.org/fairmount).



## ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Robert Hardis, Superintendent • (216) 464-2600 ext. 2201 • rph@beachwoodschools.org  
Matthew Brown, Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer • (216) 464-2600 ext. 2211 • mbrown@beachwoodschools.org  
Diana Maher, Assistant Treasurer • (216) 464-2600 ext. 2210 • dmaher@beachwoodschools.org  
Dr. Ken Veon, Assistant Superintendent • (216) 464-2600 ext. 2202 • kev@beachwoodschools.org  
Dr. Jennifer Polak, Director of Pupil Services • (216) 464-2600 ext. 2215 • jpolak@beachwoodschools.org  
Kevin Houchins, Director of Equity & Community Engagement • (216) 464-2600 ext. 2207 • kth@beachwoodschools.org  
Dr. Linda LoGalbo, Director of Curriculum & Instruction • (216) 464-2600 ext. 2208 • lhl@beachwoodschools.org



[beachwoodschools.org](http://beachwoodschools.org)

## A Night to Remember at Bryden School

On Nov. 26, more than 300 students, staff, families, alumni, and community members gathered for one final walk-through of the original Bryden building before guided tours of the new Bryden School, which will welcome students after winter break. The evening was filled with memories and excitement as generations of Beachwood families returned to the building that was built in 1956, while also receiving a sneak peak at the new building that broke ground in May of 2024.

Guests had a chance to walk the familiar hallways and visit classrooms of the original building, sharing stories and reflecting on their own experiences as students at Bryden. The evening transitioned to the future as Superintendent Robert Hardis, Treasurer Matt Brown, and Principal Michelle Nizen led guided tours of the new Bryden, highlighting the modern building with bright learning environments, collaborative spaces, and innovative features that will support Beachwood's young learners.

## Alumni Feature - Abby Lewis '22



Abby Lewis has always been interested in climate change mitigation and environmental causes. Now a senior at The Ohio State University studying Environment, Economy, Development, and Sustainability - with a minor in International Studies - she's turning that lifelong passion toward a career in the energy sector.

"I've always been interested in topics related to the environment, and Ohio State has allowed me to develop an interest in the intersection of sustainability, policy, and economics," Lewis said. "Once I started taking sustainability-focused classes at Ohio State, I realized I really loved learning about how energy markets, environmental policy, and corporate sustainability all work together."

This spring, Lewis is set to make university history as the first student to earn Ohio State's Certificate in Sustainable Energy and the Economy. Launched in 2024 by the Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics (AEDE), the certificate weaves together energy economics, policy, and market analysis.

"This certificate perfectly complements my academic focus on sustainability and economics," Lewis explained. "It will add an extra level of confidence and specialization to my



academic background, better positioning me for roles that align with my interests in the energy transition."

Lewis' academic journey took her abroad last semester to Copenhagen, Denmark, where she explored Scandinavian approaches to sustainable development. It also gave her a firsthand look at what a sustainable society can look like. For Lewis, the foundation for her success began long before college. Growing up in Beachwood, she said, shaped her academically and personally. "Beachwood fostered a diverse and supportive environment that encouraged continuous learning," she said. "I'm grateful to have had such a supportive community and encouraging group of teachers, coaches, and mentors who invested in my development and helped build the confidence that I carry through my academic and personal life today."

As she prepares for graduation in the spring of 2026, Lewis sees the certificate as more than a credential—it's a launchpad. "Being part of a program that will launch my career in sustainability and energy has been extremely motivating and given me a competitive edge as I prepare for my post-graduate career."



# The Fight Against COVID-19 Is Not Over

Ask about paid COVID-19 booster studies

COVID-19 booster vaccines play a crucial role in ongoing efforts to combat the pandemic and enhance immunity against the virus. As new variants emerge and the virus evolves, booster shots are designed to reinforce and extend the protection provided by initial vaccination. Help stop the spread of this dangerous and rapidly-changing virus — join an COVID-19 booster study at Velocity. Eligible participants may receive compensation for study-related time and travel. Health insurance is not required to join.

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# Fencing Finds a Foothold in Beachwood

**B**ehind the doors of the building at 23416 Commerce Park Dr., in Beachwood, is a centuries-old sport that is flourishing in modern form. Cleveland Fencing Academy (CFA) has become the largest fencing facility in our region, drawing in students from across Northeast Ohio to learn a sport that is equal parts athletic challenge and mental exercise.

Eric Guth was a tennis player when he attended University School. Then, while at Columbia University, the fencing program sparked an interest, which evolved into a passion. After college, he lived in Russia for nine years, studying fencing under Alexandra Zabelina, a Soviet foil fencer, who won three Olympic gold medals in team events (1960, 1968, 1972) and 10 world-championship titles – eight in team foil and two in individual foil – making her one of the most successful women's fencers of her era.

When Eric and his wife, Polina, moved back to Cleveland in the early 2000s to raise their family, Eric continued fencing at the Alcazar Fencing Club, under the instruction of Fencing Hall of Fame inductee Bill Reith. Then, in 2020, after the Alcatraz Fencing Club closed, he founded CFA as a place for his children and the community to fence.

Today, the Beachwood facility offers lessons in all three Olympic disciplines: foil, sabre, and épée. Classes range from youth and beginner programs to advanced and competitive training. "We are grateful for our coaching team, which includes internationally experienced instructors – the best of the best," Eric said.

What began as a handful of students has grown into a community of more than 100 fencers, along with a second facility in Lakewood to accommodate growing interest.

Fencing is often called *physical chess* because it combines lightning-fast reflexes with strategic, tactical thinking. Among Olympic sports, it enjoys one of the lowest injury rates,

making it a very safe choice. Plus, it features some of the quickest movements seen in competition, including blade-tip speeds that rival projectiles.

Every bout requires fencers to analyze their opponents' movements, anticipate attacks, and respond with precision – all within seconds. The sport develops focus, discipline, and critical thinking, qualities that serve students well beyond the fencing strip.

In addition to its physical and mental benefits, fencing can open doors to academic opportunities. Because it remains a relatively niche sport, skilled fencers often stand out in college admissions. Several students who have trained at CFA have earned scholarships and spots on collegiate teams.

For younger students, fencing can enhance applications to private high schools and academic programs that value balance between athletics and academics.

CFA's community involvement extends beyond its classes. CFA partners with the Beachwood Recreation Department, introducing the sport to local youth and families. It also participated in FallFest, where curious visitors were able to give fencing a try.

"Once people try fencing, they're usually hooked," Eric said. "It's quick, it's strategic, and it offers something different from traditional team sports."

As fencing gains recognition nationwide, Beachwood is emerging as one of the Midwest's key training centers. For local residents interested in learning more, CFA offers opportunities for all ages and



Eric Guth, Cleveland Fencing Academy founder.

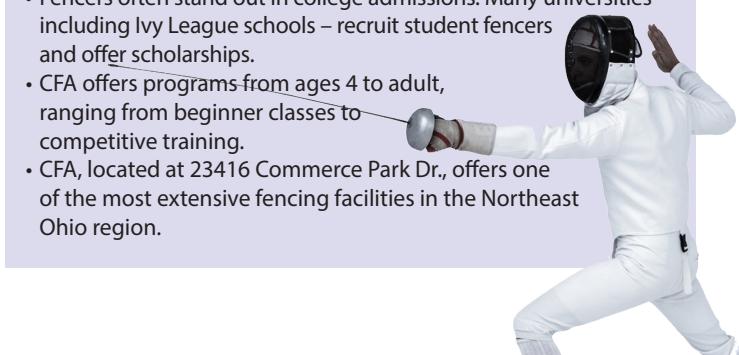
experience levels – from first-time beginners to seasoned competitors.

For more information, visit [clevelandfencingacademy.com](http://clevelandfencingacademy.com), call 440.821.9711, or stop by the Beachwood location to watch a class in action.

*"Once people try fencing, they're usually hooked," Eric said. "It's quick, it's strategic, and it offers something different from traditional team sports."*

## Fencing Fast Facts

- Fencing is one of the original modern Olympic sports, combining speed, strategy, and precision. It's often described as "physical chess."
- There are three types of weapons – foil, sabre, and épée – each with unique rules, target areas, and techniques.
- Fencing improves balance, coordination, concentration, and decision-making.
- Fencers often stand out in college admissions. Many universities – including Ivy League schools – recruit student fencers and offer scholarships.
- CFA offers programs from ages 4 to adult, ranging from beginner classes to competitive training.
- CFA, located at 23416 Commerce Park Dr., offers one of the most extensive fencing facilities in the Northeast Ohio region.



# Beachwood Men's Softball Celebrates 72 Seasons

The Beachwood Men's Softball League, established in 1954, recently held its annual banquet at the Winking Lizard Event Center in Bedford Heights.

Anthony Castrovine, an Emmy-nominated reporter for MLB.com, was the keynote speaker. Anthony has worked for MLB.com since 2004, covering the then- Indians from 2006-2010. He is also a regular contributor on the MLB television network, making appearances on TV since 2014.

The league proudly made a donation to Stand Up To Cancer, a nationally recognized non-profit organization, as this is near and dear to Anthony's heart.

Attendees then wished a happy early birthday to Dick Cohen, a commissioner, who will turn 95 in early 2026. Dick has been affiliated with the league for over 60 years.

Additional highlights included:

- **Hall of Fame Inductees**

Ralph DiRusso  
David Marcus  
Aaron Wolkoff  
Michael Tucker

- **Rookie of the Year**

Tyler Gruber

- **Batting Champ**

Brett Bryner

- **Retirement after 30 years in the league and 20 as a manager:**

Fred Gross

- **2025 League Champions**

Black Team, managed by Todd Adelman and Fred Gross

- **2025 Round Robin Champions**

Teal Team, managed by Rob Schickler and Mitch Seifert

Danno Wolkoff won the 50/50 raffle and donated his winnings back, so The Gathering Place received 100% of proceeds from the raffle as a donation.

Giving back was also a priority this season, with 300 pounds of canned goods and nonperishable food items donated to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. Commissioner Stuart Ostro and his family delivered the league-wide contribution on Nov. 26.

"After 45 years in this role, I'm grateful to those who helped build our league – former commissioners Manny Nathan and Larry Adelman, along with longtime commissioners Dick Cohen and Ed Bernstein," said Commissioner Jimmy Heller. "I also welcome new commissioners Zach Marcus and Stuart Ostro, who are helping to carry the league's legacy forward. This league has brought together generations of brothers, sons, friends, and neighbors, making it the best place to play and connect. When the time comes for me to step away, my life will never be the same."

"This is my 11th season in the league and my first as commissioner," said Stuart. "The league means a great deal to me – the friendships that have been forged and the chance to spend time with family and friends year after year. I'm grateful to be part of something that continues to grow and evolve."

Sincere thanks to the City of Beachwood and Beachwood City Schools for their cooperation in allowing use of the fields, with great anticipation for the summer 2026 season.

Tryouts will take place in April. Watch for more information in the March issue of *Beachwood Buzz* or follow the league on its Facebook page.



Pictured, from top:

- Hall of Fame inductees Ralph DiRusso, David Marcus, Aaron Wolkoff, and Michael Tucker.
- Commissioner Stuart Ostro with Black Team managers Todd Adelman and Fred Gross, and keynote speaker Anthony Castrovine. The Black Team captured the 2025 League Championship.
- Commissioner Zach Marcus shares a proud moment, congratulating his father, David Marcus, on being inducted into the Hall of Fame.
- Commissioner Stuart Ostro, left, delivers food donations to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank Distribution Hub with his family.

# Moments That Matter

## Tamil Heritage Month

by Ananya Rao

**T**amil Heritage Month is really close to my heart, especially because I am half Tamilian. The state of Tamil Nadu in southern India is home to the Tamil language, one of the oldest continuously spoken languages in the world, dating back more than 2,000 years.

Whereas Hinduism is the dominant religion among Tamil-speaking people, it is very natural that Tamil and Muslim Heritage Month comes at a time when both cultural traditions are honored, considering India's long and diverse history.

Tamil Heritage Month was first recognized in Canada. Ontario proclaimed January as Tamil Heritage Month in 2014 and the Canadian Federal Parliament unanimously followed in 2016. This recognition celebrates the Tamil community's rich cultural contribution and falls alongside Pongal, one of the most important Tamil festivals.

Pongal is a four-day harvest

celebration often referred to as a "Tamil Thanksgiving." It celebrates the natural elements – the sun, the rain, and the animals – that enable successful harvests of crops such as rice, sugarcane, and turmeric. While the unofficial movement behind the recognition of Tamil Heritage Month started in 2010 with various Tamil advocacy groups, the traditions themselves are ancient.

The significance of the four days of Pongal is as follows:

- **Bhogi Pongal (Day 1)** is the day of cleaning and getting renewed. People discard old belongings and light a

bonfire, which is referred to as Bhogi Mantalu, to mark the fresh beginning and please the god, Indra.

- **Pongal or Surya Pongal (Day 2)** is the main festival day. Families cook the sweet Pongal dish in decorated clay pots and offer prayers to Surya, the Sun God.

- **Mattu Pongal (Day 3)** is the day of cattle. The cows and bulls are washed, adorned with flower garlands, and fed special food to show gratitude for serving man throughout the year.

- **Kaanum Pongal (Day 4)** is a day of reunion with relatives, sharing food, and traditional dancing, like kummi.



Please take time to get to know, celebrate, and support your Tamil friends and family. Heritage months present an opportunity to appreciate identity and share culture with the wider community.

*I am happy to say that I am celebrating a year of writing for Beachwood Buzz. Last January, I focused on National Blood Donor Month, which also sends an important message. This year, I mixed things up with my writing.*



## Beachwood Arts Council

### CMA Renaissance to Runway Docent-led Tour Saturday, Jan. 31 • 11 a.m. • Cleveland Museum of Art

Beachwood Arts Council is hosting a docent-guided tour of *Renaissance to Runway*, a dazzling special exhibition that brings together more than 100 couture outfits and accessories in dialogue with Italian fine, decorative, and textile arts from the 1400s to the early 1600s. Explore masterpieces of design, craftsmanship,

and style with insights from knowledgeable guides.

The cost is \$15 for BAC members, \$17 for non-BAC members, and \$5 for CMA members (must bring CMA membership card).

This tour is limited to 15 people. Register by Jan. 10 by calling 216.595.3400. The exhibit closes on Feb. 1.



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## Beachwood Library StoryWalk®

The January and February StoryWalk® in Beachwood City Park East is *Snow Is...*, which is a sparkling, lyrical picture book about the magic of an early snow, written by Laura Gehl and illustrated by Sonia Sanchez. It's dawn and there is snow all around. The wonder of winter's first snowfall brings the magic of changing seasons and sees a family sharing the perfect snow day with coziness and togetherness from dawn to dusk.



# Beachwood Figure Skaters Compete at Ohio High School Competition

This winter, seven figure skaters from Beachwood Schools will be competing in the 2026 High School Team Figure Skating Championships. Beachwood students compete as part of the Eastside Blades team, which includes students from Beachwood, Orange, and Twinsburg, with Beachwood representing the largest component of the combined team.

The championship features teams composed of fifth to 12th grade students from public and private schools across the state. Team members compete individually in Free Skate, Solo Dance, Interpretive, and Showcase events, as well as two team events: Team Maneuvers and a choreographed Team Ensemble.

The annual event takes place at Thornton Park, 3301 Warrensville Center Rd., Shaker Heights, from Friday, Jan. 30 – Sunday, Feb. 1. Team Maneuvers

will be held on Friday evening. The Team Production event will take place on Saturday, late afternoon/evening. Individual events will be held throughout the weekend. The competition is free and open to the public. Please come out and cheer on our local skaters!

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**The competition is free and open to the public. Please come out and cheer on our local skaters!**

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Beachwood members of Eastside Blades, *from left*, with graduation years: Dominik Herjan ('29), Lorena Tovanche ('26), Anna Tonyushkin ('26), Masha Tonyushkin ('29), Jacob Isaacson ('29), Natalia Agudelo, ('31), and Kennedy Elman ('33).

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## Select Library Programs in January

### Maimonides' Holistic Health: Ancient

### Wisdom/ Modern Nutrition

Tuesday, Jan. 6 • 2-3 p.m.

Dafna Ben-Yosef, Ph.D., explores the holistic health teachings of the medieval Jewish philosopher and teacher, Maimonides. Register at <https://attend.cuyahogalibrary.org/event/14597904>.

### The Music of Richard Rodgers with Debbie Darling

Friday, Jan. 9 • 2-3 p.m.

Debbie Darling presents on Richard Rodgers and his collaborations with Lorenz Hart and Oscar Hammerstein II. Register at <https://attend.cuyahogalibrary.org/event/14542367>.

### Tuesday Book Chat

Tuesday, Jan. 13 • 7-8 p.m.

A discussion of *Happy Land*, by Dolen Perkins-Valdez. Registration is not necessary.

### Knit & Lit

Monday, Jan. 19 • 6:30-8 p.m.

Join us for fiber arts and informal chats about what everyone is reading. Register at <https://attend.cuyahogalibrary.org/event/14582997>.

### Third Wednesday Book Discussion

Wednesday, Jan. 21 • 2-3 p.m.

A discussion of *The Vaster Wilds*, by Lauren Groff. Register at <https://attend.cuyahogalibrary.org/event/14592842>.

### As the Stage Turned: Cleveland's Front Row Theatre

Thursday, Jan. 29 • 7-8 p.m.

Journalist Jeannie Emser Schultz will present on the Front Row Theatre, one of the most unique entertainment venues in the country, and the stars who performed there. Register at <https://attend.cuyahogalibrary.org/event/14535999>.

### Kindergarten Countdown

Mondays, Jan. 12 - Feb. 9 • 4-5 p.m.

Help your preschooler make the transition into kindergarten by practicing their social, emotional, and cooperative learning skills.

### Family Music & Movement Storytime

Mondays through April • 10-10:30 a.m.

All ages with caregiver

### Baby & Toddler Storytime

Wednesdays through April • 10-10:30 a.m.

Birth-35 months with caregiver

### Baby & Toddler Storytime

Thursdays through March • 11-11:30 a.m.

Birth-35 months with caregiver

### Hebrew Language Storytime

Wednesday, Jan. 7 • 4-4:30 p.m.

Join us for stories, songs, movement and rhymes in Hebrew and English. Presented in collaboration with the Mandel Jewish Community Center.

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## Hands Across Asia: Taiwan, the Jews, and Israel

**Wednesday, Jan. 14 • 1-2 p.m. on Zoom**

Park Synagogue invites you to attend *Hands Across Asia: Taiwan, the Jews, and Israel*, featuring Prof. Meron Medzini, direct from Israel, to discuss the ties between Israel and Taiwan. Lying on the opposite sides of Asia, Israel and Taiwan emerged as independent entities in 1948 and 1949 respectively. Both peoples are heirs to ancient languages, civilizations, and culture. The discussion will focus on how both countries developed ties that enable them to learn from each other's experiences. Prof. Medzini is the author of many books, including *Hands Across Asia: Israel-Taiwan Relations*, his most recent book, which was just released. He was also the director of the Israel



Prof. Meron Medzini

Government Press Office from 1962-1978, working with five prime ministers.

The program is free and open to the community. Pre-registration is required by Jan. 12 to receive the Zoom link. Please register at [www.parksynagogue.org/events](http://www.parksynagogue.org/events) or by emailing Ellen Petler at [epetler@parksyn.org](mailto:epetler@parksyn.org). This program is sponsored by Park Senior Adults.

## Women of Mishkan Or Award

Established in 1973, Women of Reform Judaism's (WRJ's) Or Ami *Light of My People* Award for Special Achievement in programming recognizes exemplary events that can serve as a model for other districts and sisterhoods. These awards honor those WRJ-affiliated women's groups/sisterhoods and WRJ districts undertaking replicable programs or projects of distinctive character and significance.

WRJ recognized Women of Mishkan Or's (WMO's) Challah Bake and Post-Passover Challah Sale with a Silver Or Ami Award for its goals of recruiting new members with a hands-on, inclusive, educational, and multigenerational event, and for kicking off their Post-Pesach fundraiser.

This program, which took place from March 2 - April 25, involved an innovative and novel

collaborative effort of WMO's fundraising and membership committees. They partnered with organizations, including Breadlove.org, Project ACT, the Cleveland Sight Center, and Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital.

WMO co-presidents noted that leadership had been working intentionally to touch upon the three pillars of WRJ: sisterhood, spirituality, and social justice. They also noted that this was their inaugural year as a merged congregation.

Proceeds from the challah sale were used to support WMO's ongoing mitzvah projects, in partnership with the organizations mentioned above. A special thank you to everyone who worked on this project to make it happen!

The award will be presented at WRJ's Heartland District Convention in March 2026.



# CITY OF *Beachwood*

## 2026 SPECIAL EVENTS

Where Beachwood Comes Together

JAN. 15	Beachwood Bingo Night	JULY 22	Senior Ice Cream Social
JAN. 25	Winter Warm-Up, Disney Edition	JULY 22	Teen Night at the Courts
FEB. 12	Teen Night Glow Dance Party	JULY 30	BFAC Pool Party Night
MAR. 5	Beachwood Bingo Night	AUG. 4	National Night Out
MAR. 17	Senior Meditation & Mocktails	AUG. 12	BFAC Pool Party Night
APR. 30	Senior Ladies Tea	AUG. 23	Back to School Celebration & Movie
MAY 13	Cookout with Cops	AUG. 31	Senior Picnic & 50-Year Residents
MAY 14	Beachwood Bingo Night	SEPT. 10	BFAC Dog Paddle
MAY 21	Senior Taste & Cookbook	SEPT. 14	Grandparents' Diner Night
JUNE/JULY	Beachwood Beats Concerts	SEPT. 17	Beachwood Bingo Night
JUNE 1	The Senior Game Show	OCT. 10/11	9th Annual Fall Festival
JUNE 16	Teen Night at the Courts	OCT. 22	Senior Harvest Fest
JUNE 19	Juneteenth Celebration	NOV. 5	Beachwood Bingo Night
JUNE 24	BFAC Pool Party Night	NOV. 12	Seniors Around The World
JULY 9	Beachwood Bingo Night	DEC. 17	Senior Prom & Celebration

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