

METRO Neighbors

March 2012

Serving Cincinnati's Northside & Uptown Neighborhoods

Mediaassociates@ella.net



Clearing taking place for Virginia Place, Virginia Avenue just off Colerain

Housing development Virginia Place will be this year's CiTiRAMA®

Northside — The Home Builders Association of Greater Cincinnati, in partnership with the City of Cincinnati has announced the first five area builders who have committed to participate in the 11th CiTiRAMA® scheduled September 8-16 at Virginia Place in Northside.

Additional builders are expected to announce their participation in the award-winning show in the next few weeks.

The following have already selected five of the 11 available show lots: Brookstone Homes, Drees Homes, Maronda Homes, Oakmont Custom Homes and Potterhill Homes.

Show home prices have not yet been determined. Show homes typically include numerous promotional upgrades provided by suppliers, which are included at no additional cost

to the buyer.

The 2010 CiTiRAMA® held at Rockford Woods in Northside was recognized by the National Association of Home Builders as the top single site home show of the year. CiTiRAMA® has also been recognized as the most enduring single-site urban housing partnership between an HBA and a municipality in the country.

"Now is a great time for those persons interested in buying a show home to design a home that reflects their own needs and wants," said Dan Dressman, executive director. "Contracting with one of the show builders early on allows a buyer to determine exactly what they want their home to look like and receive all the upgrades at no additional cost. Having the CiTiRAMA® label on a home provides a decided competitive

re-sale advantage" he added.

Homes built in the show qualify for the City of Cincinnati's new home 10 or 15 year tax abatement. There are no other communities in the region that offer this type of incentive for new home purchases.

By James Heller-Jackson

With its eclectic mix of locally-owned businesses, the Northside neighborhood is already known as a prime Cincinnati food, retail and arts destination in the region.

But empty storefronts that would also make great restaurants have remained largely empty because of the lack of liquor licenses. All that changed, when the full Cincinnati City Council voted to give

"The tax abatement is a big advantage to choosing to live in Cincinnati because the savings can be significant," Mayor Mark Mallory said. "CiTiRAMA® continues to be wildly successful, bringing beautiful new housing opportunities to the city."

Northside Community Entertainment District approved

Northside its "Community Entertainment District" status after a unanimous vote by the City Council's Livability Committee.

This is a huge win for Northside. Why? For at least the last couple of years, Northside's business district, while hanging in there in the midst of the biggest economic downturn since the Great Depression, has had to turn away small businesses wanting to open in the neighborhood, merely because of the lack

of liquor licenses available and the premium \$30,000+ cost of the very few licenses that were available on the open market.

The new designation changes that game. The Northside Community Entertainment District designation gives creative tools to the Northside neighborhood to enable new growth. Rather than a business having to reach out to a broker to maybe, just maybe, find a license at a relatively huge cost,

a process that often takes years, they can now call the State of Ohio directly. In our new Community Entertainment District, up to 15 additional liquor licenses are immediately available to food establishments, all at a dramatically reduced cost of \$1500, all directly available from the state, and with no outside brokers involved. These licenses are not transferable. If the business with the new li-

Location, location, location

Lynsa Davie, principal and new Chase School

By Alex Kuhns

On Valentine's day I sat down with Northside's only public school principal, Lynsa Davie, to talk about Chase School's past, present and future. We met in the (temporary) home of the Chase Panthers, which was at the Kirby Road school building on Bruce Avenue.

Chase has been housed in this building for the last five years, two and a half of which Mrs. Davie has been in charge.

The students have now begun learning in the new Chase School building on Turrill Av-

enue (behind the McKie Center).

Chase had been at this site for many years until Cincinnati Public Schools decided to bring two new buildings to Northside as part of the Facilities Master Plan. When I asked Mrs. Davie what she thinks of the new structure she replied, "It's gorgeous, it is absolutely beautiful...a state of the art facility". Modern classrooms rely heavily on new technologies and cluster design in

order to provide educational environments that are appropriate for 21st century learning. Mrs. Davie and her staff have been operating in a building con-



Davie

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structed and designed about 80 years ago, yet they have still been able to make considerable academic achievements during the last few years. In her first full year they made significant gains on the state report card and last year they moved up two categories, making Adequate Yearly Progress

Despite all this progress there is still potential for Chase to grow much stronger. Mrs. Davie says she “looks forward to being in a closer knit partnership with the community” after transitioning into the new space. She is confident about being able to grow these partnerships with neighbors because the new building is “more in the heart of Northside, as opposed to Kirby”. The new Chase facility is a Community Learning Center, which the principal purposes “to engage the community in what’s going on with the school and to be partners with the community to move Northside forward, generationally — from the youngest to the oldest. Where not just students are learners, adults are learners as well.

However that facility can be used to further grow the community, that’s what it needs to be used for, and that means everybody can learn”.

Mrs. Davie believes that

through Building Resource Coordinator Ashanti Dawson, the Boys and Girls Club after-school program and the 5th Quarter Summer Program, Chase will be able to incorporate many popular local activities. For her, moving into the new building will “provide more of an opportunity for us to get more connected with some of the other companies that have not been able to reach out to us, being locationally challenged”.

What would Mrs. Davie like Northside to know about Chase students and teachers?

“Chase students are just like any others. They want to be cared for, want to be loved, and want to be taught. Despite their economic challenges they still have a thirst for learning and desire to be knowledgeable. Chase teachers are caring, hard-working people and without them we would have never been able to turn Chase around. They are willing to learn and got right on board with what I brought in. They have been very strong and consistent with what they needed to do to make a difference at Chase, and they have”.

I asked Mrs. Davie, if she could have any job in the world, what would it be. Her response? “I can’t see myself doing anything outside of education. It would have to be something

connected to impacting the lives of children.” What Mrs. Davie would love to do after this stage of her career is to help principals turn around struggling schools in other areas. With her specialized training at the University of Virginia and her proven track record as a turnaround specialist, I’m sure Mrs. Davie will do this and help impact the lives of many more children in the future.

As many readers know, Winton Montessori is moving to Northside at the new Parker Woods Montessori facility on Beech Hill Avenue. Luckily for us, their principal is a friend of Mrs. Davie and she claims “however we can help each other out, I’m sure we will”. While the school’s programs are very different, they both offer quality to our neighborhood, and any collaboration would be beneficial.

What is your favorite thing about Northside? This was my final question for the principal, and she replied, “I think it’s the family connections. How people are connected to each other, and the involvement that they have.. I think they really have a good stake in their community and care about [it]. They’re trying to make sure that it continues to thrive. Not all communities are like that”.

I couldn’t agree with her

more. Chase School and Parker Woods Montessori need our help, almost as much as we need theirs. If you’re a stakeholder looking to get involved in our neighborhood’s education please contact me! Alex Kuhns apk42@yahoo.com

Be the Change Tutoring campaign at Chase Elementary

Be the Change is a collaborative tutor recruitment effort to support students in high need schools at Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS).

Partners in this effort include the Strive Partnership, United Way of Greater Cincinnati, Cincinnati Public Schools, the Council of Christian Communities and others.

While the demand for tutors is very high, especially in low-performing schools at CPS, the supply of committed tutors is limited. This means that children in our city are not getting the support they need to succeed. By giving a mere one hour a week to volunteer as a tutor at Chase Elementary, you will be making a difference in the life of a student who really needs your help.

It’s EASY to Be the Change. Become a tutor:

1. Contact Us:

We will help you go through the necessary steps to become an approved volunteer. These steps include getting a background check, volunteer badge, training, and placement within a school. Call us at 513-929-1343.

2. Choose a School:

Be the Change is focusing on providing support for the children who need it most in high need CPS Elementary Initiative schools. However, every school could benefit from increased tutors, so if there is another

Kiwanis treats Twin Tower residents to Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner



Ron Witt, upper photo, cooks pancakes while Don Beimesche, center photo delivers a pan to Kiwanis and other volunteers who then served the residents, lower photo.

METRO Photos by Worley Rodehaver



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PEACE *(hopefully)*

By Steve Sunderland

Sparking peace

May these poems spark peace, the kind of peace that open minds and hearts to both the power of gentleness and the forces seeking to drown out the still important sound of caring.

Gentleness

Gentleness is not known well enough. Sometimes this weed of hope dances in a breeze that surprises me.

Often a touch, a glance, even a cold hand gently placed on the skull
Can lighten a load of pain and confusion.

I know there is a special smile
On your face that sharpens the light coming into my eyes and I, too
Have to smile out and in.

A child of three reaches up

And accepts your hand
Because he/she knows that
This hand, this set of fingers and
Palm, this light paw,
Is filled with golden sunlight.

For these seconds, we learn to
Walk upright, use a spoon for
Ice cream, and examine a friendly
world.

Confessions From the Front Lines

“Righteousness is our first refuge and our strength.”
R. P. Warren (1961). The Legacy of the Civil War: Meditation on the Centennial. Random House.

What catches the spark of righteousness
Turning it into a blazing
Cloak for many to wear?

I first remember the flame when
It burned me with my ignorance.
Not wanting to display my stupidity
I dove into the fire and emerged
Angry.
“Who says...?” was the start of
Decades of resistance, fighting, and
Confusion.
“What about your bias...?”
was
The continuing line as I inflated
Anger to match intensity of words.
It worked for a while. Nothing
Can capture a mind, build it, and
Expand it like a dedicated angel
Of shame.

A fire burns and burns.
It blinds to other ideas,
Protects the heart
From other kinds of heat.

The attitude of the besieged requires,
It is thought, the costumes of war, and varying kinds

“Dr. Bob”



Dr. Bob and Mite

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Home Page

By Dave Scharfenberger

Ohio Attorney General
announces settlement

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine has announced that Ohio will receive \$335 million from a major mortgage settlement with the nation's five largest mortgage service lenders.

Ohio's share is part of a \$25 billion nationwide settlement between the 50 state attorney generals and the following banks: Ally, Bank of America, Citibank, JP Mortgage Chase and Wells Fargo.

DeWine has already broken down how the \$335 million will be spent. These items include:

- * \$97 million flowing through the Ohio Attorney General's office for foreclosure prevention, neighborhood revitalization and assistance to families struggling with foreclosure or the threat of foreclosure as well as investigation and prosecution of mortgage rescue scams.

- * Borrowers will re-

ceive an estimated \$102 million in benefits for loan modifications and other relief.

- * \$44 million available for borrowers who lost their home to foreclosure from 2008-2011 and suffered servicing abuse may qualify for compensation.

- * The value refinanced loans to Ohio's "underwater" borrowers would be \$90 million.

- * \$75 million — part of a matching grant program to demolish blighted properties.

(Source: *Coalition On Housing and Homelessness in Ohio*)

While most praised the settlement, some advocates felt that it was not enough. "It does not do justice for the millions of homeowners who lost their homes or hold the banks fully accountable for their crimes," said CUFA member Marilyn Evans. "For homeowners who were de-

frauded and lost their homes, \$2,000 is too little, too late.

**WIN Run/Walk
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Working In Neighborhoods 29th Annual 10K Run and 5 K Run/Walk — a Family Event, Saturday, April 7 — race starts at 9 a.m. at Kestral Point, Winton Woods. Awards for top finishers in each event and age group winners, \$30 pre-registration includes shirt, parking, refreshments; \$35 registration day of race; Call 513-541-4109, ext. 128 for more information or go to www.wincincy.org

Homebuyer Classes
 * Homebuyer Training Class — March 3 and 10 (2 Saturdays: 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.) Working in Neighborhoods - 1814 Dreman St. Cincinnati, OH 45223

Homebuyer Training Class
 March 31 (All Day Saturday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.) College Hill Presbyterian Church - 5742 Hamilton Ave.

Camp Washigton
elects officers

**This story is not
 available on the
 website**



This is a tear in the rubber covering under play equipment at Hoffner Park, a break a small child could get its foot stuck in. The growing break has been there for some time. These rubber coverings were placed in city-owned playgrounds to protect children from falling down on sod or concrete, not to injure them

METRO Photo



Northside-College Hill Kiwanis

We hold our monthly meetings at noon on Tuesdays, at Twin Towers in College Hill. Learn more about Kiwanis, join us for lunch. RSVP: Don Beimesche, 513-542-7800 or 271-2814.

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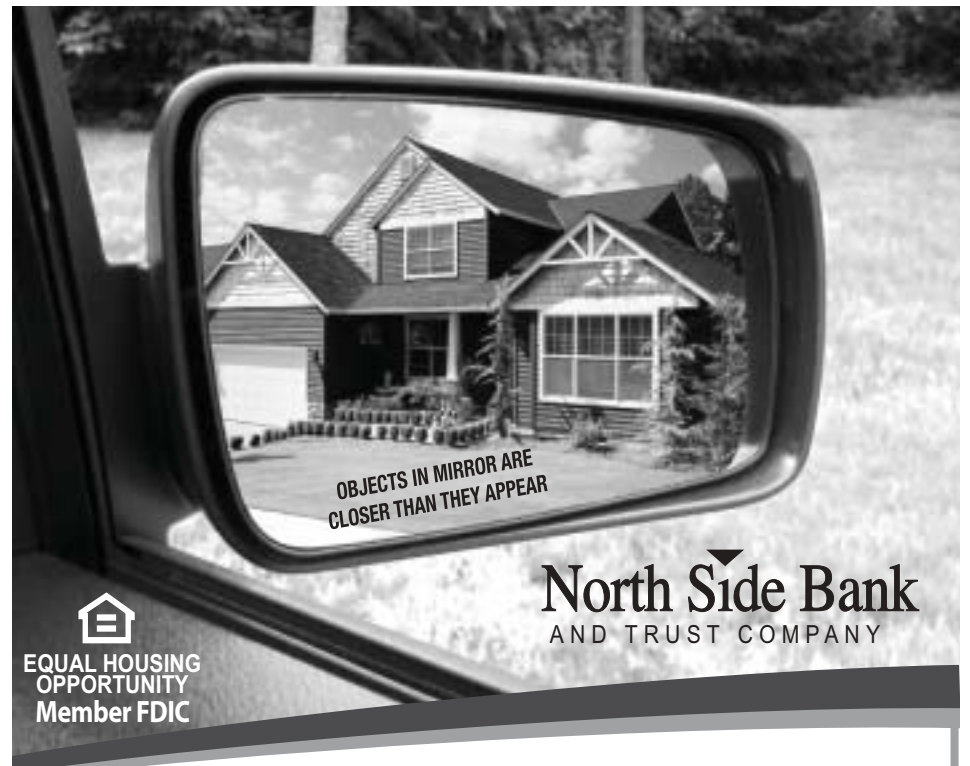


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Northside and now College Hill Post Office scheduled for closure



James Helm

"When I was a kid I hated going to church every Sunday. Now, I hate to miss a Sunday at The Gathering."

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Of razors, fists, and curses.

As the fire continues, the specific gets

Caught in the general, the exception becomes

The rule, the victimized is the only citizen

Worthy of a vote.

We band together in the power of the wound. Our voices are disguises of our

Crisis. Our certainty is a necessary weapon.

Even the small child's happiness

At being on a different jungle jim is

Forgotten, brushed aside, and rejected.

From flame to flame, the burning continues.

There is so much inside to burn.

There is so much outside to burn.

I looked up and saw grown men who

Isolated like me, our voices connected,

Screaming: "Hear us! See us! Love us!"

Battle Tested

"Nothing about the problem of the Negroes was ever taught in a classroom at school; and whenever I would raise these

question with boys, they would either remain silent or turn

the subject into a joke."

R. Wright (1943). Black Boy. Harper.

Where are the problems and the blessings

Of a life in shadows, at the margins,

In the dark colors, Taught?

We sit in classes, books, and papers

Behind us, burning to ash. The paper was so lost that even

The names of the heroes are

beyond

Memory.

Questions about the secrets of the lives

Lived, of how an unemployed father

Finds the strength to get up and face

Another day of emptiness, are not

Asked. Or even allowed.

We are existing in classrooms

As we exist in the community:

Isolated, armed, ignorant, and without a

Guide.

Now the distraction of testing replaces

The ever present fear of a future

Without the person.

Training for the test, sharpening the

Eye, the finger at the trigger, At the gallery with targets, focuses

The mind on the game of accuracy.

Some are turning on themselves,

Believing the target reflects their

Identity. not having a gentle word,

Rather, a command to perform,

They, We, see nothing but even

More civil wars ahead.

Where is Lincoln when we need him?

Who will "emancipate" us from these

Slave systems?

Every school looks like Gettysberg-

Millions of lost children

Being prayed over.

Learn more about composting

Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District is launching a new program to teach the basics of backyard composting.

Residents who attend the free "Composting in Your Backyard" seminar will learn how backyard composting can significantly reduce waste from the kitchen and yard while also producing a valuable soil amendment.

During this one-hour program, attendees will learn how to balance a compost bin, what materials are compostable and where to purchase a compost bin. After the seminar, Hamilton County residents will receive a free kitchen collector, a "Simple Guide to Composting in Your Backyard," an I Compost magnet, and a \$20 coupon toward the purchase of a compost bin.

Registration is required and open only to Hamilton County residents. To register, call 513-946-7734 or e-mail susan.schumacher@hamilton-co.org.

Composting in Your Backyard seminars are evening programs at several locations across Hamilton County. The closest one.

April 17 6:30 p.m. Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden

For more information, please call the Recycling Hotline at 513-946-7766, visit www.HamiltonCountyRecycles.org.

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Urine—big trouble

Downtown—Hello folks. Just when everything gets into a normal routine, there comes along a situation that just has to be shared with people.

Faithful followers of my humble column are familiar with the true story of the gentleman that wanted me to bring his dog back to life (*even if the poor guy sadly expired two and a half months earlier*). I have witnessed Buddhist pet funerals (*what the heck*) for an old pet that had to be put down.

But lately, there was an unique situation dealing with some of the strangest things I have seen a pet eat/swallow/ingest. I figure it's time for a little recap, and perhaps some of you out there with pets can relate to a few of these events.

OK—here is the top ten of some of the strangest things I've seen. We'll do this David Letterman style.

10.) Dogs eating rat/mouse bait. Airright, so this first one is not so god-awful strange, but this one little dog named "Trooper" really loved the stuff. Not once, but twice we had to load him up with hydrogen peroxide to rid his little body of this evil! He sure seemed very pleased with himself after making the stuff an afternoon snack. Hopefully, no one out there is making dog biscuits with that flavor!

9.) Rocks. Again not real unusual, but this was another of Trooper's favorites. By the way, Trooper is doing quite well these days. He is now a responsible young lad with a very charming tem-

perament.

8.) Cassette Tape. This one happened quite a while back. Tigger was brought in with an audio cassette hanging about six inches out of his mouth and the tape going down his throat. What really made this case memorable is when I grabbed the thermometer to take his temperature. Wouldn't you know it, but the tape was coming out the "south side" as well! This one was a true surgical dilemma! Don't try this one at home! It's expensive.

7.) Golf gloves. This situation is actually quite dangerous, just like stockings and socks. These are the kinds of things that like to stick, and then adhere to the stomach/intestinal walls if not dealt with immediately. Be mindful of that.

6.) Terra Cotta Pots. Oh boy, what a case. Here is this big beautiful German Shepherd pup who I imagine spent a little too much time smelling the roses. The owner brought him in, and on the x-ray you could see these big

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four to five inch chunks of a busted terra cotta pot just sitting in his stomach. To this day, I have yet to figure out how in the world they made it that far without doing serious damage to his throat. Hard to forget this one!

5.) Nails. Seen lots of these. You would think the nail would penetrate the GI tract and the pet would be a goner. But the neat thing here is that the sharp point almost always 'snags' the intestines and then the blunt end tumbles over and leads the way out. Nearly always, it's just a matter of time before such things are passed.

4.) Sponges. This one happened around Christmas a few years back. It belonged to a most unhappy cat that does not appreciate an honest enema. Perhaps because along with a kitchen sponge, little Titus also had a big long piece of string, part of a rubber kitchen glove and a little bit of yarn (*for good measure*) thrown into the mix as well. Boy, was that a fun time to be a vet!

3.) Money. One big ole fat cat came in one nice Spring day because he was vomiting. Since we all haven't won the lottery, the owner decided to wait on an x-ray.

A month or two goes by and Porter is still at it with the yacking. Now it's x-ray time, and it was quite obvious that Porter had a palate for money. The head of the dime was removed and the vomiting stopped. Big Porter however was quite upset I took his money and hated me ever since. The interesting here is that the coin was in there for so long that the stomach acids dissolved away the silver, and only the copper core was left. I wanted to hold onto that, but since it was the owner's dime-he took it home.

2.) Needles. This one was very recent. A dear little cat named Precious with a history of vomiting shows up at my clinic. This poor thing had a one and a half inch needle laying sideways in her stomach. On the x-ray, it went from one side of her ribcage to the other. It was surprising that it didn't start poking out the skin! Fortunately, this little cat still likes me after the fact.

And now, the number one most interesting thing. Drum roll please

1.) Engagement Ring. By far and away, my most favorite story to tell. A gentleman in Clifton had a Golden Retriever who evidently appreciated shiny things. One day, the owner called with a rather bizarre request. He's ready to propose to his sweetheart, but can't find the ring that he bought. Would I please take an x-ray and see if Ted is 'holding' the ring! Sure enough, the darned thing was happily bouncing off the walls of Ted's stomach. We kept Ted at the clinic for a few days and went on "poop detail" until it ceremoniously popped out. The owner had just one request. Please don't tell the fiancé where the ring had been!

Until next time.

school you would like to volunteer with, we can gladly place you in your school of choice.

3. Get Trained:

Tutors are required to complete a one-time training and orientation at the school to ensure we support our students in the most effective way possible.

4. Get Placed:

Once tutors are approved and trained, on-site school personnel will match the tutor with a student based on time preference, content preference and school preference. These on-site coordinators will support and assist tutors through the tutoring process at the school site.

5. Tutor One Hour, Once a

Week:

Tutors must commit to working with a student for one hour each week. Materials for each lesson will be provided to the tutor at the school the day of the lesson.

Contact: LaKeisha Cook
Volunteer Coordinator
Office-513.929.1343
Mobil-513.549.0536
Fax-513.929.1122

License were to move out of the Northside district, they would forfeit that license. Note again that these licenses are not available to a business that only wants to open a bar, these are licenses that are available only to food establishments. This is a major win for Northside and small businesses.

The original 2005 Community Entertainment District legislation was initially not really geared for anything but for-profit developers to obtain. Last year, the not-for-profit Pleasant Ridge Development Corporation couldn't afford the Community Entertainment District's original application fee of \$15,000. Many thanks need to go to Cincinnati City Council Member Laure Quinlivan, who worked hard to change the Cincinnati municipal code to make the fee downwardly flexible, thus opening the possibility of designation to not-for-profits. This change to the fee structure allowed Pleasant Ridge to apply for the status without outside funding, making Pleasant

Ridge the first Cincinnati neighborhood to apply for and win the designation.

Already, Pleasant Ridge has new businesses that wouldn't be there if not for that designation. The neighborhood of Price Hill recently won Community Entertainment District status, and already, several new businesses have either already opened or are about to open. So far, the two neighborhoods that have won the designations have benefited immensely. Over-the-Rhine, Madisonville and Westwood have also applied for Community Entertainment District status but have not yet received it.

The Northside Business Association first started working with Laure Quinlivan's city council office early last year after hearing of the possibility of Northside applying for and winning this important designation; the designation wouldn't have been possible without Laure and her staff's efforts. Also, Berding Surveying needs to be thanked, as they donated their services to the effort to produce the required survey and map. Once Northside's required application package was completed, as a matter of transparency, the plan was presented at open Northside Community Council and Northside Business Association public meetings for comment. Community support was widespread, and the package was sent along to the city council's Livability

Committee for consideration. Northside Business Association President Isaac Heintz has this to say about the designation: "The Northside Business Association pursued the entertainment district designation to provide Northside with another tool to help retain existing businesses and to attract new ones. I believe that the designation of the entertainment district can only help to continue the positive trajectory of the neighborhood and the growth of the Northside community."

Since the legislation awarding the designation to Northside, we know of at least three food-oriented businesses who would like to open in Northside and who are already applying for the newly available licenses.

The new district covers much of the existing Northside business district along Hamilton Avenue from the Ludlow Viaduct in the south to just below the Northside Library in the north. In the southern end of the district, Blue Rock Street and Spring Grove Avenue are both included, roughly from Colerain Avenue on the west side, to Crawford Avenue on the east.

As you're aware, there are currently a lot of existing empty storefronts and industrial spaces in the new entertainment district's map. We'd love to see that change. Can't you imagine once-forlorn Northside blocks now teeming with urban life?

By enabling these new licenses, we hope to see more development in the district. This new development would include not only the new food establishments benefiting from the designation, but additional retail, arts, office and residential spaces, all serving to increase the vibrancy, diversity, and uniqueness of all that is Northside.

(Editor's Note: James Heller-Jackson is a Northside resident, Director of Northside Business Association Board, and Director of Northside Community Council Board.)

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Say what?

Foster Friess, the billionaire backer of Rick Santorum who notoriously made a joke about "gals" putting "Bayer aspirin between their knees" in lieu of using contraception, has donated \$5,000 to Josh Mandel, the Republican challenger of Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio). [Huffington Post]