Message from the Executive Director

Dear Neighbors:

2020 has been a challenging year for all of us. The combination of battling a global pandemic, an economic recession with high unemployment, and racial tension has caused all of us to feel the stress on a daily basis. The fact that you all have been able to handle all of those stresses with grace and dignity is a testament to the care that you have for each other and for our neighborhood.

We have taken the opportunity to re-examine how we address the persistent needs of our neighborhood. These include mental health, drug abuse, persistent poverty, crime, abandoned buildings, and racism. These issues are all tied together. We cannot just focus on one issue and ignore the rest. As a result, Slavic Village Development has expanded our work beyond neighborhood development. We have increased our role in improving youth opportunities, building household stability, and increasing neighborhood leadership.

The most recent example of all of this is our Community Steward program, which we began in October 2019, where we have empowered 21 neighborhood residents who represent every facet of our diverse neighborhood. They have gotten out in the community, had one-on-one conversations with many of you, attended block club meetings and community events, and have provided assistance over the past four months throughout the coronavirus crisis. SVD is committed to continuing this program over the next several years, and we will shortly begin recruiting additional residents to become Community Stewards.

One of the things that we have learned through the process of engaging new leaders is how much stronger we are when we tackle issues head-on. It’s no secret that while we are now the most diverse neighborhood in the City of Cleveland, that we have a history of exclusion and racism whose effects still linger today. By expanding our leadership to explicitly include more voices of color, Slavic Village Development is making the commitment to being an “anti-racist” organization. We have a long way to go — our staff and our board does not currently reflect the wonderful diversity of our neighborhood. But, we are making conscious decisions to welcome as-of-yet unheard voices to the table.

I encourage you to let me know if you are committed to making this a more equitable community. You can reach me by email at chrisa@slavicvillage.org, or you can call me at 216-429-1182 x128. We are a stronger, better neighborhood with you as leaders.

Thank you –
Christopher Alvarado, Executive Director

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Academic Enrichment
Cleveland Public Library — Fleet Branch
Temporarily Closed: for open branches and virtual services visit cal.org

Brightside Academy Summer Camp
Summer Camp 5-12 years old. Childcare Services 6 weeks – 12 years old.
Title XX/Country Voucher and Private Pay.
7710 Broadway Ave., Cleveland, OH 44105 216-777-3505
Dolly Parton Imagination Library
Free Books mailed to your home once a month!
Ages 0 – 5  |  Sign up at dollypartonimaginationlibrary.org
Family Connections SPARK
At-Home Kindergarten Readiness Program
Age: 3 – 5  |  Open Enrollment
By appt contact Clarence Baker at cbaker@familyconnections331.org

University Settlement Smarty’s YouTube Channel
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHfpmnLiuEavUeVu9Ky1-A/videos
4800 Broadway Ave., Cleveland, OH 44127 216-641-8948
Young Entrepreneurs Institute Online Program
Learn about entrepreneurship, visit website to sign up at youngetrepreneurstitute.org

Food Distribution
Fountain of Grace Ministries
To go community hot meal  |  Every Wednesday
7345 Broadway Ave., Cleveland, OH 44105
Stella Walsh Recreation Center
Grab and Go meal distribution  |  Monday – Friday
5949 Engel St., Cleveland, OH 44127

Community Stewards Respond to COVID-19 Needs
The Community Stewards are a diverse group of 21 neighborhood residents, representing the different neighborhoods within Broadway Slavic Village, who applied to be part of a yearlong process involving training and outreach to help direct and shape a neighborhood planning process. The main focus of this planning process is on Equity, Resilience, and Climate Protection. Since October, the stewards have been taking part in related trainings including Racial Equity training with the Racial Equity Institute, Trauma Informed Care training with MetroHealth, and Leadership training with Neighborhood

Stella Walsh Rec Undergoing Improvements
Capital Repair work underway at Stella Walsh Recreation Center and will remain in place through July 2021. The center will be closed for the summer during early stages of construction but is planned to open in the fall. However, staff will continue to serve “Grab and Go” meals throughout the summer for youth weekdays from 4 to 5 and Saturdays from noon to 1pm.
The City of Cleveland is conducting capital repairs and improvements to the natatorium at Stella Walsh Recreation Center. This work includes replacement of the roof structure over the pool, including steel framing, decking, and roofing system; new lighting and HVAC distribution within the pool; new pool lining; pool deck repairs; masonry repairs; a state-of-the-art dehumidification system as well as high-performance barrier coatings on the structural members, improved insulation, which will minimize the possibility for condensation on the structure and will improve building energy performance. “The City is investing over a million dollars to our neighborhood recreation center that provides activities for our youth and to our senior citizens. This is as important community asset and we are pleased to get this done for our community in the Broadway/Slavic Village neighborhood,” said Ward 12 Councilman Brancatelli. Slavic Village Development and the Councilman have been advocating for proper repairs at the facility in meetings with City officials over the last year and are enthused to see improvements taking place so programming can expand.

University Settlement-Hunger Center
3 – 5 day grocery pick-up
Tuesday – Friday 11:30am – 2pm
University Settlement Community Meal
Hot meal pickup every Tuesday 6pm – 7pm
University Settlement Mobile Pantry
Fresh Produce 1st Monday of each month, 11am – 1:30pm
4800 Broadway Ave., Cleveland, OH 44127
Grace Wright 216-641-8948

Events
Fountain of Grace Ministries
100 Backpack give-a-way to all school age children in Slavic Village
September 12th
1pm – 3pm
5949 Engel St., Cleveland, OH 44127

Resiliency Circles with Metro Health, a virtual Market Place with Neighbor UP, and virtual Leadership training with Neighborhood Connections.
The Stewards have continued their hard work during this Covid-19 pandemic. They have been participating in neighborhood outreach events alongside University Settlement; going door to door with comfort bags (bags containing snacks with useful information and updates) and having conversations with community members they meet. They will continue this outreach throughout the summer, so keep an eye out for the community stewards on your street.

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SAY (Social Advocates for Youth) Virtual program
Mindful Boxing — learn boxing technique and self-defense. 8th – 12th grade. Begins June 10th at 11am. RSVP with Nancy Schaumburg.
schaumburg@bellefairejcb.org

Community Engagement
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The Garden Factory Free Plant Stand returns for the 2020 growing Season!

In case you don’t know or haven’t yet used the services of this FREE community resource...

The Garden Factory Free Plant Stand is a place for plant sharing in your neighborhood.

Experienced gardeners can drop off extra plants or divisions from their garden to share with other community members. If you are new to gardening or want to try out a new plant for your garden, drop by and see what’s on the stand. Selection is random and constantly changing. All garden related donations are accepted, including; gloves, tools, pots, seeds or even houseplants!

If donating plants, labels are helpful. If picking up, please be considerate, limit your selection and leave something for others. The Free Plant Stand operates on the honor system and will be set up 24/7 from May – October.

Look for it on the east (driveway) side of the Gold Plum, 6506 Gertrude Ave., Cleveland 44105

Questions? Contact Anne at asgoldplum@gmail.com or call 216-441-0267

Feeling a bit stir crazy lately? Need some fresh air, sunshine and exercise?...

Now, more than ever, is a great time to try gardening!

Having a garden does not require a lot of space and can be a relatively inexpensive hobby. It is a practical way to provide fresh food for your family or can be a real mood brightener with colourful flowers. Even small pots of herbs on the porch, patio or window sill can give a genuine sense of satisfaction when you perk up your cooking with home grown flavors.

This months colour column features gardener, Donna Smith; Donna has been gardening since she was in grade school and further enhanced her gardening experience working at The Broadway Garden Center (7758 Broadway Ave.) for 6 years. Her front yard is a living testament to her artistic sense of grace and beauty which can be observed by anyone passing by her meticulously maintained home on Fleet Avenue. Donna has lived in the neighborhood since 1999 and enjoys living here for the diversity of the people. She also likes learning about different cultures and nationalities.

One of Donna’s favorite plants are hostas but she likes to mix things up in her flower beds combining perennials and annuals for plenty of colour throughout the growing season.

But, merely maintaining her own home garden is not enough! Donna has tirelessly volunteered her time to help maintain the many plantings along Fleet Avenue to help keep our neighborhood looking good. Many a sultry summer evening, she can be observed making her way down the thoroughfare weeding beds and trimming up plants.

Donna thinks we are on the right track demolishing long abandoned houses but would like to see more residents get involved in efforts to start community gardens (or join an existing one).

Hats off and many thanks go out to Donna for all her hard work in making our neighborhood a better place for everyone!

Whether experienced or new to gardening, if you are interested in learning more about plants and meeting with other like-minded folks to discuss projects, exchange plants, or share advice and good will, stay tuned for upcoming information about the formation of the first ever Slavic Village Garden Club. (When things return to our regularly scheduled lives.)

In the meantime, you can contact Anne @ 216-441-0267 or e-mail at asgoldplum@gmail.com to sign up for further information about the SV Garden Club.

To join in with an already established community garden in your neighborhood, please contact Joe Linsky at joel@slavicvillage.org.

SLAVIC VILLAGE HISTORY TIDBIT

Water not only played a critical role in the geologic history of the Slavic Village, it also helped shape its sociology.

Mill Creek, Kingsbury Run, Morgana Run, and Burke Creek are all tributaries of the Cuyahoga River. Flowing westward over the millennia, they helped carve out the neighborhood’s terrain. They also sometimes became political boundaries that separated different social groups as they arrived.

Most of these waterways were intentionally buried as development intensified in the late Nineteenth Century. But they continue to flow today, twenty to fifty feet underground.

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SLAVIC VILLAGE RESOURCE HELP LINE

Not everyone has internet. But everyone deserves access to resources.

216-404-2990

A resource phone line to find:
Rental Assistance, Help with Utilities, Meal and Food Access, Health and Safety Programs, & Much More.
Exercise your Right to Vote!
The November elections aren’t far away so be sure you are in the know before you head to the polls.
Register: If you haven’t yet registered to vote, are unsure of your registration status, or need to identify your polling location, please visit https://voterlookup.ohiosos.gov/voterlookup.aspx. You must register or update your voter registration no later than 30 days prior to an election. Upcoming voter registration deadline:

- October 5, 2020 for the November 3, 2020 General Election

Complete the Census Helps Your Neighbors
Census Bureau will never ask you for: your full Social Security number, your bank account or credit card numbers, anything on behalf of a political party, or money/donations.
There are three ways to complete the census:
Online: Visit https://my2020census.gov/to complete
Phone: To begin, call 844-330-2020
Mail: In mid-April, the Census Bureau began mailing paper questionnaires to homes that have not yet responded online or by phone. If you have yours, you may complete and mail back to U.S. Census Bureau | National Processing Center 100 Logistics Avenue, Jeffersonville, IN 47144

CIVIC CORNER

Long Time SVD Staff, Marlane Weslian, Retires
As a 40+ year resident and SVD staff member, Marlane Weslian recently stepped down from her position as our Neighborhood Development Officer. Her projects and impact can be seen all around Slavic Village: from Arch Park in North Broadway, to Harvard Park by Holy Name, and the Morgana Run Trail that spans the width of the neighborhood. Marlane has been regarded as a local expert in greenspace development as she has found ways to utilize Slavic Village’s vacant land for extraordinary park, public art and green infrastructure uses. She will be dearly missed, but we congratulate her on the next phase of her life and are forever grateful for the genuine passion she brought to our community.

Neighbors Step Up with Pandemic Support
In March, University Settlement teamed up with Broadway MetroHealth and SVD to fund $250 projects to connect neighbors during a time of social distancing. Continuing to connect neighbors during this time was a challenge but critical work and we are proud to present the funded projects:
- Social Hug by Rita Howard: Writing and mailing cards of encouragement to seniors
- Friendly Fleet Sweep by Jenn Leffel: Neighborhood clean-up with kids activities
- Strive to Survive by Benjamin Franklin Jr: Drawings illustrated post cards + a vegetable and flower garden
- COVID-19 Helping Hands by Marilyn Malzewski: Helping families with pet care
- Community Yahooos Care by Tamika Compton: Create and distribute masks to community

New COVID Rent Assistance Program Now Open
CHN Housing Partners and EDEN, Inc have partnered to administer the Northeast Ohio Rent Help Program which launched July 1. This lifeline, funded by the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County, is for residents who are facing financial hardships due to the economic impact of COVID-19 and need help paying rent. To be eligible, an applicant must be a resident of Cuyahoga County and have a household income below 120% AMI. For example, a family of four cannot make more than $90,000 annually. Applicants can be approved for up to three months of rent. Payments will be made directly to their landlord. Applicants must submit all required documents before their application will be considered submitted.

Applicants will need to submit:
- Verification of COVID-19 related hardship
- Verification of household members (Social Security cards for all and photo identification for those over 18 years of age)
- Proof of income
- Lease agreement
- Most recent utility bill (for those also applying for utility assistance)

Please visit: www.neorenthelp.org to apply, or call 833-377-RENT (7368) for assistance. Please note that applications cannot be done over the phone.