

# TODAY'S **family**

November 2021

Cuyahoga

**FREE!**

## **Holden Arboretum**

Experience the  
beauty of the fall  
season

## **Montessori School of University Heights**

For children 3–6 years old

## **Greater Cleveland Aquarium**

Save 20% on  
memberships

## **Shaker Rocks**

Climbing gym

## **The Little Gym of Shaker Heights**

## **Adoption**

Open your heart  
and your home

## **Snapology**

Hands-on learning  
through LEGO®-themed  
programs and activities

P.O. Box 7316, Eastlake, Ohio 44097  
www.TodaysFamilyMagazine.com  
info@todaysfamilymagazine.com  
440-799-8882

**Publisher/Advertising**

Kim Miller

**General Manager/Editor**

Dan Miller

**Writers**

Deanna Adams  
Ante Logarusic  
Stacy Turner

The opinions expressed in this magazine do not constitute an endorsement by the Today's Family Magazine® staff or our advertisers. All contributors and advertisers assume responsibility and liability for the accuracy of statements and claims in advertisements and press releases. All readers assume responsibility for actions or decisions they may make as a result of reading this publication. We reserve the right to refuse any advertising. Submission of articles does not guarantee publication.

Copyright 2021,  
Direct Market Publishing, LLC  
All rights reserved.

Today's Family Magazine is distributed free of charge for families living in and around Cuyahoga County.



**Like us on Facebook!**



**Follow us on Instagram!**

@todaysfamilymagazine

**Photo/image credits:**

Cover: iStock Photo/ mdmilliman  
Page 15: © Can Stock Photo/ cthoman

**Subscribe to our monthly email newsletter!**



Featuring easy-to-enter contests with great prizes, updates, announcements, featured events and articles, and much more! Visit TodaysFamilyMagazine.com and sign up today! The link is in the upper left corner of the home page.

**contents**



**Montessori School of University Heights**

Page 5



**Snapology**

Inspiring kids to build and create  
Page 6



**Shaker Rocks**

Page 8



**Little Gym**

Page 9

**PLUS**

**Careers in manufacturing**  
Page 12

**Aquarium memberships**  
Page 13

**Mommy Chronicles**  
Page 14

**Just For Laughs**  
Page 15



**Jump Start !  
Gymnastics**

**Classes for all ages and abilities!**

**23700 Mercantile Road, Beachwood**

Rear of National Biological Building

**(216) 896-0295**

Website: [jsgymnastics.com](http://jsgymnastics.com)

Email: [jsgymnastics@jsgymnastics.com](mailto:jsgymnastics@jsgymnastics.com)

**MASKS REQUIRED BY ALL PARTICIPANTS & ADULTS**

**TUMBLING TURKEY CAMP**

**Wednesday, November 24, 2021**

(Preregistration is required)

10:00 am-3:00 pm ages • 5-14 years old



**SIX-WEEK SESSIONS**

**WINTER 1 SESSION**

**Sun., November 28, 2021 - Sat., January 22, 2022**

**WINTER 2 SESSION**

**Sunday, January 23 - Saturday, March 5, 2022**

**OTHER PROGRAMS**

**YOUTH OPEN GYM**

**Fridays through December 10, 2021**

11:15-12:30 pm • \$10 per participant

**ADULT OPEN GYM**

**Tuesdays & Thursdays**

**Now through December 16, 2021**

7:30-9:00 pm • \$10 per participant

The WIT/MIT class is our adult open gym led by coaches who are excited to help you accomplish your own personal fitness goals. Whether you're a beginner or an advanced gymnast/athlete, this open gym can accommodate your levels and abilities. Our class is a great and supportive mix of returning cheerleaders and gymnasts, parents, cross-fit athletes, and beginners who have never done a forward roll before. Come get an awesome workout, learn how to hold a handstand, do a back handspring, improve spatial awareness, or general strength & flexibility utilizing gymnastics equipment (such as our in-ground trampoline and the 50-foot tumble track system).

# Adoption: An alternate path to parenthood

By Nina Polien Light

The perception of adoptive parents may be of a loving wife and husband who are unable to have children of their own. The couple go to a private adoption agency, shell out tens of thousands of dollars and, after what could be a years-long waiting period, bring home the newborn son or daughter they've always dreamed about raising.

Working with a private adoption agency with the goal of adopting an infant is an admirable approach to offering a home to a child in need. But some folks—married or not—find the process to be too costly and drawn out. Fortunately, there are other avenues for adoption, especially if prospective parents are open to providing forever homes for youngsters with special needs, older children, sibling groups or children of different races or ethnicities.

November is National Adoption Month, a 30-day platform for raising awareness and bringing attention to the need for permanent families for minors in foster care. It is an initiative of the Children's Bureau, which is part of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

"National Adoption Month is a celebration of those members in our community who have taken a chance on children and made them a member of their family," says Eugene Tetrick, supervisor of the Substitute Care Unit (foster care/adoption) for the Lake County Department of Jobs and Family Services. "These people had the courage and determination to 'change their normal' by bringing a child in need into their home."

Beverly Torres, senior manager for permanency support (adoption) at the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services, says many children are in county custody because of abuse, neglect, a parent's mental health issues and other reasons. "When they can't be safely reunified with their caregivers and when parental rights are terminated, we owe these kids a family. November highlights foster care, and especially adoptive care, for our families and children."

In honor of National Adoption Month, Today's Family answers

questions about adopting youngsters currently in the foster care system.

## What is the difference between fostering and adopting?

Foster parents are state-certified caregivers, who provide a temporary home for children while social service agencies attempt to reunify youngsters with their families. If reunification with birth parents does not happen, the public agency holding temporary custody of the child receives permanent custody of them, matches them with an adoptive family (most often in the dually licensed foster/adoptive home they are currently in) and works with the adoptive family to finalize an adoption through probate court.

## Who is eligible to adopt children in foster care in Ohio?

Prospective adoptive parents must be at least 18 years old, have sufficient income to meet the child's basic needs and be in good physical, emotional and mental health. They may be single, married, part of a same-sex couple or the child's older sibling. If part of a couple, they must be in a stable relationship for at least one year. Education level, religion and home ownership are not factors.

## How great is the need?

Every day, children throughout Ohio enter the custody of children services. This results in 2,000 to 3,000 children at any given moment waiting to be adopted in Ohio. The need for adoptive families is great and every child deserves a forever family.

According to Torres, Cuyahoga County has permanent custody of 800 children. The county has potential adoptive parents for about half (slightly more than 400) of them; the remainder are still in need of forever families.

Tetrick adds, "From 2017–2019 we finalized adoptions for 37 children. With those adoptions, our foster homes close as their families are now 'complete' when the adoption is finalized. Therefore we are continuously trying to recruit new families to replace the ones that left after they completed their families."

And the need is definitely very real as Lake County had 120 children in their custody in 2020.



Serenity (13) and Eric (8) are siblings with the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services. They are looking for their forever home.

Call 216-881-5775 today to begin the process of making their lives, and yours, more fulfilled.

## So many people wish to adopt. Why haven't these children found forever families?

It's important to match youngsters with families who are committed to meeting the children's specific needs for the long term. Many children in foster care deal with physical, psychological or behavioral concerns as they all have been exposed to abuse and/or neglect.

"Any time a child moves from one home to another, it's a traumatic experience," Torres explains. "Some adoptive families are looking for a specific type of child. When kids come in to our custody, they are experiencing a trauma in their life, a separation, a loss. That comes out in different ways for different children. Sometimes they've been removed from their home because of a relative's mental-health issue and they've inherited that mental-issue. The specific needs of our children dictate the kind of families we're looking for."

Placing older children, such as teenagers, can be challenging because some people prefer to adopt infants or toddlers. Keeping siblings together can also be difficult if families wish to adopt one child at a time.

## What is the cost?

"Oftentimes, those who become licensed as foster and adoptive parents through the county are looking to grow their family through adoption as the costs of private adoptions are too expensive," Tetrick says. "Some costs involved in the adoption process are court costs for the

adoption and paying for updated birth certificates, which are minimal comparatively to private adoptions. Adoption of a child in the custody of Lake County costs less than \$200."

Cuyahoga County's Torres says a required fire inspection may run \$30-\$100. If the compulsory home study visit reveals the need for making home improvements to meet Ohio mandates, there may be costs associated with those upgrades.

By comparison, voluntary adoption of a newborn at a nonprofit organization in Ohio typically costs \$10,000-\$25,000, according to the Franklin County Law Library website.

## I want to adopt a child currently in foster care. Now what?

Start with contacting the county agency. Cuyahoga residents may call 216-881-5775 or visit <https://hhs.cuyahogacounty.us/adoptable-kids>, those in Lake can dial 440-350-4218 and those in Geauga can call 440-285-9141.

According to Torres, prospective adoptive parents are required to attend pre-service training to become licensed as a foster or adoptive parent. Once licensed, they will complete an application and undergo a home study, which includes a fire inspection. Following approval, the county agency will work to match the adult and child. After a match is made, an adoption assessor and the child's social worker will present the prospective adoptive parent with the

See **ADOPTION** on page 5

# MONTESSORI

SCHOOL OF  
**UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS**

FOUNDED 1968

[WWW.MS-UH.ORG](http://WWW.MS-UH.ORG)

23599 CEDAR ROAD | BEACHWOOD, OH

CALL FOR A PERSONAL TOUR

**216-381-8388**



**THREE YEAR PROGRAM**  
BEGINNING AT AGE THREE



# Montessori School of University Heights provides a foundation for life

By Deanna Adams

The Montessori method of education, developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, has been utilized for more than 100 years, and continues to increase in popularity. The Montessori approach, based on explorative hands-on learning, individualized self-directed activity, and a noncompetitive, collaborative, multi-age environment, lays a solid foundation for lifelong learning.

The school's mission is to assist each child in becoming the unique person each is created to be. The school provides an environment specifically prepared to meet the young child's developmental needs and encourages children to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually according to each child's own capacity in an atmosphere of peace, love, and respect.

As the children engage with the unique Montessori materials, self-learning and self-development occur. The children gradually develop an inner discipline, a sense of self-worth, and respect for others and the world in which they live.

Former high school physics and chemistry teacher, Elizabeth "Betty" Hisson, along with her husband, Jack, believed so strongly in Dr. Montessori's mission, and the importance of child-centered early education, that they opened the Montessori School of University Heights in 1968.

Although the school now resides in Lyndhurst—inside the Church of the Good Shepherd—its mission continues to thrive under the leadership of Maria Wood, head of school. "My husband and I became acquainted with this school when our first child was an infant. I was immediately impressed with the peaceful, beautiful, engaging atmosphere. I became an assistant in 1990, when both of our sons were enrolled," Wood recalls. "I took Montessori training and completed my internship under Betty's guidance. When Betty retired in 1999, I embraced the work of continuing the school's mission."

The school is for children, ages 3–6, which is considered a crucial stage in a young person's education-

al life. Wood explains that Maria Montessori, an Italian medical doctor, was first to discover that young children between birth and age six have a unique mental capacity that she termed the "absorbent mind." Dr. Montessori described this capacity as the young child's ability to absorb information effortlessly like a sponge absorbs water. The Montessori primary environment is orderly, beautiful, and inviting. No flashing lights, buzzes, bells or whistles. Instead the children explore and learn from real objects made primarily of natural materials, such as wood, cloth, metal, and glass—and, surprising to some, includes china. "We encourage this so that they learn to appreciate beauty and how to handle beautiful items with care," Wood says. "We want them to experience the delight of aesthetically pleasing materials."

Even at such a young age, children are introduced to a variety of subjects, such as math, language, geography, science, music, and art by exploring the Montessori materials that embody concepts in these areas.

In the practical life area, children build fine and gross motor skills through activities for everyday living including fastening clothes, tying/buckling shoes, polishing, washing, sweeping, sewing, and woodworking, all using real materials.

The sensorial work refines the uses of the five senses. "Our school also serves the spiritual development of the child utilizing the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program," notes Wood.

Absent from the room are computers, tablets, and televisions. "We believe a child needs concrete experiences with real objects. There is a strong connection between the hand and brain. The young child develops through meaningful interaction with real objects. Through working with their hands the children develop order, concentration, coordination, independence and, as Dr. Montessori states, 'reach a strength of character which is conspicuous.'"

Since its formation, Montessori School of University Heights has served approximately 600 young children. Many former students have used their Montessori foun-



ation to go on to work as doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs, social workers, teachers and in other successful professions. "We build a foundation for lifelong learning in the sense that we help nurture the person's curiosity and overall love of learning that carries them through life," Wood says. Many alumni enjoy reconnecting with the Montessori materials when they become parents and enroll their children in the school.

While the children receive individual presentations on the Montessori materials, they also develop social skills, grace, courtesy, manners, respect for others, and the ability to relate to others as they work together with the Montessori materials, play together on the playground, and eat together at the snack table. Both children and their parents often

develop life-long friendships due to the school's small family-like atmosphere.

Applications are accepted year-round for children who will be 3 years old by the fall. New children visits are typically held in March or April.

The Montessori School of University Heights is located at 23599 Cedar Road in Lyndhurst. For more information, see [www.ms-uh.org](http://www.ms-uh.org), or phone 216-381-8388.



## Adoption from page 3

youngster's medical and educational records, photographs and other pertinent information. The adult and child will then have preplacement visits in the adoptive home and the child's current home. After

the child moves in with the adult, a judge or magistrate can finalize the adoption. Classes, support groups and referrals to community agencies will then be available to the new family.

# Snapology

Inspires kids to build, learn and create while having fun

By Mary Flenner

Snapology in Beachwood offers children ages 4 to 12 a hands-on experience to learn and create through LEGO®-themed programs, robotics, engineering, animation and more.

“It’s a makerspace that inspires minds to create and innovate,” says owner and operator, Gina Cuffari.

Snapology features countless LEGO bricks and other building toys with space to roam, explore, build and create,” says Cuffari.

Cuffari was inspired to open a Snapology franchise in 2014 and her brick and mortar location opened its doors in Beachwood in 2018. In 2020, Snapology of Cleveland moved to 23645 Mercantile Road. “For almost four years, I ran a mobile program. The last three years, we have been able to offer programs in schools, community centers, and

at our discovery center. The pandemic was tough but we are thrilled to see our students in person again! The value is the combination of STEAM education and fun,” says Cuffari.

Snapology after-school programs are offered at many area schools as an option that parents can pay to have their child take part in.

“As a parent, you’re always looking for opportunities that you can feel good about your kids being involved in. Not only the fun they’re having, but that they’re learning. We make learning fun and help improve critical thinking, problem solving, and team skills. We teach basic engineering concepts, coding, programming... and doing it with LEGO bricks seems to be a perfect way.”

Cuffari says she discovered Snapology after spending almost 20 years in higher education.

“My kids were 2 and 6 at the time.



I decided I wanted to do something a bit more entrepreneurial and find more of that family balance. I met with Laura and Lisa Coe, who started the company in Pittsburgh back in 2011. It was a company I believed in and was passionate about,” Cuffari says.

Cuffari says she selected Beachwood for its convenience. It’s located close to Interstate 271 and is easily accessible. “It’s a big, open space and is perfect for summer camps and birthday parties, too. We’re also trying to expand to the

westside more and more. We were pleased to partner with GradePower Learning this past summer and offer Snapology camps in Fairview Park.”

“At our Discovery Center space at 23645 Mercantile, we are focused on engagement. Parents always say, ‘I can’t believe how engaged they are, how focused they are,’” Cuffari says.

Snapology also offers classes, indoor play, birthday parties and summer camps.

To learn more, visit Cleveland.Snapology.com or call them at 216-990-8988.



**HORIZON**  
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Give your child the tools they need

**Free Preschool**  
**Preescolar Gratis**

Limited Space Available. Call for details & eligibility.

— FREE TRANSPORTATION —

**MENTOR**  
8303 Tyler Blvd.  
440-205-8420

**EUCLID**  
1050 E. 200th St.  
216-481-3830

**CLEVELAND**  
2285 Columbus Rd.  
216-344-3000



[www.HorizonChildcare.com](http://www.HorizonChildcare.com)

## Fall color at Holden Arboretum



Experience fall color from a new perspective at the Holden Arboretum. The Murch Canopy Walk invites guests on a 500-foot-long elevated walkway that is built 65 feet above the forest floor. The Kalberer Emergent Tower is 120 feet or approximately 12 stories tall and provides a breathtaking view of the surrounding area all the way to Lake Erie. Visiting the structures are now included with membership and general admission.

Visit [holdenfg.org](http://holdenfg.org) for more information and to purchase tickets.



## Great Lakes Science Center opens new aerospace exhibition, 'Above and Beyond'

Get ready to explore the future of aerospace technology and air travel with Great Lakes Science Center's newest exhibition, Above and Beyond, an interactive experience presented by Parker Aerospace.

Guests will launch into the future at Above and Beyond with 5,000 square feet of unprecedented interactive demonstrations of the advances in aviation and aerospace from the first powered flights to the newest innovations.

"The Science Center is thrilled to offer this incredible, interactive exhibition that highlights the science and wonder of flight," said president & CEO Dr. Kirsten Ellenbogen. "From the moment guests enter through an immersive theater experience they will feel the excitement and inspiration that has accompanied humanity's quest for flight."

Within the exhibition, guests will be able to step into a simulated space elevator that takes them to the edge of the universe, design and

test a supersonic jet to face off in a virtual high speed flying competition, experience a flight simulation with motion-sensing technology to get a sense of what it's like to fly like a bird, and discover concepts for future aircraft.

"Parker is proud to help bring this fascinating exhibition to northeast Ohio, a land of world-class technology, innovation and education and home to Parker Aerospace. It is more meaningful because it is in Cleveland, the community we call home," said Parker Aerospace President Roger Sherrard.

Above and Beyond runs through Sunday, January 2, 2022 and is included with general admission to the Science Center.

Visit [greatscience.com](http://greatscience.com) for more information and to purchase tickets.

Fall hours will be 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Wednesday–Saturday and noon–5 p.m. on Sundays. The Science Center will be closed Mondays and Tuesdays and for all home day Browns games.

## 35th annual Beary Merry Christmas Show Handcrafted Market

Wednesday, December 1 & Thursday, December 2  
11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

It's holiday shopping time at the 35th annual Beary Merry Christmas Show Handcrafted Market on Wednesday, December 1 and Thursday, December 2 at the Normandy Party Center, 30310 Palisades Parkway in Wickliffe.

This craft extravaganza showcases over 50 talented artisans from Ohio and Pennsylvania, displaying unique holiday gifts for your shopping pleasure. The event will again feature a deluxe Chinese raffle extravaganza to benefit Susan G. Komen for the Cure Northeast Affiliate. This will include over 50 baskets for all members of the family including a spa package from John Roberts, variety of dinners, sports items, toys, family fun and more. Delicious lunch and dinners catered by Normandy Party Center will be available for purchase. Admission is \$3.00.

Asa Cox with Century 21, Asa Cox Homes is the sponsor again this year. Event coordinators are collab-

orating with Asa and Asa's Angels, a support program for families in need in the community during the holidays. She distributes over 15,000 toys, helping more than 3,000 families. Each family is personally interviewed and provides a wish list for their children. \$125 is generously spent on each child. During The Beary Merry event toys will be collected for her annual Christmas Outreach Drive for Kids. Her goal is "to make all children smile on Christmas morning" and Beary Merry is here to help! Bring a toy to the show and make a child happy this Christmas. Please support this "beary" worthwhile cause.

Mark your calendars! This is one holiday market you do not want to miss!

If you have questions, contact Denise McPherson at 216-481-9229 or [bearymerry@roadrunner.com](mailto:bearymerry@roadrunner.com). Follow them at [www.facebook.com/BearyMerryShow](http://www.facebook.com/BearyMerryShow).

**Dr. Trista's  
Children's  
Dentistry**

Where Healthy Smiles Start

# Always welcoming new smiles!

Schedule your child's  
dental exam &  
cleaning today!

Dr. Trista is a board certified pediatric dentist. She specializes in treating the dental needs of infants, children and adolescents in a child-friendly atmosphere. Her extensive resume makes her uniquely qualified to help your child achieve and maintain a healthy, bright smile for a lifetime.

**Dr. Trista is the Pediatric Dentist for The Cleveland Clinic,  
Department of Plastic Surgery, Craniofacial Team**

**Pleasant visits to the dental office promote trust  
and confidence that will last a lifetime.**

Dr. Trista Onesti is proud to be named a 2020 Pediatric Top Dentist as seen in:

## Trista Onesti, DDS

5255 Mayfield Road, Lyndhurst

# 440.459.2100

[www.DrTristaSmiles.com](http://www.DrTristaSmiles.com)

**BOOK YOUR NEXT  
BIRTHDAY PARTY  
AT CUTS N CURLS!**

a unique hair salon & toy store  
**Cuts N Curls**  
for boys and girls, Inc.  
(and grown-ups, too)

**BRING IN THIS AD AND RECEIVE:**

**\$2.00 OFF**

A KID'S CUT

Expires 11/30/21

**\$5.00 OFF**

AN ADULT'S CUT

Expires 11/30/21

HOURS: Tue-Fri 10 am-7 pm, Sat 9 am-6 pm  
Sun 10 am-5 pm  
*Appointments preferred.*

**6025 Kruse Drive, Solon • 440-542-1750 • [www.cutsncurls.net](http://www.cutsncurls.net)**

# Reach new heights! at Shaker Rocks climbing gym

By Nina Polien Light

The Richman family traveled to youth climbing competitions throughout the country when their three now-grown children were in high school. Along the way, they visited impressive rock gyms that far outshined Cleveland's facilities.

"I live in Shaker Heights and knowing that the Van Aken District was popping up, I thought it would be a fantastic place to have a modern climbing gym," says Annie Richman, a former elementary educator, who opened Shaker Rocks in 2019 with her husband, Spencer. "Most rock gyms are in industrial warehouse neighborhoods because that's where tall buildings can be found. We are in a residential area with restaurants, shops and recreation next door, which is attractive to a lot of people."

Shaker Rocks sports 14,000 square feet of climbing surface plus a yoga studio, fitness area, locker rooms and a gear shop. Snacks are available as well as space for birthday parties, family reunions, corporate team-building events and other occasions. In addition to open climbing and parties, the facility offers a one-hour "Taste of Climbing" experience, climbing classes, yoga & fitness classes, summer camps and school holiday camps. A youth climbing team is now firmly established having sent five climbers to Youth Nationals in Reno this summer. As climbing was represented for the first time in the 2020 Olympic Games, Richman expects that competitive climbing will become more popular.

Shaker Rocks is open to people of all ages and abilities. Climbing can be a multigenerational family activity, Richman insists.

"It doesn't matter how young or old or how strong or not strong you may be," she says. "It's an activity people can enjoy equally by climbing routes of different difficulties. I can do this with my kids and with my 80-year-old dad."

Richman says her gym boasts more climbing under one roof than

any other gym in northeast Ohio. Several climbing styles are featured. Bouldering allows climbers to scale shorter walls without ropes; after climbing, they drop onto a big, cushy crash pad. Some climbs work with belay and auto-belay devices. Both require the climber to be tethered to a rope. The former relies on a partner to manage the rope, while the latter can be used independently.

"We have lots of lead climbing, which is something that's been lacking in Cleveland for a long time," Richman says. "It's slightly more technical, where you protect yourself as you go instead of being attached to a top rope. You climb and hook the rope into protection above you, then you keep climbing above that until you get to the next piece of protection and so on."

The gym has the area's first speed wall, she adds. Speed climbing is one of the three Olympic climbing events.

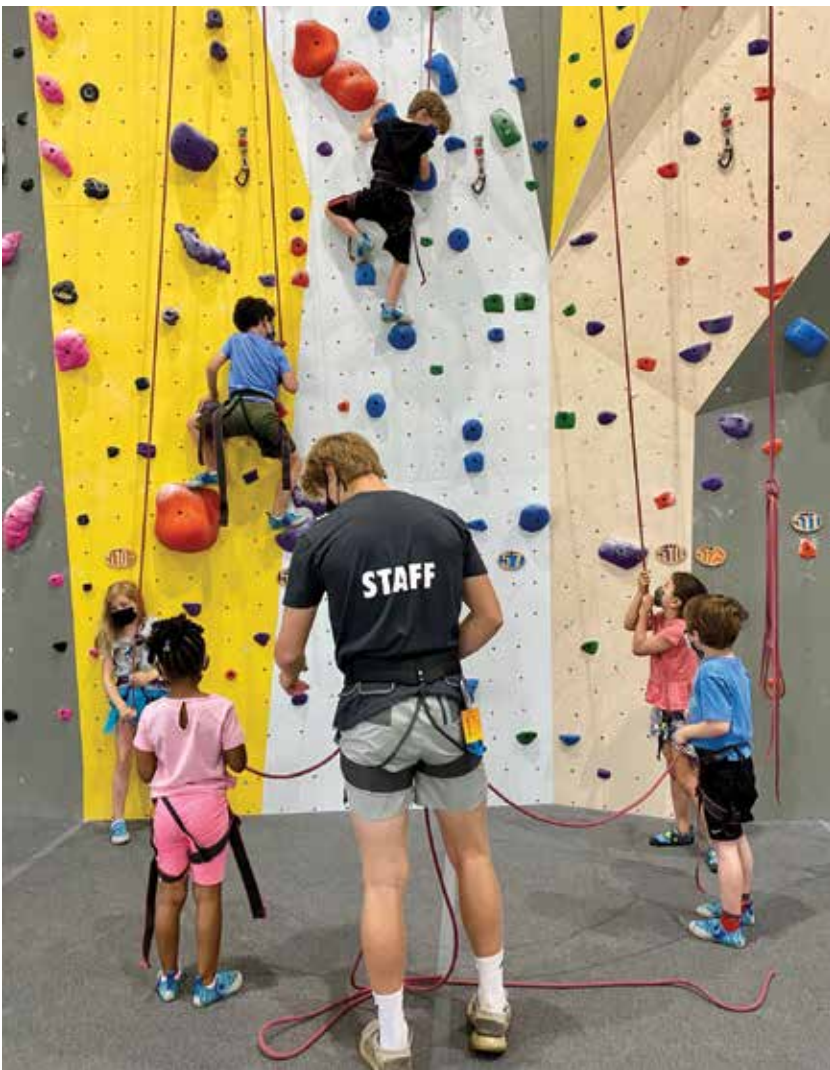
Among the equipment in Shaker Rocks' fitness area are a Kilter board, campus rungs, free weights, a bench press and hang boards. Guests are welcome to change clothes and shower in locker rooms before or after workouts, but must provide their own locks and towels.

Annual and monthly memberships are available as are punch cards or day passes. Members and guests may use the entire facility and attend yoga and fitness classes at no extra charge.

Richman says indoor climbing provides more than family-friendly entertainment. It's a community-building sport with personal benefits that include increased determination, a stronger work ethic, and physical and mental fitness. "It's one of the rare workouts that is actually fun — you want to keep trying till you get to the top."

Currently, Shaker Rocks requires masks for everyone entering the building regardless of vaccination status.

**Shaker Rocks**  
3377 Warrensville Center Road  
216-848-0460  
[www.ShakerRocksClimbing.com](http://www.ShakerRocksClimbing.com)



## Give yourself permission to ask for help.

You shouldn't feel alone in managing the needs of your aging loved one. Let us be your partner by helping you take care of yourself and the people who need you most.

Call 216-373-1797 or visit [wecare-youcare.org](http://wecare-youcare.org) for more information.

**WeCare**<sup>SM</sup>  
... because you do

A service of Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging

**Today'sFamilyMagazine.com**



# Tumble, leap and learn at The Little Gym of Shaker Heights

By Mary Flenner

For 45 years, The Little Gym has helped children between 4 months and 12 years old develop motor skills in a fun, supportive environment.

Programs at The Little Gym are designed to help even their youngest students become what they call, whatever-ready kids. Kids who are ready to play, ready to learn, and ready to meet key developmental milestones as they grow.

“Now, more than ever, parents are looking for a clean, safe, environment for their children to play, learn and grow. That’s what we provide,” says owner of The Little Gym of Shaker Heights, Paula Pascarella.

The gymnastics-based classes teach kids to get comfortable with movement as they learn tumbling, bars and beam.

The Little Gym believes in a nurturing approach, one that’s individualized based on each child and celebrates their small successes along the way. Their primary goal is to provide a foundation of self-con-

fidence that children will carry into adulthood.

It’s a fun environment where kids can grow in all areas of their development. “Our students are growing not only their physical skills, but also their social, emotional and cognitive skills. They’re having so much fun they don’t realize the development that’s going on behind the scenes... it’s almost like one of those desserts with veggies snuck into the ingredients,” says Pascarella.

For parents who might be considering enrolling their child in gymnastics classes when they are older, keep in mind that ages 1 to 4 years old are hugely important as the brain develops, and physical activity and developing motor skills play a big part. As children engage in these physical activities, they’re creating new neural pathways, as well as strengthening cognitive and perceptual abilities. Numerous studies show the positive correlation between physical activity and academic success. Classes at The Little Gym also encourage independence, problem-solving and risk taking.



Setting realistic expectations is a big part of The Little Gym philosophy as well, as they offer a mix of structured and open-ended skills and activities.

“Kids can watch or join in, whatever their comfort level. The Little Gym’s parent-child classes also provide ‘exploration time’ as a very important part of toddlerhood is

giving them a safe space to explore,” says Pascarella.

Shamuire Spivey, mother of two children at The Little Gym and member since 2014 says, “The instructors do a fabulous job of encouraging kids and celebrating successes no matter how small those successes may be. This has gone

See **LITTLE GYM** on page 10



*There's more than one way to become a family.*



Cuyahoga County  
**Together We Thrive**  
Division of Children and Family Services



More than 500 children in Cuyahoga County need a forever family. Teens, sibling groups and special needs children are waiting for you to welcome them into your family. For more information call 216-881-5775 or visit [EveryChildNeedsFamily.com](http://EveryChildNeedsFamily.com)

## Building forever families

Are you ready and able to adopt?

During the pandemic many of us spent time at home with our families. We were reminded how family enriches our lives, and in some cases reassessed our work and other priorities so we could spend more time with them.

For some people this might also mean deciding to grow their family. There are many ways to do that, including through fostering and adopting. Adoptive families can look very different. It could be a married couple with older children, a single parent, a grandparent or relative, or a same-sex couple. People choose to adopt for as many different reasons as there are children who need to be adopted.

Right now, in Cuyahoga County there are nearly 800 children and teens who need a permanent family. About half of them are already connected to a potential solution, but hundreds of others are still looking. They're not just cute babies and toddlers, but teens who need someone to help them become adults and be there for them long after they turn 18, young people with special needs,



or sibling groups who want to stay together.

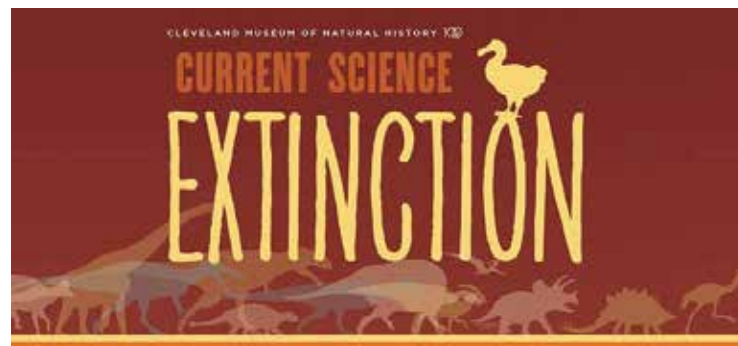
Some children may be more difficult to find a permanent connection for, but every child is worthy of love and every child needs family. As a community we cannot let them down.

Family is what you make it and we're asking you to make our kids part of your family. If you have room in your heart and home, please consider adoption.

For more information call the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services recruitment line at 216-881-5775 or visit their website at [www.everychildneedsfamily.com](http://www.everychildneedsfamily.com).

## Current Science: Extinction

Exhibit on display through December 5 at Cleveland Museum of Natural History



The museum's Current Science gallery is a dynamic, ever-changing space that allows on-staff curators and researchers to highlight the latest "buzz" from the science world. Exhibits offer guests a way to see their place in the natural world while establishing links between the news of the day and the Museum's research and collections. This integrated visitor experience provides opportunities for interaction and one-on-one conversations with Museum researchers and educators.

With features designed to be flexible, such as new display cases and interactive screens, Current Science operates on a six-month thematic rotation. The space will serve as an incubator for testing new concepts that resonate the most with the community. These themes and concepts speak to the Museum's

cutting-edge work in many different STEM fields, including conservation, human health and evolution, and others. Portable work stations with integrated technology allow Museum scientists to demonstrate their work while sharing the impact of their research on the modern world.

### Current Theme: Extinction

Now through December 5, visitors to Current Science can explore the topic of extinction and the importance of protecting biodiversity. The normal process of species loss—known as background extinction—occurs routinely over long periods of geologic time. But sometimes extinction takes place at a higher rate for a relatively short interval. Explore past mass-extinction events as well the current biodiversity crisis.

## The Little Gym from page 9

such a long way in building my son's confidence in his abilities."

"We always say, 'You don't have to be the best, just try your best.' That really makes the difference for kids to enjoy it. What deters many of us is that physical activity can be hard. If you don't have that introduction at a young age, it can be harder to jump into as a teen or an adult," says Pascarella.

"Not only are we helping the children, we're helping the parent. Our team is prepared to coach the parents on expectations for their children, to set their mind at ease that much of their child's behavior is typical for the age. The goal is to be each child's springboard to life's adventures, whether they go on to play sports, become a musician, an academic, whatever they decide they want to do. We're here to lay the foundation for success."

"I love my job. Being able to provide an environment where children can safely interact with others and parents can be with other parents to support each other brings me such joy," says Pascarella. "I'm head over heels for The Little Gym—as a parent, as a business owner—to know I'm doing something good in today's challenging world means everything."

The Little Gym of Shaker Heights offers a free introductory class for new families. Programs include: parent-child classes, pre-K gymnastics, grade school gymnastics, sports skills development, dance, summer camps, birthday parties and parent survival nights.

The Little Gym is located at 20707 Chagrin Boulevard in Shaker Heights. Call 216-752-9049 or visit [TLGShakerHeightsOH.com](http://TLGShakerHeightsOH.com) for more information.



# 2 For the Price of 1!

Present this discount coupon at the box office to get one FREE ticket with the purchase of one ticket.

Offer expires 12/31/21.



[www.AtlasCinemas.net](http://www.AtlasCinemas.net)

Great Lakes Stadium 16, Mentor • (440) 974-4372

Diamond Center 16, Mentor • (440) 352-8846

Eastgate 10, Mayfield Heights • (440) 460-0399

Lakeshore 7, Euclid • (216) 731-1701

Atlas Cinemas at Shaker Square • (216) 331-6825

Call today to schedule your own private auditorium! Please allow a minimum of 24-48 hours to schedule.



# Fall in love with trees.

Get outside and experience the beauty  
of the fall season at Cleveland Botanical  
Garden and Holden Arboretum.

Visit [holdenfg.org](http://holdenfg.org)



HOLDEN  
FORESTS &  
GARDENS

THE HOLDEN ARBORETUM  
9550 SPERRY RD, KIRTLAND, OH

CLEVELAND BOTANICAL GARDEN  
11030 EAST BLVD, CLEVELAND, OH

# Manufacturers pitch their jobs to students

Tuition scholarships available for students to train for skilled jobs

Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) alum James Clark went to college on a basketball scholarship, but he has left his mark in advanced manufacturing.

Clark, a 1992 graduate of the former West Tech High School, serves as director of quality for Rockwell Automation. He recently addressed CMSD high school students at a Manufacturing Day at the Great Lakes Science Center, telling them that modern manufacturing offers a variety of in-demand, high-tech, high-paying jobs.

“You are in the right place at the right time,” said Clark, who holds a degree in mechanical engineering. “A lot of opportunity lies ahead.”

CMSD Chief Executive Officer Eric Gordon stressed that the field is wide open for candidates — male or female, regardless of whether they go to college or choose other training. He asked the students if they had ever heard the phrase “college OR career,” and hands shot up.

“Wrong. It is career, not college

or career,” he said. “There are a lot of ways to find your career.”

The event provided information to area students, including more than 100 from CMSD's Max S. Hayes, East Tech, John F. Kennedy and the Garrett Morgan campuses. Videos stressed the clean, high-tech environment of modern manufacturing, with invitations specifying “creators” or “makers” wanted.

CEO Gordon encouraged the students to network and “prove your value” to the participating local companies: Rockwell, Swagelok, Parker Aerospace, Lincoln Electric and Timken.

Markus, an 11th grader at Max Hayes, did not need to be sold. He is already interested in computer-aided design and looking ahead to a future that involves engineering and mathematics.

“I’m a mega-nerd,” he said. “That’s something I want to do.”

CMSD is sending a message to all students that even they don’t choose college, they should focus on skilled,



Photo credit: Shape Cleveland

living-wage jobs. CMSD is preparing to roll out PACE, a planning and career exploration curriculum, for the sixth through 12th grades.

The Say Yes to Education program, introduced in CMSD schools

in 2019, provides district graduates with tuition scholarships not only to colleges but also to Pell-eligible training programs.

Visit [www.SayYesCleveland.org](http://www.SayYesCleveland.org) for more information.

## Spruce up your home for the holidays with a new rug from Safavieh!



### Berber Shag Collection Design: BER274B

Available in a variety of sizes.

For four generations, the family behind the Safavieh brand has dedicated its talents and resources to providing uncompromising quality. They believe there is no equal to the durability, beauty and artistry of handmade rugs and well-crafted furniture. They focus their research and development on creating the highest quality products consumers can buy within a broad range of budgets.

Visit [www.safavieh.com](http://www.safavieh.com) to see all their beautiful collections. Once you find exactly what you like, their products are available online through a variety of retailers.



**Help me grow.**

**New baby at home?**  
We have the **answers and support** you need for **your happy, healthy baby.**



**Learn more about Home Visiting**  
1-800-755-GROW (4769) • [www.helpmegrow.org](http://www.helpmegrow.org)





## Save 10–20% on memberships to the Greater Cleveland Aquarium

Promotion runs November 26 – December 25, 2021

PLUS! Get a chance to win the Fantastic Finn golden ticket giveaway

Imagine a holiday gift with no shopping, no shipping and no waiting. Black Friday (November 26, 2021) through Cyber Monday (November 29, 2021) the Greater Cleveland Aquarium is offering 20% off annual passes purchased online. “This holiday season, you can support a local attraction while saving some money and hassle,” says Tyler Hobel, membership coordinator. Annual passes will remain on sale online through December 25, but the discount drops to 10% after the initial weekend.

Throughout the promotion, annual pass purchases will be accompanied by a coupon redeemable for a Fantastic Finn chocolate bar. “Every membership purchase includes a milk chocolate bar, but a select few will include either a golden or a silver ticket that unlocks a special prize package,” explains Hobel. Prizes range from VIP experiences and a bonus year of membership to credit in the Coral Cove Gift Shop. “It adds a little surprise oomph, or should I say ‘oompah’ to the gift,” jokes Hobel.

The membership discounts and accompanying Fantastic Finn golden ticket giveaway is available to anyone purchasing an annual pass for themselves or as a gift, as well as to those who are extending their current annual passes or rejoining after

having lapsed as members. The cost of an Aquarium annual pass ranges from \$45 – \$130 (\$36 – \$117 during the promotion) for 1–8 guests at the individual, senior, couple, senior couple, family or grandparent levels. While the chocolate bar coupon must be redeemed by January 21, 2022, all gift passes are valid for one year from activation by the gift recipient. “If you send a gift pass to your sister in December and she doesn’t activate it until February, she can access visitation, program and discount benefits until February of the following year,” explains Hobel.

During the Aquarium’s four-day cyber sale, general admission gift ticket vouchers also can be purchased for 20% off (limit six). Gift recipients must call and redeem their general admission vouchers for a visit on a specific date and time up to two years from date of purchase. Vouchers are not active until a guest calls to redeem as a reservation.

“The Greater Cleveland Aquarium’s year-end promotion is always a terrific opportunity to save on a gift that’s big enough to wow and small enough to wrap,” says Hobel.

Visit [www.GreaterClevelandAquarium.com](http://www.GreaterClevelandAquarium.com) or call 216-862-8803 for more information.



# A lifetime of learning starts here.



CLEVELAND  
MONTESSORI

Cleveland Montessori  
12510 Mayfield Road  
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Fall Open House  
November 3, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

**Unlock your child's potential with a solid preschool foundation.**

Located in the heart of Little Italy, our students grow and thrive in a learning environment that promotes a lifetime passion for learning. Applications are now being accepted for 3- & 4-year-olds. Call today for information on discounted preschool tuition for those living and working in the University Circle area.

Contact the director of admissions at 216-421-0700 or email at [info@clevelandmontessori.org](mailto:info@clevelandmontessori.org) to arrange a personal tour.

# Memories of Thanksgiving, grandparents and childhood

By Stacy Turner

As had often happened during visits with my mother-in-law, my husband brought up the farm in rural West Virginia where his mom had been raised. His mom left the farm behind for city life in Columbus as soon as she was able. She returned each year with her entire family, however, traveling the winding roads to spend Thanksgiving in West Virginia throughout my husband's childhood. All the while, his grandparents continued to raise sheep, hogs, dairy cows, and chickens well into their golden years. And like any working farm worth its salt, those holiday visits didn't stop the daily chores. Each morning, Grandpa rose before dawn and attempted to step over grandkids, like sleeping speed bumps scattered across the floor, on his way out to the barn for the early morning milking. Rolling over to return to sleep, my husband remembered Grandpa pass by his sleeping bag like a ghost; tall

and lean, holding his trusty oil lamp as a beacon on his his way to the barn.

While my husband was in college, his grandfather passed away. Not long after, grandma's failing health moved her to an assisted living center, and the annual Thanksgiving pilgrimages ended. The farm sat idle for years, long after Grandma's passing, since none of her children continued to farm, and only one remained in the area. The last time my husband had set eyes on the farm was when he returned for his grandmother's funeral, early in our marriage. Since that time, the house had been demolished and all that remained of the outbuildings were a ramshackle single-story stable and an old shed filled with creepy dolls and forgotten ephemera.

The beauty of those rolling hills never left him, and often during visits with his mom, they'd reminisce, and talk about the old property. At one point, one of his aunts dreamed of building an A-frame cabin there,

but those plans never materialized. Since I had never visited, my husband often talked about some day packing a tent and taking a family road trip down those winding roads, but we had never found the time.

During one visit with his mom, we didn't realize that our kids had stopped whatever they were doing in order to hear what sounded like a juicy story to their young ears. We didn't find out until we had packed up and were on the highway heading home, a captive audience to their new game of 20 questions. "What's this 'secret farm' you were talking about with grandma?," our older daughter grilled us. "Are there horses there?," they asked hopefully. "Why haven't we ever heard of this place?," they continued accusingly. "And why haven't we ever seen it?" It took much of the return trip to assure them both that the farm was the place where their grandma was born, and where her parents — their great grandparents had lived. Eventually, they were convinced it wasn't some dark family secret we'd been hiding, but the name "secret farm" firmly stuck.

A few summers ago, during what turned out to be a record heat wave, we spent a week at the secret farm, so we could all experience this historically mysterious place firsthand. We pitched our tent near an ancient oak tree on a hilltop overlooking a grassy hollow where many a sheep would graze in days gone by. We shared the place with a small herd of cows owned by a neighbor that pastures them there. Following the cow paths, we hiked all over the property that week, through woods, up and



The lamp from the "secret farm" now enjoys a spot in Stacy Turner's home.

down hills, and to the small pond where, as a boy, my husband caught frogs with his cousins.

On our last night, relentless rain made us happy to pack up and head home, leaving the secret farm in the rear view mirror like my mother-in-law had done so many years before. And while it's no longer a family secret, my kids now have their own stories from the secret farm to mingle with their dad's childhood memories.

One Christmas after our visit, my mother-in-law gifted my husband with his grandpa's oil lamp that he remembered fondly from childhood visits. It hangs on our mantel, one of the few artifacts that remain from the now not-so-secret secret farm.

For past Mommy Chronicles articles, visit [www.TodaysFamilyMagazine.com](http://www.TodaysFamilyMagazine.com) and type "Mommy Chronicles" in the search box.

## Handmade Unique Holiday Gifts



### 35th Annual Beary Merry Christmas Show Handcrafted Market

Wednesday & Thursday  
December 1 & 2  
11 am – 9 pm

Normandy Party Center  
30310 Palisades Parkway  
(Off Euclid Avenue in Wickliffe)



SHOW SPONSOR:  
ASA COX HOMES  
ASA'S ANGELS

- Over 50 talented artisans.
- Chinese raffle with over 50 baskets.
- Door prizes every hour.
- Lunch & dinner available for purchase.
- \$3 admission.

#### TOY COLLECTION

Bring a toy to the show to support Asa's Angels. Put a smile on a child's face for Christmas and help our local families in need.



### Help us feed our community's hungry children.

One dollar can help provide four nutritious meals.



Greater Cleveland Food Bank

Donate today at [GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org](http://GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org)



# Just For Laughs

Little Jimmy's preschool class went on a field trip to the fire station. The firefighter giving the presentation held up a smoke detector and asked the class: "Does anyone know what this is?"

Little Jimmy's hand shot up and the firefighter called on him.

Little Jimmy replied: "That's how Mommy knows supper is ready!"

There was a little boy named Johnny who used to hang out at the local corner market. The owner didn't know what Johnny's problem was, but the boys would constantly tease him. They would always comment that he was two bricks shy of a load, or two pickles short of a barrel. To prove it, sometimes they would offer Johnny his choice between a nickel (5 cents) and a dime (10 cents) and Johnny would always take the nickel -- they said, because it was bigger.

One day after Johnny grabbed the nickel, the store owner took him aside and said, "Johnny, those boys are making fun of you. They think you don't know the dime is worth more than the nickel. Are you grabbing the nickel because it's bigger, or what?"

Slowly, Johnny turned toward the store owner and a big grin appeared on his face and Johnny said, "Well, if I took the dime, they'd stop doing it, and so far I have saved \$20!"

After Leslie brought home her fiance to meet her parents, her father invited the young man into his study to find out more about him.

"What are your plans?" he asked Joseph.

"I'm a scholar of the Torah," Joseph replied.

"Well, that's admirable," Leslie's father replied. "But what will you do to provide a nice house for my daughter?"

"I will study, and God will surely provide for us," Joseph explained.

"And how will you buy her a nice engagement ring?"

"I will study hard, and God will provide for us."

"And children?" asked the father. "How will you support children?"

"Don't worry, sir, God will provide," replied the fiance.

The conversation continued in much the same fashion. After Joseph and Leslie had left, her mother asked her father what he found out.

The father answered, "Well, he has no job and no plans, but the good news is that he thinks I'm God."

A young man moved away from his parents to become a student. Proudly showing off his new apartment to a couple of his friends late one night, he led the way to his bedroom where there was a big brass gong.

"What's that big brass gong?" one of the guests asked.

"It's not a gong. It's a talking clock," the man replied.

"A talking clock? Seriously? Asked his astonished friend.

"Yup," replied the student.

"How's it work?" the 2nd guest asked, squinting at it.

"Watch," the student replied. He picked up a hammer, gave it an ear-shattering pound and stepped back.

The three stood looking at one another for a moment. Suddenly, someone on the other side of the wall screamed: "You idiot, it's ten past three in the morning!"

Summer vacation was over and Little Johnny returned back to school.

Only two days later his teacher phoned his mother to tell her that he was misbehaving.

"Wait a minute," she said. "I had Johnny with me for three months and I never called you once when he misbehaved!"

# WE PAY CASH

**For children's clothing, shoes, toys, books & baby gear!**

**No appointment necessary!**



**Get ready for the holidays!**

Bring your gently used items to one of our convenient locations and we will pay you cash on the spot.

You can also trade them in for things you need now!

**We buy up to one hour before closing.**



*Kid's Stuff With Previous Experience®*

## **MENTOR COLONIAL PLAZA**

7537 Mentor Avenue

**440-951-7222**

Mon.–Sat. 10 am–6 pm • Closed Sun.



## **WESTLAKE**

25028 Center Ridge Road

**440-899-1100**

Mon.–Sat. 10 am–6 pm • Closed Sun.

## **A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY**

**NOVEMBER 28 – DECEMBER 25**

# SAVE 10-20% ON ANY ANNUAL PASS!

**Give a 1-year membership and get a chance to win other aquatic adventures!**

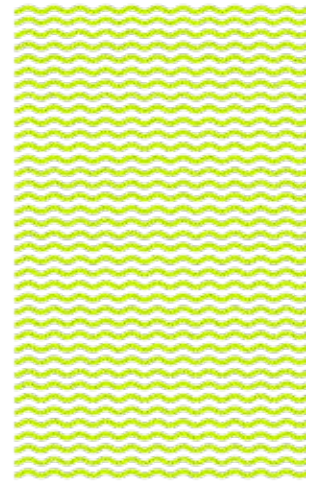


Discount and chocolate bar giveaway details at [greaterclevelandaquarium.com/event/fantastic-finn](http://greaterclevelandaquarium.com/event/fantastic-finn)

f t i @deaquarium



# Real talk: It's OK to not feel OK.



Stress affects many of us on a regular basis. Join the conversation about mental wellness and find advice, help and support.

Visit [heyimhere.org](https://heyimhere.org)

 [heyimhereohio](https://www.instagram.com/heyimhereohio)