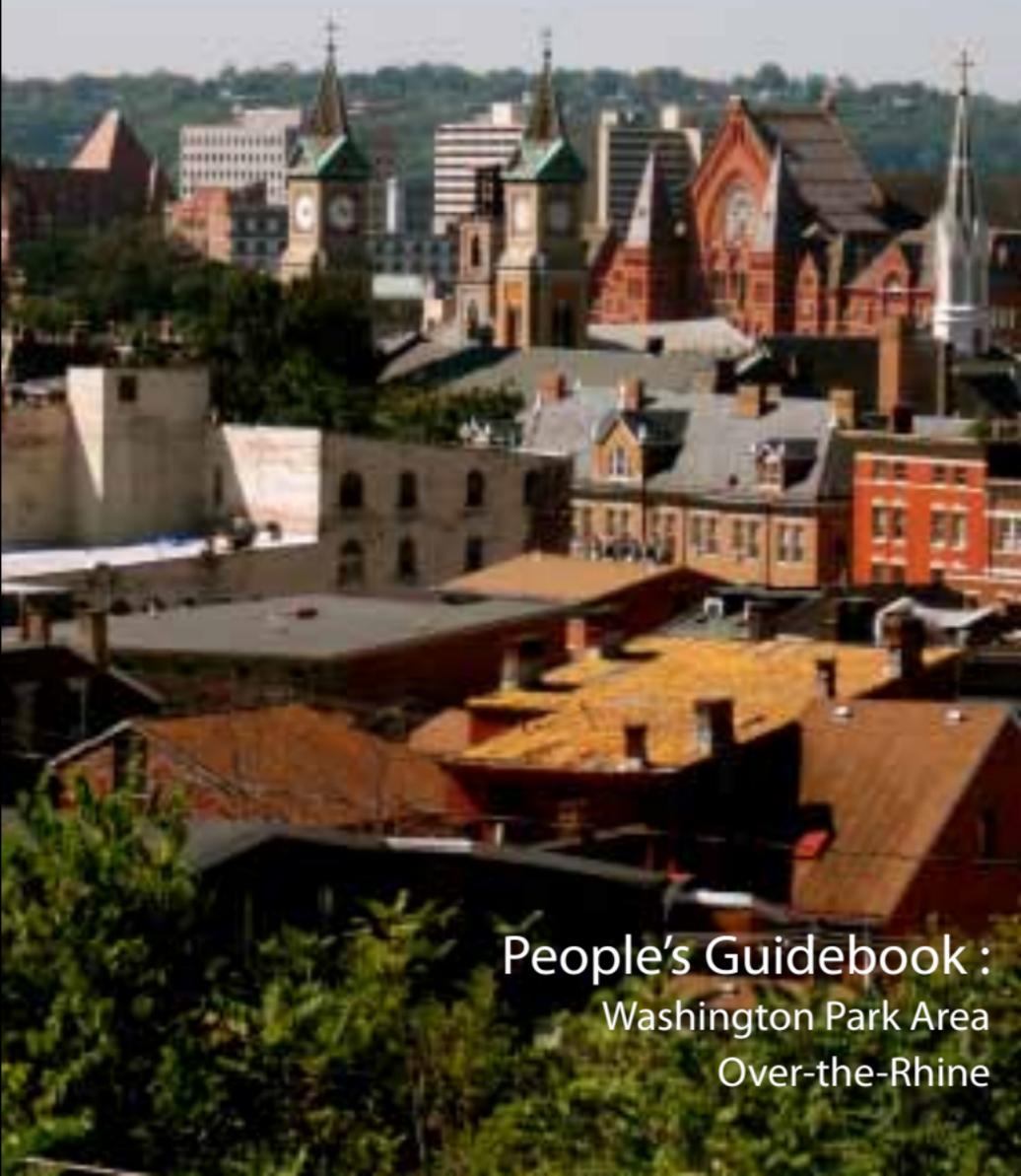


# A Story Seldom Heard



People's Guidebook :  
Washington Park Area  
Over-the-Rhine

# Family on the Block

Cooing mourning doves  
nest in the hanging basket on my porch  
morning joy for two weeks

Alan leans out his window  
my friendly neighbor offers gracious greeting  
and saves my Ford Focus from being towed

Caroline in her husky voice  
wobbles down 14th Street with worries  
wearing a southern smile and says *how are you*

Janie, Willie, Mary, Sherry  
Jimmy, Doyle and Demus  
faces now only in dreams and memory

Twenty-six years now at 14th and Republic  
we have a family on the block  
a web woven by story strands

Strengthened by hellos and good nights  
hearts, eyes and elbows leaning out the window  
to preserve presence of community

These strands are invisible to  
planners, developers, newcomers  
rushing to revitalize our corner

Their renaissance refuses to recognize  
our connections are historic  
our love is cost effective.

By Bonnie Neumeier  
May 7, 2013



Mural at buddy's place

History is written mostly by those with resources and power. The everyday, common folk who make up our neighborhood seldom get their stories heard or represented. This alternative community journey in the Washington Park area of Over-the-Rhine, by emphasizing “places” and the People’s Community Development, challenges the declared “Renaissance of Over-the-Rhine” engineered by the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC) and supported by the City of Cincinnati. This journey seeks to educate and add what usually gets missed and made invisible when the “rebirth” gets named only by those in power. Many voice support for Over-the-Rhine as an integrated community, both racially and economically. We believe there must be recognition and respect for all that has gone on and is going on as a result of the poor and oppressed working passionately and determinedly to create community and quality of life here in Over-the-Rhine.

In our neighborhood of Over-the-Rhine we have a long and determined history of standing up for our rights as a People struggling to survive whole. We are investors in our own community. We may live on low incomes, but our pride is high. We labor with love to

build quality of life through grassroots programs and services. We respect our neighbors. We appreciate our historic buildings. We love our land.

Our blood, sweat and tears are rooted in THIS PLACE WE CALL HOME. We believe we have a right to live here without threat of displacement by outside developers who see our land as gold and overlook the beauty and asset that is here in our people folk. There is beauty in the eyes of every child, woman, and man who walk our alleys, who pray in our storefront churches, who work hard at piecing together a quilted life, sewn together with colorful lived experiences that deserve to be lifted up, encouraged, and valued.

We are creators of our People's history. We want to be actors, not victims of plans where we don't have a seat at the table or a voice that is heard. We are a beautiful people in Over-the-Rhine. We are African American, Appalachian, and everything in between. We stand tall with our faces to the sun knowing our efforts will continue to support our people living in Over-the-Rhine as varied interests lay claim on this land we call home.

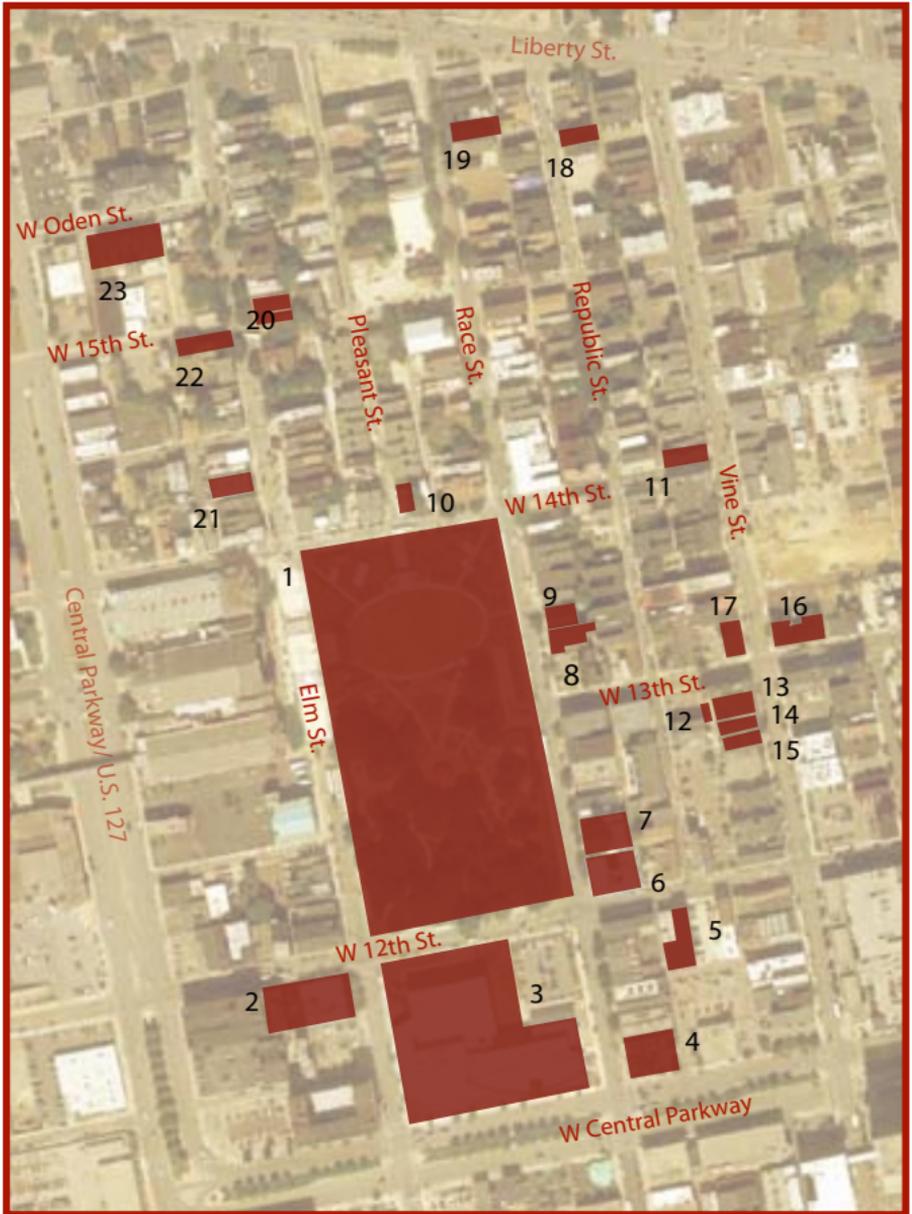
This guidebook contributes to the recognition of our HOME, to the reaffirmation of the Over-the-Rhine People's Movement history and story. It identifies and remembers the places important to us. It recovers the unacknowledged and submerged stories of our community. It makes history by rewriting the spatial narrative of people's lives and the organizations we have built. This comes at an important moment, where terms "renaissance" and "rebirth" do much to silence and make us invisible.

We are a gift to the City of Cincinnati even though our pockets carry only pennies. Power need not be measured by profits. There is power in the will of a people who are inspired to use all that we have—our voices, our hands, our feet, our spirit—to build a just world where all can live free and with dignity, no matter the color of our skin or cultural and class background. We welcome new neighbors and we believe this vision can become a reality if we come to know and embrace each other as brother and sister, but also understand that to sustain a diversified community, it will take purposeful planning and a fair distribution of resources so all benefit equitably.

Our People's Movement has always believed that the first step out of oppression is expression. We express ourselves through song, dance, theatre, and poetry and even in our marches for our basic human rights. We call this expression *The People's Art*. This art is expressed in our everyday ordinary lives. It is displayed in a functional way where we live. It is in our voices, on our windowsills, on our wallpapered walls, on our street corners, and flowing from our crayons and pencils and imaginative eyes. We support and encourage this People's Art. It's critical to our survival because it inspires and spreads our vision and our hope.

We appreciate Natalie, Kat, and Chris collaborating with our community on this project, as it contributes to *The People's Art*. We see this as a continuation of the many projects we do in partnership with Peaslee Neighborhood Center and Miami University Center for Community Engagement in Over-the-Rhine. Ours is a powerful history to be told and heard, challenging all to take responsibility to remember, to respect, and to build on, as we move Over-the-Rhine forward, TOGETHER.

Bonnie Neumeier  
Over -the-Rhine Resident  
Co-Founder, Over-the-Rhine People's Movement  
August 2013



Liberty St.

19

18

W Oden St.

23

W 15th St.

22

20

Pleasant St.

Race St.

Republic St.

21

10

W 14th St.

11

Vine St.

Central Parkway / U.S. 127

1

Elm St.

9

17

16

8

W 13th St.

13

14

15

12

7

6

W 12th St.

2

3

5

4

W Central Parkway

- 1 Washington Park
- 2 Drop Inn Center
- 3 School for Creative and Performing Arts
- 4 Elementz
- 5 Tender Mercies
- 6 The Lord's Gym
- 7 First English Lutheran Church
- 8 Emanuel Community Center
- 9 Nast Trinity United Methodist Church
- 10 Over-the-Rhine Community Housing
- 11 Rohs Hardware Store
- 12 Timothy Thomas Death Site
- 13 The Cincinnati Interfaith Workers Center
- 14 Contact Center
- 15 Recovery Hotel
- 16 buddy's place
- 17 Venice on Vine/ Power Inspires Progress
- 18 Joseph House
- 19 Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
- 20 Elm Street Senior Housing
- 21 City Gospel Mission
- 22 Sweet P's Styling Shop
- 23 Jimmy Heath House

## Washington Park 1230 Elm Street

1

Historically, Washington Park offered a respite for all kinds of residents and citizens of Over-the-Rhine, including persons homeless. Children played in the playground, swam in the deep-water pool, and played on the basketball courts. Concert patrons attended Music Hall. Others enjoyed a leisurely stroll or a park bench on a hot day. And every August the park would be a flurry of activity for the Community Festival organized by the Contact Center.

Washington Park Elementary School once stood at the north end of the Park. The school was torn down in the fall of 2007. Before that fall, a multi-year, public planning process determined that the School should be moved to the block immediately south of the Park. This public decision was summarily and unilaterally rejected by the newly-founded 3CDC, which declared that the site south of Washington Park should be used for the School for the Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA). The SCPA opened in 2010 while Washington Park Elementary has never been replaced.

Starting in 2006-07, 3CDC began their “rap sessions” to encourage the public to help program a newly–designed park.

Community residents were vocal and clear in their desire for the deep-water pool and basketball courts to remain. Neither of which are in the new 48 million dollar park.

The new Park, however, continues to have the Peace Bench that sits near Elm and 12th Streets. This mosaic park bench, designed by parents and children of Over-the-Rhine, is part of the “I Have a Dream for Peace” Mosaic Project, a collaboration of Peaslee Neighborhood Center, Art Academy of Cincinnati, and Miami University Center for Community Engagement

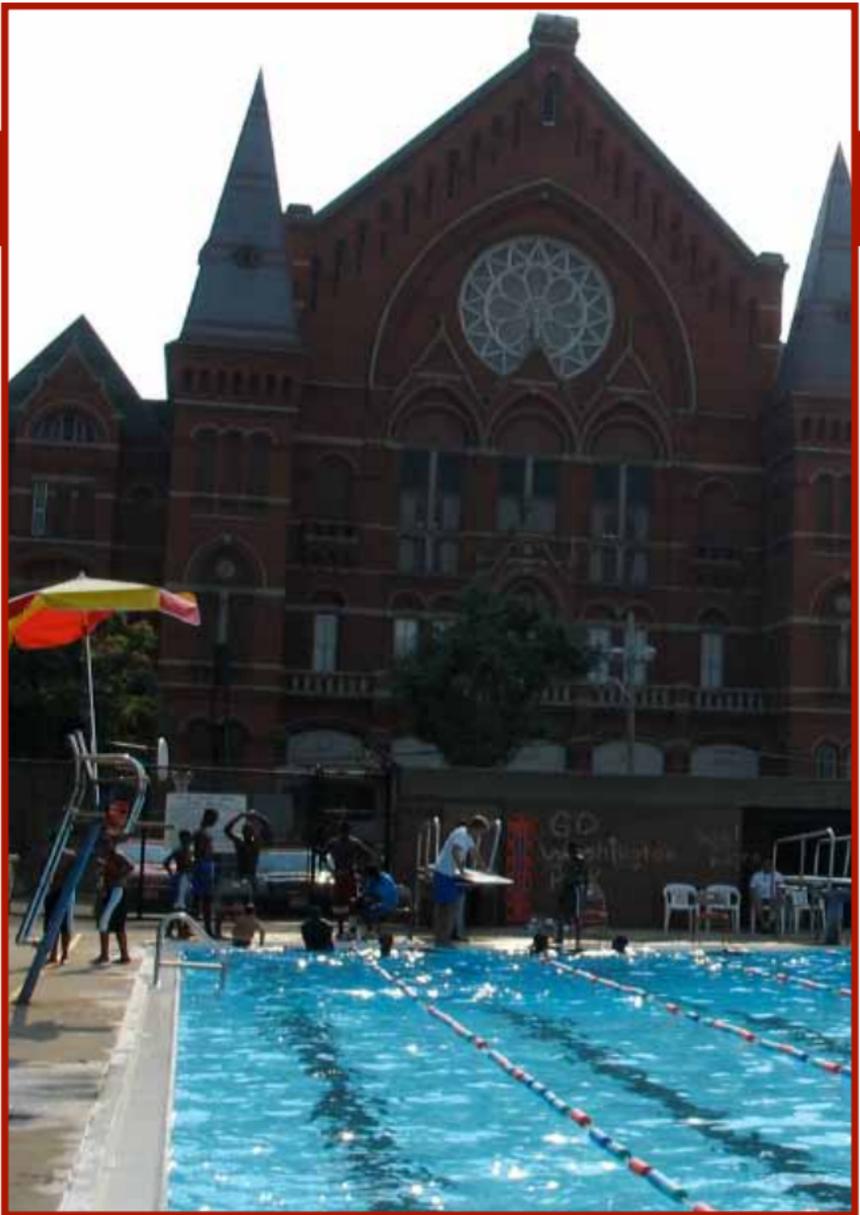


Photo by Debbie Mays

in Over-the-Rhine. The renovated Washington Park represents a significant *public investment* in our neighborhood and city. We must ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity to benefit from this community space, regardless of their socioeconomic status.



## Drop Inn Center 217 West 12th Street

2

Drop Inn Center (DIC) homeless shelter was founded in June 1973 as a one-room storefront at 1711 Vine Street. In 1974, it moved to a 5-room space at 1324 Main Street. A group called ShelterHouse Volunteer Group, led by buddy gray, formed to keep the shelter open on weekends. The Main Street location was inadequate and was threatened by the City with closure. On January 13, 1978, in the middle of a blizzard, ShelterHouse Volunteer Group and the Residents Organizing Committee decided to move to the Teamsters Building at 217 W. 12th Street, a much larger and warmer facility with greater potential for programming. It has gone down in history as "The People's Move." Government cutbacks during the 1980s resulted in a growing population of persons homeless. Drop Inn responded by purchasing land and constructing a new wing that opened in 1990. Over the years, DIC has been at the forefront of responding to the tragedy of homelessness in our city. Throughout its forty year history, DIC has evolved to meet the needs of its residents with a variety of programs. buddy gray, a tireless advocate for persons homeless and a leader in Over-the-Rhine, was its General Coordinator until his tragic death, November 15, 1996. A man suffering from mental illness shot and killed buddy at the shelter. DIC is currently being pressured to move by development efforts led by 3CDC and the City. Drop Inn's long history of standing up for the oppressed has been a cornerstone of the Over-the-Rhine People's Movement.

SCPA was created in 1973 as one of the first magnet schools of Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS). The creation of magnet schools was CPS's strategy to voluntarily, racially integrate its public schools. SCPA combined a full range of arts studies with a complete college preparatory academic program. In 1976, SCPA shared space with Cutter Junior High School in Over-the-Rhine (formerly the old Woodward High School building) on Sycamore Street. Eventually, SCPA occupied the whole building and Over-the-Rhine junior high school age children were sent to Blume School in the West End. The late Cincinnati Pops Maestro Erich Kunzel championed the building of a new SCPA school near Music Hall. In 2010, SCPA combined with Schiel Primary School for Arts Enrichment creating the first kindergarten through 12th grade arts school in the country. This new 72 million dollar (private/public partnership) school is now located on Central Parkway, adjacent to the Drop Inn Center. The Greater Cincinnati Homeless Coalition initiated an OTR/SCPA committee to both raise awareness about homelessness and foster healthy partnerships between the community and SCPA teachers and students. This committee also works to increase the number of Over-the-Rhine students attending the school. Over-the-Rhine's last remaining neighborhood elementary school, Rothenberg, just completed its 26 million dollar renovation in May of 2013. For ten years the children have been in a swing space that was the former Vine Street School.





Elementz, located at 1100 Race Street, is a community-based organization whose mission is to teach inner-city youth how to find their creative voice through urban arts, in order to strongly encourage personal growth and life success. Elementz provides a place where youth feel safe and free to express themselves, be recognized for their gifts, and create family with other youth and adults in the community. This is done in a context that includes development of personal ethics and morals.

Elementz teaches and encourages art that comes out of urban life and experience. There is a unique and contemporary sound to art that reflects the hard realities of inner-city life, but also a pulsing vibrancy that is reflective of the pulse of the city. Here in Cincinnati, we have a long tradition of artists who reflect and represent urban stories through music and dance, including the artists that came out of King Records in the 1940 – 1960 time period.

At Elementz we embrace art that speaks to urban youth, and encourage youth to learn and produce original works in those art forms. In addition to music and dance, hip hop culture also embraces visual art such as “graffiti-style” art and urban fashion. Other urban art forms taught at Elementz include Spoken Word, Urban Photography, and Video Production. On the third Thursday of the month from 5:30 – 8:00pm, Elementz hosts *Staged on Central and Race*, a showcase of youth artists and their work.

## Tender Mercies 27 West 12th Street

5

Tender Mercies, founded in 1985, provides housing and related services to homeless persons with histories of emotional and/or mental disabilities. Committed to the goals of security, dignity, and community with and for its residents, Tender Mercies has capacity for 134 permanent residents and 16 transitional residents in six buildings in Over-the-Rhine.

The founding story of Tender Mercies is this: Fr. Chris Hall worked night shifts at Drop Inn Center where he met two women who had been released from Rollman's Psychiatric Hospital. Through Fr. Chris' efforts these women found housing in an apartment building on Race Street. Within two months, in their own apartments, one woman was raped, the other murdered. Fr. Chris Hall, with the help of Randy La Fond and Edward Slater, started managing that building and through attrition the Race Street property soon became the permanent home for 12 homeless women with histories of chronic mental illness. This was the beginning of Tender Mercies.



## The Lord's Gym 1200 Race Street (Formerly)

6

In 1993, the Lord's Gym in Cincinnati started as a non-profit organization with the goal of providing a way to reach young people of the community and to create a safe place for future leaders. The Lord's Gym provides a safe, drug and alcohol free environment for young men, reaching up and out. This space provides a health facility, religious fellowship, and a food pantry to the Over-the-Rhine community that is an alternative to life on the streets. One can frequently observe Lord's Gym members skipping rope and staying fit outside the center while discussing community issues. It has moved to 1829 Vine Street.



## First English Lutheran Church 1208 Race Street

7

The building was built in 1895 and the congregation dates back to 1814. Today, First English Lutheran Church consistently supports the most vulnerable citizens of the community by offering funeral services and fellowship for those residents with little economic means. This faith community also hosts a lunch on the last Monday of the month where the church, in partnership with community members, provides roughly 280 free meals and operates a clothing closet that provides free clothing to people in need. The Church also sponsors a learning center for literacy instruction.



## Emanuel Community Center 1308 Race Street

8

Emanuel Community Center was one of the earliest settlement houses (like Jane Addams Hull House in Chicago) in the city. It was organized by Methodists in 1835 initially serving German immigrants, workers, and poor people. It was the first licensed child care center in Ohio serving working mothers of the neighborhood. Reaching out to immigrant populations Emanuel served each new set of newcomers: first the Germans, and later those who came north in the Great Migration, both African Americans and later Appalachians. It had educational and language programs that have come and gone as folks were "integrated" into the ways of Over-the-Rhine. It had a local service mission with housing assistance programs, a boxing program, gym-athletic programs, and emergency assistance services that have come and gone. In the 1970s, *Voices Community Newspaper*, without an office, would be welcomed in Emanuel on Saturdays by the maintenance man so *Voices* could type up articles for the newspaper. Services ended in November 2012. Grandin Properties purchased the building. Plans are to lease office space to budding entrepreneurs and operate an urban squash program.





Nast Trinity United Methodist Church was a close affiliate of Emanuel. It had a small membership drawn from the larger city, some of whom have remained faithful over the years in service to Over-the-Rhine: through Sunday evening meals served by other Methodist congregations, support for Emanuel, and intermittent work with the Community Council. The church owns the housing next to it, long boarded and empty, and the vacant lots at each corner of the block; all coveted by 3CDC as they face the Park. In 2000, Nast Trinity nearly had a deal to make the housing available to Over-the-Rhine Community Housing for housing development but those plans collapsed for reasons that are still unclear. The former pastor, Dave Weaver, was faithful to the causes of the People's Movement. Under his leadership Nast provided the use of their land and paid for the port-o-lets needed during the shut down of Washington Park facilities.

Nast is credited with establishing the Methodist Church in Germany. Many German immigrants came to Cincinnati, learned English at Emanuel, joined Nast, and subsequently took "methodism" back to the Old Country. For those interested in music, Nast Trinity has a unique pipe organ, probably brought from the "old country," that is well-maintained even if not in great use.

On October 4, 2012 Nast Trinity United Methodist Church merged with Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church. Calling themselves the Downtown Campus, Awaken the City leads the ministry.

Over-the-Rhine Community Housing (OTRCH) was born out of the merger of the Race Street Tenant Organization Co-operative (ReSTOC) and Over-the-Rhine Housing Network, two long-standing affordable housing organizations in Over-the-Rhine. ReSTOC was founded in 1978 and Over-the-Rhine Housing Network in 1988. Both organizations were founded out of the same movement now recognized as the Over-the-Rhine People's Movement. In order to secure and sustain affordable housing and promote community based development in Over-the-Rhine the two organizations joined forces in April 2006. OTRCH has developed over 600 housing units and manages nearly 400 of those units. OTRCH works to build and sustain a diverse neighborhood that values and benefits low-income residents.

OTRCH is determined to keep the neighborhood of OTR a welcoming place where a diverse group of people live, work, and build an engaged and sustainable community. To that end they provide a range of affordable housing, support services, volunteer opportunities, and advocacy in the community.

"We believe that the need for affordable housing in the neighborhood is as great as it has ever been in our history. If there is to be affordable housing in Over-the-Rhine, it is OTRCH that will make it happen. With so much change, it is comforting to know that we are solid and residents can count on us...and they do." ~Mary Burke Rivers, Executive Director OTRCH



Over the Hill  
Community Housing

SUPPORT  
Anna  
Louise Inn

Rohs Hardware , a neighborhood landmark, closed its doors at the end of December 2010. It was a family business that started in 1933 bearing the family name. Al Rohs, the son of the original shopkeeper, started working in the store in 1948 when he was 10 years old. When facing retirement, he sold the building to 3CDC with mixed feelings. Rohs Hardware was a great example of a neighborhood-serving business that cared about the people who lived in the neighborhood; his small workforce were often neighborhood residents. Customers frequented the store to get keys cut, to buy night crawlers, garden seeds, light bulbs, roach powder, nuts and bolts and everything in between. Al Rohs took time with his customers. He often gave free advice on how to fix things. He welcomed and gave time to his customers, who were mostly tenants with low incomes and neighborhood non-profits with tiny budgets. When news of the store closing hit the streets, residents wondered where they'd go for their everyday needs. Al's store seemed to handle most everything. The sentiment of community people was that this landmark was being pushed aside for more upscale development. The community is still waiting for neighborhood-serving businesses, the likes of Rohs Hardware, where everyone feels welcomed, appreciated, and respected.





## Timothy Thomas Death Site 13th and Republic

12

On April 7, 2001 at about 2:20 am teenager Timothy Thomas was shot and killed by a police officer in the dark alley near 13th and Republic. Mr. Thomas, who was unarmed, was the fifteenth African-American man to die at the hands of the police since 1995. Mr. Thomas' death triggered several days of unrest and protests the media continues to dismiss as "the riots." On June 2, 2001 some 2,500 people joined a March for Justice through downtown Cincinnati and gathered in Fountain Square shouting for the resignation of the police chief. These events forced a public discussion on race and police-community relations that was long overdue. Recent renovation along Vine and Republic Streets has transformed the alley where Mr. Thomas was killed. Prior to the renovation, ReSTOC and religious leaders commemorated the site, which was already marked by a memorial shrine.



## The Cincinnati Interfaith Workers Center 1235 Vine Street

13

Working people are struggling every day just to get by. The Cincinnati Interfaith Workers Center (CIWC) is located in Over-the-Rhine where the median household income is just \$14,517. High unemployment, lack of good jobs, and increasing inequity in our city creates conditions of poverty for many working families.

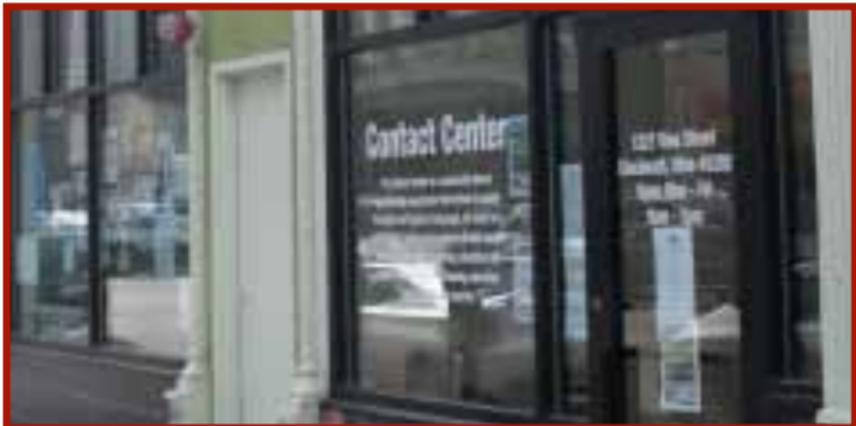
The CIWC educates, empowers and mobilizes low-wage and immigrant workers to achieve positive systemic change. Founded by the Cincinnati Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice in 2005, the Workers Center became its own member-based organization in 2007. The Center has organized low-wage workers in the temporary labor, construction, service, restaurant and other industries, recovering more than \$700,000 in stolen wages owed to workers. The CIWC also consistently conducts trainings in worker health and safety and worker and immigrant rights. The CIWC seeks to end worker exploitation and create just work places and livable wage jobs.



## Contact Center 1227 Vine Street

14

The Contact Center is a community based membership organization that strives to uphold the rights and dignity of all people. The Center works with people on low and moderate incomes through grassroots organizing, education, and outreach around issues of housing, education, safety, and income security. They have been at the forefront of organizing recipients on public assistance since 1992 to challenge and make changes to the policies of Welfare Reform. Their work ensured that domestic violence victims have special assistance in the State's public assistance program. Working to end poverty by advocating for meaningful jobs with livable wages, the Contact Center's key leaders are mostly low-income individuals who have experienced the unjust situations they organize to change. Friars Over-the-Rhine Mission (F.O.R.M.) originally created Contact Center in 1968, an outreach program of St. Francis Seraph Church. Contact Center also shared its storefront with Voices Community Newspaper in the mid 70s. Contact Center became an independent non-profit organization in 1979. It was housed originally at 1641 Vine Street, and then moved to 1227 Vine in November 2002.



## Recovery Hotel 1225 Vine Street

15

This former rooming house with both a doctor's office and bar was a vacant building owned by an absentee landlord who was living in another country. ReSTOC tracked down the owners and convinced them to sell the building at a low price. ReSTOC then raised money, contributed thousands of hours of sweat equity and renovated the building despite staunch opposition from local developers who claimed that housing for recovering alcoholics would blight the community. Since 1995, this building has provided 20 units of affordable, transitional housing for graduates of local recovery programs. Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings occur on-site. Tenants of this building have made tremendous contributions to the community including activism, photography, service to the elderly, and directing a national advocacy organization. This site has welcomed the People's Platform for Equality and Justice Campaign on Final Fridays.



## buddy's place 1300 Vine Street

16

1300 Vine Street, formerly the Jimmy Skinner Music Center, was slated for demolition after a fire in the early 1990s and saved by ReSTOC. buddy's place was completed in 1999 and was named after buddy gray, an influential leader in Over-the-Rhine. He was co-founder of the Over-the-Rhine People's Movement, Drop Inn Center, ReSTOC and the local, state, and national Coalitions for the Homeless. buddy's place provides 20 units of housing for people just out of homelessness. The mural on the north side of the building was designed and painted by residents of Over-the-Rhine. It commemorates the Over-the-Rhine People's Movement, a coalition of organizations rooted in basic human rights, affordable housing, education, social service, community art and music programs, and political advocacy, dating back over 40 years. The first floor of buddy's place houses Miami University's Center for Community Engagement in Over-the-Rhine, which opened in February 2002. The Center relates with the People's Movement and other groups struggling for human rights and social justice. The Center brings faculty and students from many disciplines to work collaboratively with neighborhood organizations to effect democratic, equitable development strategies for people on low incomes, workers, people of color, and families. In 2006, with the community's





support, Miami University instituted the Over-the-Rhine Residency Program, a full semester living and working immersion experience where students from all majors integrate a full course load of 15 credit hours in the “school of social life.”

## Venice on Vine/ Power Inspires Progress 1301 Vine Street

17

Serving pizzas, hoagies, and salads, Venice on Vine is truly “good food for a good cause” – it is run by Power Inspires Progress (PIP), a non-profit job training program. PIP operates social enterprise businesses as a tool to help inner-city residents overcome employment barriers. While serving great food to the public at Venice on Vine, PIP trainees receive on the job training with pay. They also build their work skills, confidence, work history, and work with tutors to pursue their educational goals.

Power Inspires Progress was founded by religious women in 1986, led by Sister Barbara Wheeler and Sister Judy Tensing. In 2005-2006, PIP collaborated with Over-the-Rhine Community Housing, Miami University and University of Cincinnati to rehabilitate a historic theater building into this friendly neighborhood restaurant, the first new business to open here in 20 years. In addition to the Venice on Vine restaurant, PIP also runs Venice Catering, which serves home style meals for churches, nonprofits, schools and businesses.



## Joseph House 1526 Republic Street

18

The Joseph House, established in 1994 by Sr. Kateri Koverman, offers transitional housing with alcohol and drug addiction services for veterans who are homeless men (and women on occasions). The House collaborates with other agencies like the VA Hospital, Disabled American Veterans, and the Veterans Service Commission to provide holistic services geared towards safety and independence. In 1995 only 5 veterans were treated at any given time. ReSTOC made possible their expansion into three more buildings now being used for veteran services in the community. By 2012 the Joseph House expanded to 8 buildings with 120 beds and currently houses 102 veterans daily. Their buildings are easily identified in the neighborhood, as they proudly display both the American and POW-MIA flags. Services are provided as long as necessary, with an understanding of the resident's abstinence from drugs or alcohol. Their motto is "We do not leave our wounded behind."



## Prince of Peace Lutheran Church 1528 Race Street

19

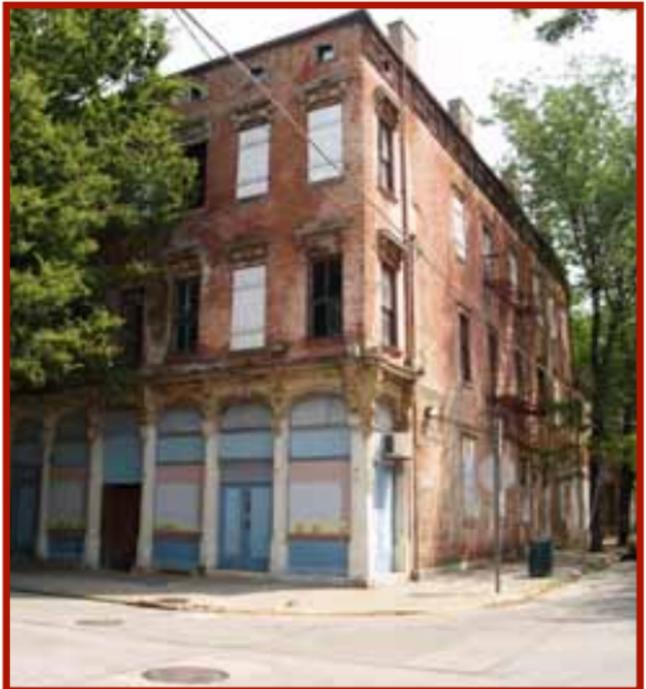
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church has a German heritage. Its space provides many uses, such as shelter during the winter months. Rev. Joel Hempel, former pastor, was very active in the early days of Drop Inn Center. Like Nast Trinity it provided services to the community, including evening suppers, counseling, and emergency assistance for families. The major connection to the current People's Movement is probably unseen, unknown or invisible to most. When the Coalition for the Homeless was in its infancy, it convened what was to become the Homeless Clearinghouse to equitably allocate public and private funds for shelters, soup kitchens, and homeless-serving programs. All programs were handled in an open process with all involved at the table, with decisions made democratically. It became known as the "Prince of Peace Process," so named after the church venue for those meetings. Prince of Peace Process was carried forward by the City Community Development Department, but has now been "inherited" by the Strategies to End Homelessness where it is always in peril of extinction.



## Elm Street Senior Housing 1500-1506 Elm Street

20

These Over-the-Rhine Community Housing buildings have a long history of grassroots organizing, services, and space for the community. The former site of the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless (now located at 117 W. 12th Street in O-T-R) and Choices Café will be the site of a new community development initiative, Elm Street Senior Housing. This development will meet the needs of elderly, low-income residents and will create the only senior housing project in the neighborhood. Elm Street Senior Housing will develop fifteen apartments for seniors with special design features which will enable residents to live there for the rest of their lives. The street level of the buildings will be used for administrative and community space. These fifteen units of senior housing only begin to address the growing needs of senior citizens in our community.



## City Gospel Mission 1419 Elm Street

21

The City Gospel Mission was founded in 1924 by James Gamble of Procter & Gamble Co. as a way to serve the homeless through meals, shelter, recovery programs, and chapel services. City Gospel Mission works with men, women, and at-risk youth to break the cycle of poverty and despair. City Gospel Mission collaborates with local churches to offer one-to-one, relationship-focused programs and services to equip those in need with spiritual, emotional, and physical skills and resources to achieve life transformation. Carl Marcotte, a former director at CGM, was a member of the Alcoholism Task Force that met in the early 70s at CGM. The idea that this city needed a low-barrier homeless shelter came out of these early meetings. It's been housed at 1419 Elm Street since 1943 and plans to expand and relocate to Queensgate.



## Sweet P's Styling Shop 1439 Elm Street

22

This community barber shop was established in 1974 and remains a neighborhood-serving business in Over-the-Rhine. Not only can one receive a good haircut and style at Sweet P's, but it also serves as a gathering place for community conversation. You can't pass Sweet P's without seeing and hearing folks discussing politics and community development. People here are always watching out for their neighbors. We need more of these neighborhood-serving businesses.



Jimmy Heath, a graduate of the Drop Inn Center's Recovery Program, devoted his life and work of photography to advocate for basic human rights. The Jimmy Heath House (JHH), a project of Over-the-Rhine Community Housing, is named in his memory. It is a twenty five unit, permanent supportive housing development that revitalized five historic, vacant buildings in Over-the-Rhine.

JHH is based on the "Housing First" principle. The idea is to target the most challenging situations—people who are chronically homeless, who do not respond to traditional treatment programs and spend years cycling between the streets, shelters, jail cells, and emergency rooms. This cycle is profoundly destructive for the people caught in it and extraordinarily expensive for communities. The JHH interrupts the cycle by giving persons chronically homeless a home without requiring them to get sober first. Residents are then surrounded with robust support services in the hope that having a place to live will help them address their other problems. More than 150 cities around the country already have Housing First programs in place and have demonstrated measurable success. OTRCH made possible the first in Ohio.

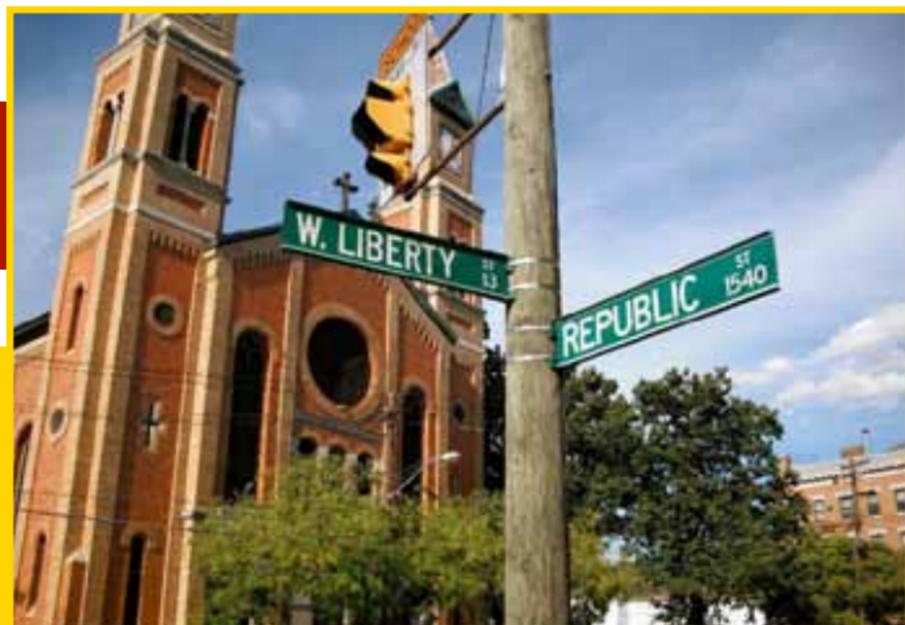
Jimmy Heath documented, and honored the lives of all people in his community through his personal journey and his photography. JHH is an important part of this community legacy. "I will conclude that it is the people, and that means all the people, who really make Over-the-Rhine a community. I am happy that





I have been allowed to witness, and be part of a community willing to come together to help its most vulnerable members.”

~ David Elkins, Jimmy Heath House Program Coordinator



Compiled and designed by Miami students Natalie Otrembiak, Kathleen Roosen, and Christopher Buie in collaboration with the community.

Contributing Writers:

Bonnie Neumeier

Jenn Summers

Thomas A. Dutton

Alice Skirtz

Mary Burke Rivers

Pat Clifford

Jim Luken

# PEASLEE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

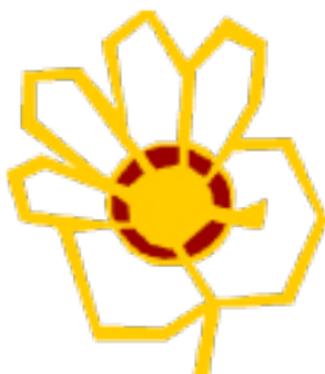


## Peaslee Neighborhood Center Community Education Program

215 E. 14th St. Cincinnati OH 45202

[www.peasleecenter.org](http://www.peasleecenter.org)

513-621-5514



## Miami University Center for Community Engagement in Over-the-Rhine

1300 Vine St. Cincinnati OH 45202

<http://arts.muohio.edu/cce/>

### **Our Vision:**

*Thoughtful citizens committed to  
a just and equitable society.*