



Summer 2017
The Columns
 A Publication of the Museum District Association

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*Museum District -
 Richmond, VA*



President's Column

M.A. Powers, 2017 MDA Board President

For many of us summer is winding down and we have our sights set on the start of the school year. If you are interested in supporting our local schools with supply donations and welcome back festivities, keep a lookout on our Facebook page, Nextdoor and *This Week in the Museum District* emails for announcements.

I am continually amazed by the commitment and willingness to serve that is demonstrated by the MDA board of directors. It has been a busy and productive summer for the MDA. Some of the projects and tasks addressed are described below.

The capital project along the Roseneath median is complete. A new turf program was initiated last year and the grass is beginning to fill in more evenly. Posts have been installed in key locations where trucks have routinely crossed the median. The ruts, created over many years, were hazardous, unsightly and costly to repair. The posts should serve as a deterrent to trucks and other vehicles from crossing the median in the future. There are a few places where additional tree plantings are scheduled, as well as a few trees of mismatched species that will be transplanted to alternate locations in the fall.

The Zoning & Land Use Committee has reviewed a number of key projects in the neighborhood. The committee has met monthly this year with property owners, architects and developers to review in-fill and renovation projects within the Museum District and larger development projects along the periphery. New homes are planned for Monument and Ellwood Avenues, a vacant office building on Thompson is being converted to a multi-unit residential dwelling, North End Juice Bar is expanding and the Better Housing Coalition is converting the for-

mer Quality Inn & Suites on Broad Street into 210 apartment units. The MDA was also asked to weigh in on a new zoning designation for Scott's Addition, allowing for expanded mixed-use development. The MDA Zoning & Land Use committee advocates for residents on a regular basis to maintain safety and preserve architectural integrity.

The Museum District now has neighborhood house and garden flags. The MDA has worked much of this year to bring a fresh look to the signature column so that it can be displayed throughout the community. We hit a learning curve with some fading in the first run of production but we seem to have remedied the problem and you can again purchase flags on our website. We are also offering a variety of themed items through a third party web site called Zazzle. Check out our Facebook page and weekly emails for the link.

The MDA hosted a successful National Night Out, raising crime prevention awareness. We enjoyed music, fun and food while gaining tips on keeping our streets safe through our Neighborhood Watch program. We currently have about 30 percent of our geographical area involved. If you wish to be part of the effort to thwart crime in the Museum District, please reach out to our safety chair, Ron Russ: MDAsafety@museumdistrict.org and look for the Neighborhood Watch group on Nextdoor.

Our next Town Hall meeting is Wednesday, September 27 at 6 p.m. We have invited our local officials to provide administrative updates and plans for the future. Please join us for refreshments, socializing and highlights from our city representatives at Temple Beth-El from 6-8:30 p.m.

See you in the neighborhood!

Museum District Association
Founded 1964
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The Mission of the Museum District Association is to unite, protect, and advance the interests of the neighborhood in order to realize its potential and improve the quality of life in the neighborhood and community.

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Museum District - Richmond VA

Mark Your Calendar!

Upcoming Events in the Museum District

<u>What</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>Where</u>
Town Hall Meeting	Sept. 27 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	Temple Beth-El
Fall Alley Clean Up	Oct. 7 7:45 a.m.	Albert Hill MS parking lot
Annual Meeting	Nov. 16 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	TBD

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To reach any of our board members by phone,
please call 804-410-1632 and leave a message
stating the person you wish to reach.

The board meets at 7 p.m. on the third Monday
of most months at All Saints Presbyterian on
Grove Avenue. If you would like to make a
presentation to the board, please email or call
the president.

36 Hours in the Museum District

By Liz Bryant

Fully embracing the concept of the staycation, and being a fan of *The New York Times* Sunday travel section, I set out to see if I could fill a weekend with fun and relaxation in Richmond, specifically without leaving my neighborhood. Turns out there is way more than a weekend's worth of activities, but what follows is a snapshot of how this reporter spent "36 Hours in the Museum District."

Friday, 6:00 p.m. -- That magical time when the work-week ends and the weekend begins starts with a classic cocktail at The Franklin Inn (800 N. Cleveland St.). A seat at the small bar is perfect for watching the local TV news and catching up on neighborhood happenings from the friendly bartender.

7:30 p.m. – It's a short walk to dinner at Arianna's Italian Grill & Pizzeria (700 N. Sheppard St.) where you will find a varied menu with generous portions. Try a

caprese salad and pizza -- pineapple and onion are a delicious topping combination. If you have leftovers, cold pizza makes for a great Saturday breakfast indulgence.

Saturday, 8:00 a.m. -- Up and at 'em early at the Boho Cycle Studio (714 N. Sheppard St.). Great music and a motivating instructor lead you through a workout to energize you for your day. Find class schedules and pricing at www.bohocyclestudio.com.



Liz Bryant enjoying dinner at the Belmont Food Shop.

Continued on next page



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Continued from previous page

11:00 a.m. – Take a trip down Memory Lane at the Virginia Historical Society (428 N. Boulevard) at their *Toys of the 50s, 60s and 70s* exhibition. Hang out with Gumby, Mr. Potato Head, and Barbie and have more fun than a Barrel of Monkeys. The exhibition runs until December 31.

1:00 p.m. – Down the block is the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (200 N. Boulevard). Enjoy a light lunch on the Best Café patio with a view of the 24-foot-tall *Chloe* in the sculpture garden before heading upstairs to be delightfully lost in the art. Must-sees in the museum are Degas' *Little Dancer*, *House at Dusk* by Edward Hopper and the entire Fabergé collection.

4:00 p.m. – Kramer's Market (406 N. Cleveland St.) offers a broad selection of chilled wines. Pick up a favorite bottle and enjoy a pre-dinner glass on your porch. It's a great way to meet your neighbors.

7:00 – Dinner at the Belmont Food Shop (27 N. Bel-

mont Ave.) is a charming dining experience. Located in a former neighborhood grocery, the menu offers something for carnivores, pescetarians and vegetarians alike. Make sure to save room for dessert. You won't be disappointed. It's small, so reservations are a good idea.

Sunday, 10:00 a.m. – Having brunch at Buddy's (600 N. Sheppard St.), the decades-old institution formerly located in the Fan, will remind you a bit of the congenial atmosphere at Cheers. And the mimosas are delish.

12 noon – Wrap up your staycation with a walk on Monument Avenue. The 1.2 miles from the Boulevard to Thompson Street and back will put you in the mindset to tackle the week ahead. And if it's going to be a tough one, remember that your next staycation can be only five days away.

Lodging Note:

While I opted to enjoy my staycation from home, the Museum District does offer two lovely B&Bs – the Museum District Bed & Breakfast (2811 Grove Ave.) and The One Bed and Breakfast (1 N. Boulevard).



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Evolution of the Devil's Triangle

Editor's Note: Writer Justin Sizemore takes a look at the history of the area known as the Devil's Triangle.

The Devil's Triangle is the small commercial district located along Sheppard Street between Monument and Kensington Avenues. Developed in the 1920s along the trolley line that ran south from Broad Street to Cary Street, this three-block stretch of shops sat next to Johnston-Willis Hospital (now Kensington Court Apartments), and was originally home to wholesome establishments like a newsstand, a butcher's shop, and a pharmacy.

But by the 1980s, following the decades-long expansion of Richmond's more affluent western suburbs, the neighborhood now known as the Museum District had become decidedly less prosperous. Though gentrification was beginning to sweep the Fan, the wave seemed to stop at the Boulevard, and the Museum District remained "very Southern, blue-collar" and "lower income," longtime resident and developer Rich Holden told the Times Dispatch in 2010.

It was also around this time that the once-quiet com-

mercial corridor on Sheppard Street became known as the Devil's Triangle, a reference to three notorious dive bars, which formed the Triangle's three "corners." Café 21 was situated at Sheppard and Patterson, the present site of Buddy's. A block north, in the building, which is now home to Sheppard Street Tavern, was a bar called the Felix. And across the street from the Felix, on the northwest corner of Sheppard and Park, sat the most notorious leg of the Triangle: the Ritz, a watering hole whose patrons were known to have a particular penchant for drug use, bar fights, and other unsavory behavior.

Over the past 25 years, the Devil's Triangle has shed its once seedy reputation. A seemingly unlikely turning point in this process was the construction of a 7-11 at Sheppard and Park in the late 1980s. As the Times Dispatch reported in 2010, the 7-11 "brought floodlights and 24-hour activity to a dark corner once inhabited by an auto-body shop that doubled as a drug trafficking hotspot."

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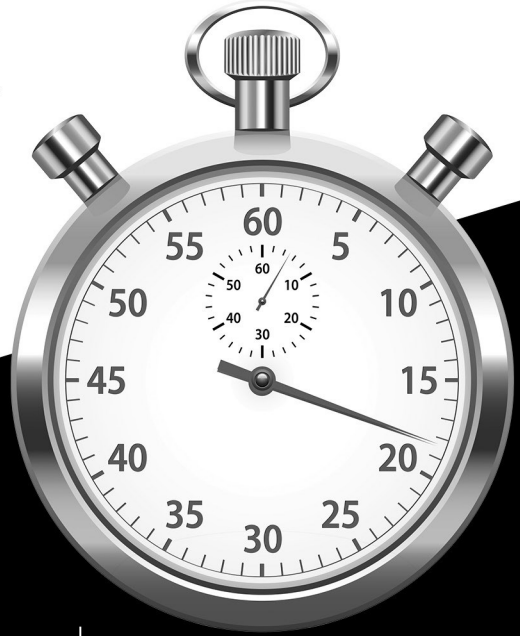
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Author Talk – Dr. Greg Rubano – Tuesday, August 8 @ 4:30 p.m.
Dr. Rubano brings the story of *the 1st Native American to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame*. Q & A to follow. *Appropriate for ages 6 and up.*

Summer Reading Finale – Saturday, August 12 from 10:00 p.m.- 12:00 p.m.
Come celebrate the end of RPL's Summer Reading Program at Belmont. We'll have snacks, crafts, a photo booth, and a special camping-themed storytime with Ms. Jenn at 10:30 a.m.

Adult Yoga – Wednesday, September 6 & 27 from 7:00-7:45 p.m.
Yoga instructor Lin will lead 45 minute yoga class, including final relaxation. Class is suitable for beginner level yogis. Attendees will need to bring a mat and a blanket if they wish. Space is limited. Please call to register. 646-1139

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More information can be found at RichmondPublicLibrary.org

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Inspection Key Part of Real Estate Sale

By Steve Jones

One of the major points of consternation in any real estate transaction is the often misunderstood home inspection. The home inspection is the most common cause for a real estate deal to fall through, followed by financing issues.

In the contract used by most Richmond Realtors the home inspection is addressed in Item 4 of the purchase agreement. The contract allows the purchaser of a home to have the home inspected in search of "defects" not necessarily apparent to the purchaser when viewing a home. The inspection needs to be performed and a request for repairs needs to be delivered to the seller within the time limits agreed upon in the contract, typically 10-14 days. The important term here is "defect." The request for repairs should not contain cosmetic issues, maintenance issues or issues with older systems in a home.

Most buyers use a certified home inspector to inspect the home they are trying to buy. A home inspector is a generalist, well versed in construction and home systems, and able to give a good analysis on the general condition of a home. He may not be, however, a specialist in electrical, plumbing, structural, roofing, radon or HVAC systems. What he can do is to point out possible deficiencies in these systems and recommend that the buyer have these matters further inspected by people who specialize in these areas.

Once the request for repairs has been delivered to the seller there is a seven-day negotiation period during which the parties attempt to come to terms about the repairs or compensation in lieu of repairs. If an agreement is reached, then everything proceeds to closing. If no agreement is reached within seven days, the buyer has two days to consider whether to proceed with terms last agreed upon or to terminate the contract. The important thing is to try to be objective about what should be included in the request for repairs. A request that includes too many minimal repairs that are not "defects" may irritate the seller and get the negotiations off to a bad start. Buyers should consider what is actually a defect and sellers may be more likely to respond in a positive manner by taking corrective measures.

VCU Students Imagine a Revitalized Thompson St.

By Max Ewart, VCU MURP student

On Tuesday, May 2, a studio class from VCU's Masters of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) program, in the Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, presented a semester's worth of in-depth research on the Thompson Street Corridor. Through this educational exercise, the class sought to gain some insight on ways to make the Thompson Street Corridor more pedestrian friendly and act as a connection between Scott's Addition and Carytown, as well as bolstering the identity of the corridor itself. Throughout the process the group of students and their professor, James Smither, met with Mark Olinger, Richmond's director of the department of planning and development review (DPDR), as well as members of the Museum District Association to discuss the research and give design recommendations.

The purpose of this course is to allow students in the MURP program to get hands-on experience in the planning world. By partnering with DPDR and the Museum District Association, the students got a chance to simulate a professional experience while employing strategies and skills they have learned in their studies. During these meetings, the group presented a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis that informed goals that could be achieved along the corridor. The students met with stakeholders five times throughout the semester to present findings and listen to recommendations from the group.

Project participants identified key needs that included improvements to connectivity, identity and branding as well as safety for pedestrians, motorists and cyclists. The group presented final recommendations to members of the Museum District community and several City Council members at Temple Beth-El. After the presentation was complete, members of the audience were given electronic copies of the final document and presentation, both of which were well received. The presentation is available on the MDA website located at www.museumdistrict.org.

Two primary things were achieved during this exercise. The students were given a taste of what it is like to be a planner in the city, working with the local government and members of the community.

They also had the opportunity to present a vision for the



A rendering of the Thompson St. corridor.

Thompson Street Corridor and encourage the public to start thinking of their own vision. This portion of the Museum District has much potential. Changes, such as narrowing driving lanes and installing a bike lane or a reimagining of the public recreation facilities, can make the Thompson Street Corridor more accessible and vibrant for Museum District residents.

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Jane Baughan: A Life in the Museum District

By Carolyn M. Chilton

“There was a beauty shop in the basement of the house on the corner,” she told me. “What? A beauty shop in that house?” I said. “Oh yes, and lots of small markets, but not as many restaurants as we have today. “ “What was Cary Street like?” I asked her. “The Cary Court shopping area had a Black and White Grocery Store, a Kresge’s Department Store and a Woolworth there. Dot’s Pastry Shop was also in Cary Court. (It was purchased by Ukrop’s in 1976, and by 1981 there was a Dot’s Pastry Shop in every Ukrop’s Store.) Ponymall, where you could ride ponies, was where the Kroger and Baker’s Crust are now. And you could watch cartoons and movies all afternoon on Tuesday at the Byrd Theatre for only 25 cents.” “What, what, what?” I said again and again, ever more incredulous!

The woman who is telling me these wonderful stories is Jane Baughan and she’s lived in the Museum District in the same house all but a few years of her life. Like

many long-time residents of the Museum District she is full of stories about growing up here in the mid-20th century and the changes she’s seen.

We’re sitting on my front porch, watching people walk by with children and dogs, everyone saying hello to us. “How has the neighborhood changed?” I asked her. “There were no cars parked here when I was a child,” she said. “But there were lots of people walking everywhere. Large groups of us children would walk to and from school. We walked to local markets, and into Carytown. Everything we needed was right here – shops, entertainment, church, school, friends.”

Our streets have always invited walking, and are still a rich contributor to the neighborliness of the area. The East-West streets in the district are generally 75-foot wide, and are bordered by concrete sidewalks and lined with distractive houses. The North-South streets are

Continued on next page

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Continued from previous page

narrower, generally 50-feet wide and have fewer houses.

“What was a significant feature of the Museum District when you were a child?” I asked her. “The streetcars,” she says. Jane and her teenage friends would ride the street car to Monument and Robinson to Eleanor Fry’s Dance Studio where they took lessons, and went to evening dances. The arrival of streetcars in Richmond was a catalyst in the city’s expansion and in the growth of neighborhoods like The Fan and The Museum District.

The arrival of the electric streetcar in Richmond after 1888 allowed for rapid expansion of residential development in the suburbs surrounding the central city. Streetcar lines did not extend into the West of Boulevard area, however, until about 1909, when the Virginia Railway and Power Company extended the Broad Street line west to Sheppard Street and then south along Sheppard and Belmont Avenue to West Cary Street. (National Register of Historic Places, West of the Boulevard Historic District, pg. 142)

Now known as the Museum District, the official name

of our neighborhood at that time was “The West of the Boulevard Historic District.” The plaque recognizing this status is located in the median of Roseneath Avenue at Grove Avenue. Granted this status in 1994, the district is a 69-block residential neighborhood. The district was built from several large tracts of farmland located in what was then western Henrico County. One of the largest tracts was 36 acres, owned by Channing M. Robinson. Extending through Robinson’s property was an insignificant little street called Clover Street. It was widened in 1890 and renamed Boulevard!

Housing in the district was developed from about 1895-1940. Jane’s house, built by her grandfather in 1927, is a Colonial Revival. Just walk our streets and you’ll see that the houses in the district are one of Richmond’s finest collections of early-20th century architecture. What is the history and style of your house and street? If you’d like to find out more about the history of the Museum District, and about your house, visit the MDA website: museumdistrict.org. Click on “Resources” and then select “Historic Places Registry.” This document has fascinating history of the Museum District, its development, and information on all the structures in the district.

Alley Cleanup Oct. 7

The fall alley clean up will be the morning of Saturday, October 7. It’s a chance to keep the Museum District looking beautiful.

Scheduling the alley clean up in October will allow us to pick up unwanted furniture and other debris from the moving and rental turnover that accompanies the beginning of the school year.

Volunteers will meet at Albert Hill Middle School, 3400 Patterson Avenue at 7:45 AM on October 7 to enjoy coffee and donuts before breaking into teams and hitting the alleys.

Please sign up today to help with the alley clean up. Contact: MDA Environment Chair Matt Hogan at mdaenvironment@museumdistrict.org.

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Mother's Day Tour Brings in Nearly \$20,000

Mother Nature was very cooperative on May 14, providing ideal weather for the 23rd annual Mother's Day House & Garden Tour. Karen Lebo, chair of the 2018 event committee, said that helped draw the crowd of nearly 1,000. But the creative mix of styles was the real draw.

"From small to large, minimalist to sophisticated, finished to works in progress, I think our branching out to include a wide variety of homes was one key to this year's success," Lebo said.

Arax Boghosian, 2017 event chair, described the tour as one of the most profitable in recent memory with close to \$20,000 in ticket sales.

From this, the association will contribute \$4,250 to area groups including: \$750 to Albert Hill PTA, \$750 to Health Brigade (formerly called Fan Free Clinic), \$750 to Friends of Belmont Library, \$750 to Enrichmond Foundation for the benefit of Humphrey Calder Com-

munity Center, \$750 to TJ Viking Fund, \$500 to Prevent a Litter Veterinary Hospital (known as PAL). Additionally \$750 was set aside to start a scholarship/book fund to be administered by the MDA board. Remaining proceeds will go toward ongoing operations, programming and events such as Spring Fling and National Night Out.

Planning is already underway for next year, so mark your calendars for May 13. Anyone interested in volunteering for the committee, the event or having their house considered for the tour should contact MDA-housetour@museumdistrict.org.



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Volunteers Drive Mother's Day Tour Success

Many thanks to the wonderful volunteers who made the 2017 Mother's Day House & Garden Tour such a smashing success!

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A Short History of the Museum District

By Justin Sizemore

Carved out of farmland west of town, the neighborhood now known as the Museum District was developed from about 1890 through 1940 and consists of roughly 70 blocks, bounded by Colonial Street to the east, Ellwood Avenue to the south, North Thompson and North Nansemond streets to the west, and West Grace Street and Cutshaw Avenue to the north. Known originally as the West End and later as West of the Boulevard, the District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994.


The oldest homes in the District, built between 1890 and 1895, sit on the south side of Grove Avenue, between North Sheppard Street and North Colonial Avenue, across the street from the six-block tract on which the VMFA and the Virginia Historical Society—the museums that give the District its name—were later constructed. At the time, those six blocks were home to R. E. Camp No. 1, a home for disabled confederate veterans, which opened in 1885. The R.E. Camp and the small neighbor-

hood growing up around it were originally situated in Henrico County, as the city line did not extend west of the Boulevard until 1906.

Annexation extended the City line to Roseneath Road in 1906 and to Commonwealth Avenue in 1914, permitting the installation of new infrastructure—streets, curbs, gutters, and gas, water, and sewer lines—and accelerating the District’s development. One key to the District’s development was the Richmond Union Passenger Railway, the world’s first practical electric trolley system, which debuted in 1888. By 1909, the trolley’s Broad Street line was extended west to Sheppard Street and then south along Sheppard and Belmont Avenue to West Cary Street. In an era before widespread automobile ownership, the trolley permitted the District’s largely middle-class population to commute to jobs downtown. Trolleys were gradually replaced by buses and cars and the service was discontinued just after World War II.

Most of the District’s housing stock was built during the


Continued on page 19




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Where is this in the Museum District?



The Columns is giving away a \$20 gift certificate to Sheppard Street Tavern. To win, you need to email an answer to MDAnewsletter@museumdistrict.org by Sept. 15. All the correct answers will be entered into a drawing. The winner will be notified by email and the person's name will be published in the next issue of the newsletter. Last issue's winner was Toni Corcoran.



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Kramer's Market: A Museum District Institution

By M.A. Powers

If you live along Cleveland St. you are probably familiar with the little grocery store under the black and white striped awning. Kramer's Market has been a neighborhood staple for nearly 70 years. When Jiyeon Jang bought the business over 27 years ago, she was told that Mr. Kramer operated the market for about 40 years. Jiyeon was a young woman, just 28-years-old at the time, who decided to make the Museum District her home. She has been here ever since. Her daughter, who works weekends in the store, and granddaughter make their homes in the Museum District, as well. Kramer's Market, which began as a family business, has continued to be a multi-generational family business that fills a need for many close-by residents.

When asked if she ever thought about changing the name of the market, Jiyeon explained that when she travels back to her birthplace in Korea, she is comforted by familiar sites and she wants locals returning to the Museum District to be comforted when they visit Kramer's. She thrives on tradition and being part of the community. The store is open every day of the week, and she is there to greet you with her warm smile and kind words much of the time.

Jiyeon says that she can tell when the economy swings because her sales are affected by even slight shifts. She purchases items for the store through vendors at retail prices seen at large grocery stores and then must tack on enough to make it possible to stay in business. Last winter was tough, she said. People didn't stop by as often and sales were slow. But the spring and summer have been much better. Even when sales are lean, Jiyeon says, "I love to work here because I love to see my customers." Small grocers operate on a very narrow profit and often sacrifice personal vacation time to save on payroll and make ends meet. She doesn't mind though because she loves being part of the community. When asked about changes that she has seen over almost three decades of business, Jiyeon reminisced about the family feeling of the area. She feels that some of that has been lost in recent years.

The building has seen a few improvements over the years, such as the addition of central air conditioning, but retains the original embossed tin ceiling. The store itself is impeccably arranged and tidy. Canned goods



Jiyeon Jang has owned Kramer's Market for 27 years.

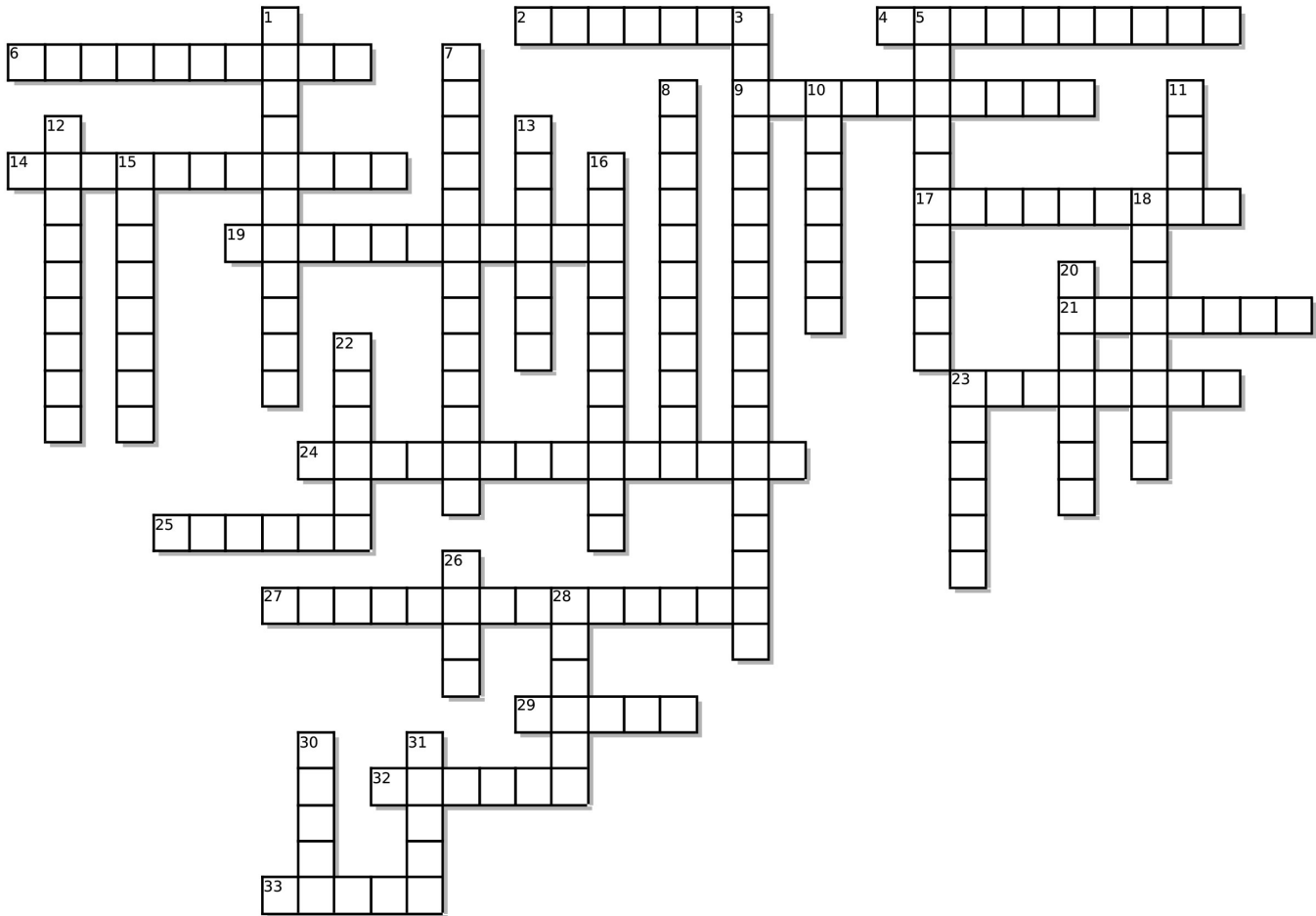
are evenly spaced on clean shelves and the wine and beer case is generously loaded with a wide variety of beverages. She stocks all the basics and many popular luxury items like sparkling water, assorted snacks, candy and pet foods. The Neighborhood Laundromat operates next door under a twin awning and a new hair salon and antique store are opening soon across the street. Jiyeon looks forward to welcoming her new business neighbors and helping them to become part of the Cleveland family. Business owners like Jiyeon are what make the Museum District a fabulous place to live and work.

Next time you need a few grocery items, think about popping over to Kramer's at 406 N Cleveland. Store hours are: Sunday-Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.

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Museum District Crossword



ACROSS

- 2 Car repair street
- 4 Carytown summer festival
- 6 Boulevard society
- 9 Girls' school
- 14 Tattoo
- 17 Grassy median
- 19 Corner of Franklin & Cleveland
- 21 Two lanes, one way
- 23 Western boundary
- 24 Park, Patterson & Sheppard
- 25 Neighborhood Bar & Grill
- 27 Community Center
- 29 Green VHS visitor
- 32 Our neighbor to the east
- 33 Shortest street (2 blocks)

DOWN

- 1 German block party
- 3 Former neighborhood name
- 5 Raising a racquet
- 7 Floyd Avenue Obstacle
- 8 Mother's Day _____ & _____ tour
- 10 3300 block of Franklin
- 11 VMFA Cafe
- 12 Dirty paw (AKA coffee shop)
- 13 1st District City Council
- 15 Cellar sandwiches
- 16 Neighborhood saint
- 18 5th District City Council
- 20 Food Shop and Butchery
- 22 Middle school mascot
- 23 Beth-El
- 26 2nd District City Council
- 28 MDA logo
- 30 Belmont has 2 of these shops
- 31 Huge white bust

Continued from page 14

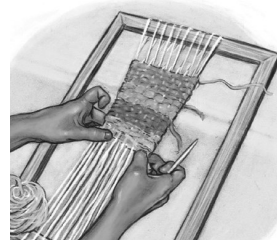
fifty-year period which ended in 1940. At the time the District was added to the National Register in 1994, it consisted of nearly 2,000 structures, 90 percent of which had been built prior to 1940. According to census data, the District is home to nearly 7,000 people, or about 3 percent of the City's population.



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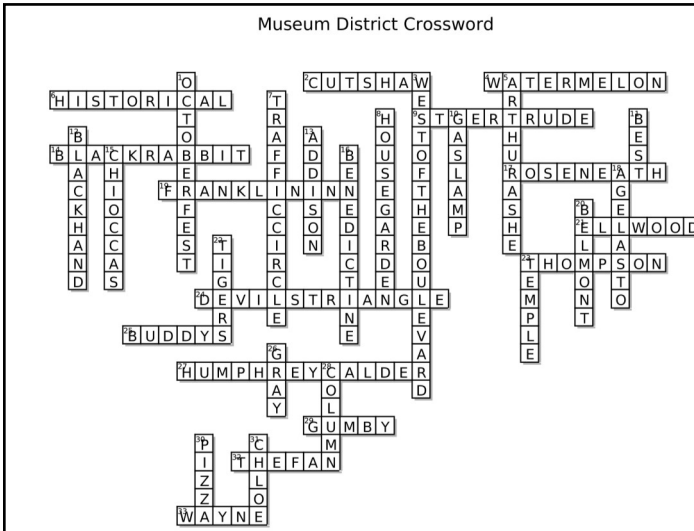
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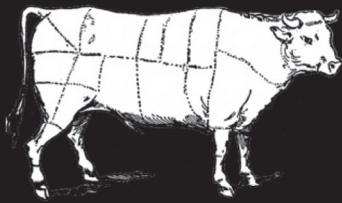


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