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**Mayor**

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***MAYOR KURTZ'S WEEKLY UPDATE FOR AUGUST 13, 2021***

**Home Days Survey**



The response to last weekend's Home Days has been overwhelmingly positive. I have received calls, emails, and people have stopped me in public to tell me how magical and memorable the event was for their families.

The community celebration could not have been possible without the dedication and "can do" attitude of the City staff and other organizations that worked tirelessly to make Home Days 2021 a successful event. This team is so talented and driven that we had our first meeting to discuss plans for Home Days 2022 this afternoon.

I would appreciate ten minutes of your time to share your thoughts about Home Days. We have created a short survey to get feedback on this year's event and ideas for next year. You can access the survey [here](#), from the home page of the [City's website](#), or pick up a printed copy at the Civic Center. The survey will be open for three weeks and will close on Friday, September 3.

The fun will continue next month at Fall Fest on Sunday, September 26, at Elmwood Park.

**Welcome Jennifer Zisk-Vitron!**



I am proud to announce that Jennifer Zisk-Vitron will be joining the City of Independence as the Community Resources Manager on September 20, 2021. Jennifer is a licensed social worker with more than 20 years of direct service experience working with youth, individuals, and families.

Currently, Jen serves as the Director of Programs for Adoption Network Cleveland. In that role, she is responsible for the overall administration, creation, planning, development, coordination, and evaluation of programs and services.

Community Services Director Emily Thomas said, "The wealth of knowledge, experience, and passion for serving the community that Jen brings to the Community Services Team will not only allow the City of Independence to continue to serve residents in truly meaningful ways, but to expand our programs and services to meet the ever-evolving needs of our community."

A native Ohioan, Jen said she is driven by her passion for working with people to help them understand and reach their potential. She earned a B.A. from Kent State University and a Master of Social Work from Cleveland State University. She is happily married to Independence Patrolman Bryan Vitron (who is also a K9 officer). They are the parents of two sons, Benjamin (deceased) and Jake.

## **Major Retailers Change Mask Policies**



The rise of the Delta variant in the U.S. has led to outbreaks of COVID-19 across the country and here in Northeast Ohio. According to the latest CDC data, nearly all nearby counties have either substantial or high transmission levels of the virus.

The CDC is now recommending ALL individuals – regardless of their vaccination status – wear masks indoors.

Because of the recent spike in cases, many local retailers are reinstating the mask mandates for employees and customers.

The best way to beat another spike is if more people get vaccinated, according to experts. Until then, let's all do our part to protect ourselves and our loved ones. The COVID-19 death toll stands at more than 614,000 people just in the United States.

## **Severe Weather**



The heavy rain, winds, and thunderstorms on Thursday caused a tree to come down on Stone Road that caused a power outage.

CEI/First Energy removed the tree and restored power to residents in a few hours.

## **It's a Wrap for Summer Camp**

This year's Summer Camp was about fun, friendship, and fitness. Over the past nine weeks, the 122 junior and senior campers have walked or run a total of 11,457 laps which equates to 2865 miles which is the distance from New York City to San Francisco, California!

The responses to the parent and counselor surveys are super positive! Parents have been raving about the activities provided at camp this year and are hopeful that more field trips will return next year.



Counselors learned the science behind hearing and the size of the ear opening during Miss Sluka's Wacky Science class this week.

Because Miss Sluka's last day was Tuesday, Ms. Rita had a life-size cutout made of her for display - just in time for Wacky Wednesday. The children dressed her up in Spirit Week attire and posed for pictures. Miss Sluka even managed to "dance" at the Hawaiian Luau!

All the campers participated in a Runway show on the stage of the Independence High School Auditorium. Boys and girls alike walked the "runway," showing off their creative apparel and "designer clothes." There were some fascinating fashion choices.



**Paper Plate Awards:** Adventure Camp hosted the 2nd Annual Paper Plate Awards on the High School Stage. Paper plate "awards" are given to campers and counselors alike. All "awards" are designed by the campers/staff and meant to be a fun way to recognize each other for outstanding qualities or achievements.

## **Indoor Pool Closed**

The indoor pool was closed on Thursday, August 11, for repairs. The Technical Services crew will be busy cleaning and painting the pool next week. They will apply approximately 25 gallons of a highly durable two-part epoxy. The pool is scheduled to re-open on Thursday, September 2, 2021.

## **Behind the Scenes at Home Days**

Two Summer Playground staff, two PTO parents, and four children helped the Community Services staff set up the Home Days' Kidz Zone last week. They inflated balls, built a bridge, Gingerbread house, and laid out Candy Land. They also volunteered during the event and made sure everything was cleaned up and secured each evening. We understand that the PTO made \$1600 over the two days.

Kidz Zone is being re-set for the Greater Cleveland Autism Camp to use next week.



**Download Finance Director Vern Blaze's Weekly Update for August 13, 2021 [here.](#)**

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