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OWENS UNIVERSITY

University Circle hosts annual CircleFest

By Arooj Ashraf, La Prensa Correspondent

Cleveland: *University Circle* hosted the 18th Annual CircleFest Dec. 4, 2011 attracting more than 4,000 people to join in festive winter activities. The opening day offers free admission to surrounding museums with activities for children and adults alike.

Julie Anderson, Chief Operating Officer at *Cleveland Botanical Gardens*, said the festival is a wonderful time for families to visit and explore the garden. "We are trying to create traditions for families," she said. The Gardens holds competitions for best gingerbread houses for professional and amateurs.

This year's winning gingerbread structure is a miniature replica of Russian landmark, the *St. Basil's Cathedral*. Adorned with M&Ms and other delicious candies, *JoAnn Van Lantern* captured the beauty of the church and amplified the tastiness of the gingerbread house to win first place in the adult amateur category.

Other notable gingerbread structures included an Eifel Tower replica, an Apple desktop, and a treehouse. Anderson said three judges from media and local bakery chose the winning pieces.

Visitors also enjoyed time with the glasshouse critters like the giant African centipede, hedgehog,

Newly hatched butterflies were released in the *Costa Rican glasshouse*. Nearly 30 species of butterflies float free in the glasshouse year round.

Joe Mohalik said the pupas are bought from butterfly farms in Ecuador and delivered to the Gardens as they are ready to complete their metamorphosis. "They live for 2-5 weeks," he said. New butterflies are released into the Garden everyday at 2 p.m.

Across the Oval, a make-shift ice rink is open to the public until late January 2012. Children and adults can rent skates for only \$3.

Nearby, *Jeff Meyers* of *Elegant Ice Creations Inc.* transformed blocks of ice into beautiful, seasonal sculptures. He mesmerized the crowd as his power tools carved flawlessly into the block to shape the ice. Meyers has been carving sculptures for the past ten years and said it was a job he landed right after completing high school.

As Meyers carved a Santa head, the real Santa Clause made a guest appearance at the *Natural History Museums*.



The *Cleveland Museum of Art* offered hands-on crafts for children, with lantern making workshops. *Joann Cowan*, volunteer at CMA, said the Women's Council members volunteer throughout the year to make lanterns for sale at the gift shop; proceeds benefit the museum's programs.

Guests enjoyed professional exhibitions of exotic lanterns created by *Robin VanLeer*. The evening ended with a lantern parade, around the circle despite the rain.

Musical performances and concerts were held at various locations and free horse drawn carriage rides and trolleys were available to shuttle guests around the circle.

Many displays and activities will continue through the holiday season; "We invite people to come back and enjoy," said Anderson.

Owens Center for Fine and Performing Arts presents 'It's A Wonderful Life: Live From WVL Radio Theatre' Production, Dec. 14

The public is invited to take a journey back to the 1940s and the Golden Age of Radio as Owens Community College's Center for Fine and Performing Arts presents an authentic "live radio broadcast" of Frank Capra's beloved film "It's A Wonderful Life" on Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2011. This marks the theatre production's second appearance at Owens.

Titled "It's A Wonderful Life: Live From WVL Radio Theatre", the production will take place in the College's Mainstage Theatre at 7:30 p.m. The Owens Toledo-area Campus is located on Oregon Road in Perrysburg Township.

"Owens Community College is proud to once bring to Northwest Ohio's surrounding communities a theatre production that certainly rekindles memories of a time when families gathered around the radio for entertainment," said *Barbara Barkan*, Owens Director for the Center for Fine and Performing Arts as the 'On-Air' sign lights up and actors and actresses tell the story of the heartwarming holiday classic 'It's A Wonderful Life' from the studios of WVL Radio.

Barkan added, "I encourage area residents to purchase their tickets very soon as the seating



for the theatre production is extremely limited due to popular demand."

Produced by the North Carolina State Company and Immediate Theatre Project, "It's A Wonderful Life: Live From WVL Radio Theatre" retells the uplifting and bittersweet tale of George Bailey's close call with death on Christmas Eve and the profound impact it has on those around him. More than 30 characters and numerous locations of Frank Capra's timeless classic film will be showcased in the form of live radio drama. Popular in the 1940s, the live studio radio broadcast will feature a small group of actors and actresses as well as old-fashioned radio sound effects to bring the town of Bedford Falls to life.

Since 2006, the North Carolina State Company and Immediate Theatre

Project have produced the radio play version of "It's A Wonderful Life" for audiences initially in Asheville, N.C. The production, which was adapted for the stage by W.V.R. Repoley, can now be seen at theatrical venues throughout the country.

Tickets for "It's A Wonderful Life: Live From WVL Radio Theatre" performance are \$20 and all seats are reserved. To purchase tickets, visit www.owens.edu or contact the College's Box Office. For more information about this event, contact the Center for Fine and Performing Arts at (567) 661-2787 or 1-800-GO-OWENS, Ext. 2787.



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Language Access Won for Limited English Proficient Parents

By Elizabeth Ford

The *Cleveland Metropolitan School District* entered into a resolution agreement with the *U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights* last month regarding the rights of *Limited English Proficiency (LEP)* parents with children enrolled in the District. LEP is the limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English.

Megan L. Sprecher, an attorney with Legal Aid, filed a complaint against the District for not providing appropriate interpreting and translation services to LEP parents, a legal right guaranteed by *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*.

The agreement, reached on September 14, 2011, states that the District will

develop a written plan to adequately notify the parents and provide them with meaningful access to the school's programs and activities. Specifically, the District will develop a notification system for parents in a language that they can understand, identify LEP parents within the school, determine what language is best to communicate with them in, and provide a centralized list of LEP parents and the language access services they require.

The District will also ensure that translators and interpreters are qualified and trained to maintain the confidentiality of the families. The interpreters furnished will also be trained, in both English and another language, in all the necessary

terminology, such as special education terms. The translators will provide written communications and vital documents to the LEP parents in the language they understand and using appropriate vocabulary and phraseology.

The District is required to submit this plan to the Office of Civil Rights for review and approval. They will then monitor the District until it has found that the District is in compliance with its plan and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

All other public and charter/community schools are also required to provide language access to parents under Title VI. This resolution agreement could be applied to other schools and districts in the area.