

# The Barberton Herald

## LIFE

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Page 7

## Students give downtown a twist

**Cierra Thompson**  
Herald Staff Writer

Students from Kent State University College of Architecture and Environmental Design focused on the city of Barberton for a class project that required them to re-design downtown buildings.

The 16 students chose a variety of buildings to recreate like Fabric and Freight Mart, Kave and Ignite Brewing Company.

They also created designs that involved new businesses like kayak rentals, food markets, restaurants and coffee shops. They took old buildings and made them more modern and displayed them on their posters, floor plans and 3D models.

Professor Scott Lukens described the project and said the goal was to challenge the students.

He said his students had 15 weeks to research and to create designs that had modern takes on the buildings. Lukens is an architect and he grew up in Barberton. He wanted his students to see the town and immerse themselves in the history and culture, which required them to do research and look at the demographics.

"This is a great town and with the lake in the center



**HERALD PHOTO/Cierra Thompson**  
Daniela Hoover explains to Ward 3 Councilman Elwood Palmer her design concepts.

of it, it's got a lot to offer," said Lukens.

He's done this project with other cities in the past and said he likes working with Barberton because the city workers are always helpful. This was the second time he's had a class focus their project on Barberton and he said there could be more projects in the future as well.

The students spoke with Joe Stefan, director of planning for the city of Barberton, and he told them about things the community could benefit from.

Megan Stanard, a fourth-year architecture student, explained how they learned what the city could use.

She said there aren't a lot of grocery stores or restaurants in the area so she incorporated a juice bar and a healthy food market in her design plan. She focused on the Great Northern building across from Lake Anna.

"We coordinated with the city, and our professor is from Barberton, which gave us a lot of the information we needed," said Stanard.

"They're great and creative and it's a fresh new outlook on Barberton," said Stacy Carr, strategic planner for the city of Barberton, in regards to the students' design projects.

The Dec. 14 event took place at Summit Artspace.

## Kids have fun and learn the reason for the season

**Nan Pamer**  
Apostolic Church

Throughout the school year, kids from all over the community come to Apostolic Church to have dinner, play ball, games, do crafts and have classes about God. The high point is the annual Christmas party the night of Dec. 12.

Approximately 75 kids came to experience Christmas in a fun and exciting way. The church annex was filled with Christmas lights, decorations, music and booths with activities.

Games included throwing rings on the Christmas tree for a prize, making a manger from paper plates and opening an advent door to receive various coins. There was a relay race with cotton balls and straws, a karaoke machine giving kids a chance to sing songs and a hot cocoa booth. They drank cocoa while sitting by the large fireplace in the annex. (Note for next year: have cleanup team ready, cocoa and spillage go hand in hand.) There was also a booth with pizza, chips, homemade cookies and fruit drinks.

Nan Pamer, director of the Apostolic Church Outreach to Kids, believes



**COURTESY PHOTO**

An evening of Christmas fun is experienced at the Apostolic Church.

the answer to many problems with children is to teach the Bible and train them in Christian principles.

"There are many complex issues facing kids today, but helping them understand that God loves them and gave His life for them through Jesus Christ, is a foundation that will give children courage to face the troubles of their lives and have hope in God that things will be better," Pamer continues, "There is no substitute for children having hope in the One who will not fail them and knowing that when they pray, God hears them and will help them.

It never ceases to amaze me, that the un-churched children can be boisterous and not listen but when we begin to talk about the love of God, the worth of prayer and the price Jesus paid to save them, the kids get very quiet and still, and listen."

"Even in the hullabaloo of the party, when the speaker began to teach about the innkeeper who chose to put

Jesus in the stable instead of his inn, 75 kids settled down and quietly listened and prayed. They understood the challenge facing their lives; either put Jesus first, or put Him in the back of your life, out in the stable. It is their choice. It seemed to resonate, even to the youngest child. It settles down the restless soul like nothing on earth. There is power in the Gospel," Mrs. Pamer concluded.

At 8 p.m., as the lesson, prayer and group picture ended, the church buses pulled up and the havoc returned as the kids found the right group to board their ride home.

Slowly, the annex returned to silence and the crackling of the fireplace could again be heard. As the large room was cleaned and decorations were boxed, every staff member involved knew that they had made a difference in the life of a child that night.

There is no greater feeling in the world.

## Writer draws inspiration from Ohio roots

**Karla Tipton**  
Herald Staff Writer

When Miki Johnson left Ohio for college and a career in the arts, she never expected to end up with a career in Hollywood. "I did not come to LA to write for TV, which I imagine a lot of people do. I came here to start over," said Johnson, who grew up in Green, and whose parents now live in Barberton.

After earning a degree in creative writing at the University of Pittsburgh and a master's in acting from Yale, Johnson spent years working as an actor and playwright. After "getting out of a relationship" in Texas, she moved to Los Angeles, where she had friends from college. One friend knew someone who knew someone at AMC, where a job had opened on the writing team.

"They asked for a sample of my writing. I gave it to them," said Miki. "I was lucky because I knew some people, but then when the rubber hit the road, I had writing samples, and they were good enough. So

really very quickly, and I mean quickly, less than a week, I had a job writing for TV."

Over the past four years, she has worked as a staff writer and story editor for the cable series "Hell on Wheels" (AMC) and "Ray Donovan" (Showtime), for which she wrote several episodes, including one to air on Showtime Dec. 30. In November, she started at Netflix, writing for "Ozark."

It's challenging to jump into the middle of a show with previous seasons. "You have to stay inside this certain matrix that you didn't even create. Is this creative writing, or is it something else? But it's fun to work inside somebody else's mind. At the end of the day, I can't imagine a job I would like more."

Before going to California, "I worked as a relatively unrecognized artist for 15,

20 years," she said. Her play "American Falls" premiered in Houston, and was also staged in Pittsburgh, Cleveland and LA. Johnson was named Best Playwright of 2012 by the Houston Press.

The play takes place in a town in Idaho, but its themes are rooted in Johnson's midwest experience. "There is a middle-of-the-country-ness to it. You can feel the Ohio in it," she said. The characters have similarities to her family and people she grew up with.

More recently, she began producing, not as financial overseer, but to maintain story integrity. "It's making sure that all of the actors, directors, artists and designers understand what the writer intended. (There) are extremely brilliant actors. They're complicated people, and they can be difficult. It can be very stressful."

Having grown up in middle America, Johnson

finds living in LA to be challenging. "It's a weird town," she said. Dealing with Hollywood personas "is exhausting. Almost every day, I think maybe I'm in the wrong place, because I don't necessarily feel like I fit in, but I do like the job. It's really, really fun and exhilarating."



**Miki Johnson**



## HERALD AROUND THE WORLD



Chester Futch, a Florida native and Vietnam veteran, enjoys reading the Herald in Florida. He loves doing the crossword puzzles.

**RIGHT:** The McKinneys, Ashley, Joshua, Isaac, Leo, Eliza, Leigh, Lennie IV, Lennie III and Kelly, take a break from the cold Ohio weather in sunny Florida.

