

DEARBORN/DEARBORN HEIGHTS

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## DEARBORN

## Say it ain't Poe - Big Read events conclude this weekend

By Jodi Rempala

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Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore." Hopefully that won't be the case as the Big Read wraps up and community attention from Edgar Allan Poe drifts off into the back of people's minds.

Dearborn residents are invited to take part in the Big Read Wrap Up from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday.

After a month of events dedicated to the life and times of Poe, it's time to say goodbye. But those who attend the "closing

ceremony" will get a chance to meet the author up close and personal.

Actor Helen McKenna-Uff will bring the long dead writer back to life for the occasion.

McKenna-Uff has been playing Poe since 1999, including five at other Big Read programs.

She's performed as Poe on the radio, TV and in theater.

Those who have seen her perform as the author are amazed by her transformation.

"I have been giving talks about Poe for years and have made an intense study of his life and works, and so,

when I perform as Poe, I am able to take questions from the audience and answer them in character," McKenna-Uff said in an email.

In fact, she tells groups that Poe has come back from the grave and is borrowing her body to answer the audience's many questions.

The "Poe-session" really brings the author to life, and allows fans to feel like they really are meeting the man.

After intensely studying Poe for years, McKenna-Uff said, she knows his life and works inside out. This allows her to answer questions in



PHOTO COURTESY OF POEANDHELEN.COM  
Helen McKenna-Uff will be Edgar Allan Poe during the closing party for this year's Big Read.

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## EDUCATION

## DEARBORN HEIGHTS

# IT'S ELEMENTARY

Clerk thanks voters who made their voices heard

also offered his utmost thanks to the poll workers who spent a long day at the precincts helping voters get through quickly.

"This was a difficult election to manage," he said, because there were two separate ballots -- one for Republicans and one for Democrats.

That could have been a recipe for disaster, Prusiewicz said. But surprisingly, he said, this was one of the smoothest elections he has run in his almost five years in office.

The next election date in Dearborn Heights is in May for residents of the Crestwood School District. In order to vote in that election, voters must be registered by April 4.

Crestwood is asking voters to consider a \$35 million

### Register to vote

Registration can be done online at [www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos) or at any Michigan Secretary of State's Office. Residents also can register at the Wayne County Clerk's Office or their city clerk's office. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on election days.

- To register to vote, a resident must:
- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be 18 years old by Election Day
- A resident of Michigan
- A resident of the city or township
- Once registered, voters do not have to re-register unless they move.

bond issue for repairs to all of its schools.

If approved, the bond is expected to cost the average homeowner less than \$20 monthly. For a home valued at \$125,000, with a taxable value of \$62,500,

the cost would be \$18.23 each month, or \$218.75 annually.

There also will be a state primary for local elections Aug. 2. Voters must be registered by July 5 to be eligible to vote in that election.

### Poe

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a modern context, rather than in the 1800's persona.

In addition to answering questions from the life and times of the macabre author, McKenna-Uff will recite many of his works like "The Raven" and "The Tell-Tale Heart."

When she is not in character, she serves as a park ranger at the Poe House in Philadelphia. Visitors to the Big Read Wrap-Up also will have a chance to win a night's stay in the Poe House at The Dearborn Inn.

Throughout the Big Read, a variety of events have taken place in Dearborn and Dearborn Heights so residents could really get to know the man behind the words of works like "The Cask of Amontillado." There have been crafts, lectures, a wine tasting, movies and even a murder mystery.

One of the biggest pieces of the Big Read is the community collaboration of a book based on Poe's writings. To kickoff this year's Big Read, people were encouraged to write stories or poems about or in the stylings of Poe. There will be a draft of the book, "Dreaming Dreams No Mortal Ever Dared to Dream Before," for people to take a peek through. Contributors will be notified when copies are available.

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### River Oaks

FROM PAGE 1

leyko said. "Had we not passed the bond, we would have problems with all these students and having places to grow."

The district held meetings at all three elementary schools to talk to parents about the proposed boundary changes.

"We came up with what we thought is a very fair proposal," Maleyko said.

The district's has an enrollment of 19,165 students for the 2015-16 school year.

Also during the meeting, the board heard a presentation from McCullough Unis students on the robotics team and their teacher Kidada Simmons.

McCullough Unis was the first middle school in Dearborn to have a robotics team when it started last year, students said. This year, the nine members of the McU Bots team

tor to replace Steve Lynch. A name might be presented for approval during the meeting at Henry Ford College next week.

Trustees Joseph Guido and Michael Mead were absent from the meeting.

Maleyko said he was asked to serve on the state's 10-in-10 committee, which is looking at ways to put Michigan

among the top 10 for public schools in the country within the next 10 years.

Deputy state Supt. Norma Jean Sass, who also served as associate superintendent in Dearborn, asked Maleyko to be part of the committee, he said.

Rene Ziaja, president of the Dearborn Federation of School Employees, spoke briefly to the board.

DFSE represents non-educational support staff such as secretaries, cafeteria workers and paraprofessionals. The union is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, Ziaja said.

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