

# HEY AKRON Magazine



AKRON ISSUES ON THE  
BALLOT

A LETTER FROM  
MAYOR HORRIGAN

ADJUSTING TO A NEW  
NORMAL



DANIEL HORRIGAN, MAYOR



# contents

HEY AKRON MAGAZINE 2020

4 A Letter from Mayor Horrigan

6 Akron Issues on the Ballot

8 Employee Spotlight | Summer Hall

10 Picture Yourself on Main Street

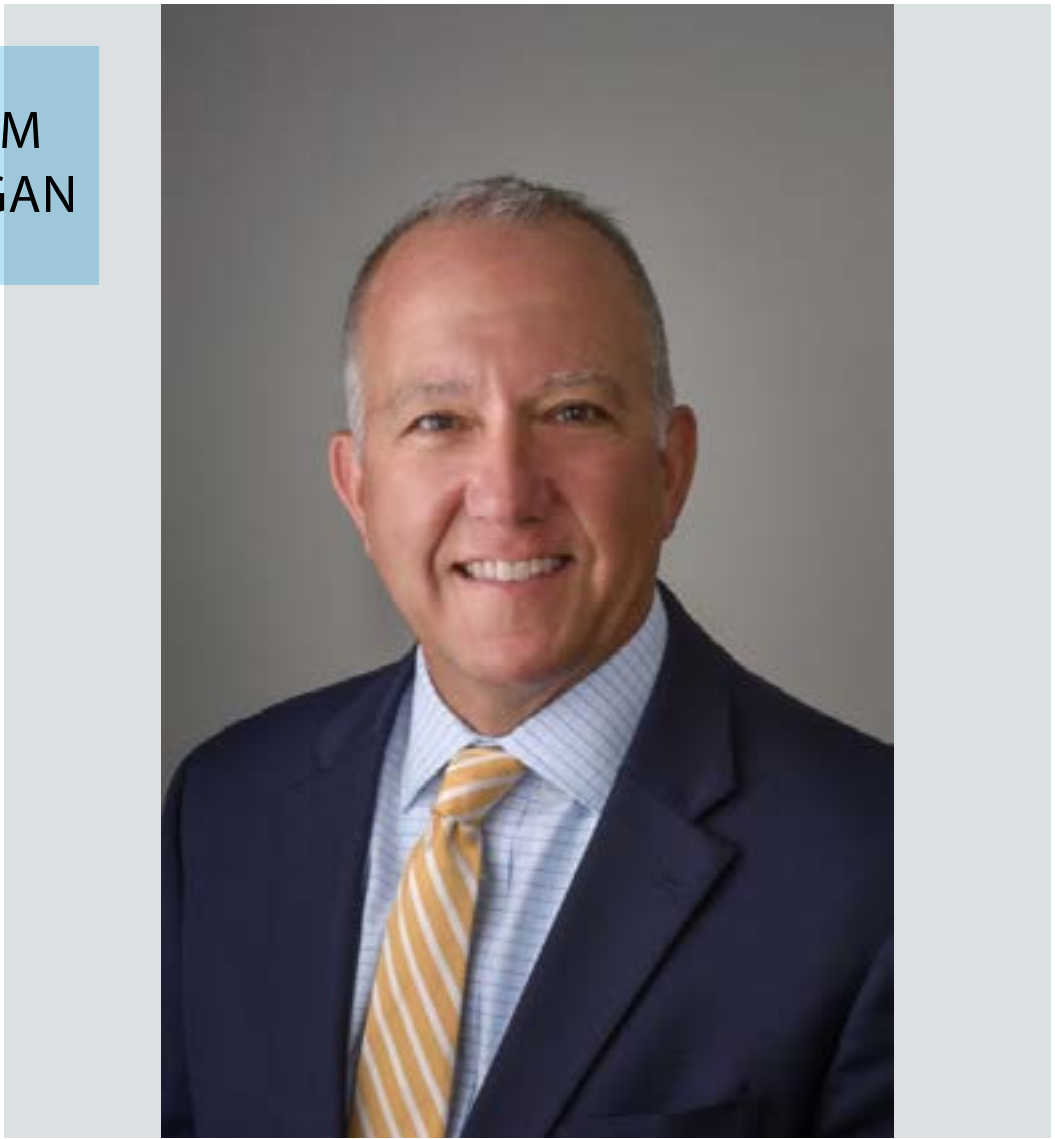
12 Racial Equity and Social Justice Task Force

14 Community Spotlight | Adjusting to a New Normal

16 COVID-19 Community Resources

18 Lock 3 Fall Schedule

## A LETTER FROM MAYOR HORRIGAN



### Fellow Akron Residents,

Where do I begin? For all of us, 2020 has been a year of firsts! It's been a year of hardship and struggle, but also one of adaptation and growth. We have learned much about ourselves and about what we want most for our families and community. We better understand what we need from our leaders and have learned, most importantly, how to better take care of each other.

For those of us in government, much of this year has been spent building crisis management networks between our institutions, as City, County, School and State officials strategize and communicate daily on how to best help our residents through a national public health crisis. The entire country has had to reimagine how we work, socialize, recreate and educate in this new environment, and Akron was no exception. This year has been about aligning all the resources we have to help Akronites stay healthy and safe.

“I’ve said it before, and I will continue to do so, Akron’s greatest asset is its people.”



Intertwined with this work to alleviate pandemic struggles are major issues surrounding social justice and racial equity that finally bubbled over the walls of our current social construct. These issues matter, they are real, and they must be addressed.

These pages of the 2020 Hey Akron Magazine will give our citizens a glimpse into the people, projects and programs that have defined our year. I want to acknowledge the dedicated City staff, community leaders, businesses and residents who have rallied, fought and made major strides in managing dual crises in our community. Everyone plays a part in our success. I’ve said it before, and will continue to do so, Akron’s greatest asset, is its people.

Thank you, Akron.

Mayor Daniel Horrigan

# AKRON ISSUES ON THE BALLOT NOVEMBER 3RD

## GET TO KNOW YOUR CITY OF AKRON CHARTER AMENDMENTS

Every decade, a bipartisan Charter Review Commission convenes to review the Akron Charter and make recommendations for improvements to the City's founding document.

In Spring 2020, appointed by Mayor Horrigan and Council, the Charter Review Commission- representing diverse backgrounds, professions, ages, races, and neighborhoods- met in public virtual meetings over several months. Their recommendations resulted in six proposed ballot issues. City Council unanimously agreed to present these issues to Akron voters at the November 3, 2020 general election.

These amendments are designed to increase transparency, accountability, efficiency, and inclusion. They are designed to modernize practices, enhance competition, and increase opportunity for Akron residents and businesses seeking to engage with their local government.

### **ISSUE** **2** RELEASING BODY WORN CAMERA RECORDINGS TO THE PUBLIC

Requires the City to promptly release recordings of a police officer using deadly force or seriously injuring a citizen, in order to build community trust and increase accountability.

### **ISSUE** **3** ADVANCING HUMAN RESOURCES

Maintains hiring practices that are fair, competitive, and efficient, while developing a more inclusive and modern City of Akron human resources department.

**ISSUE**

**4**

**ENHANCING PURCHASING PRACTICES**

Saves taxpayer resources and creates more opportunities for local and small/diverse businesses to compete for City contracts by reducing outdated bureaucracy.

**ISSUE**

**5**

**HIRING PREFERENCE FOR VETERANS AND AKRON RESIDENTS**

Gives Akron residents and veterans a “foot in the door” for City jobs, assuring the City workforce reflects the diversity and character of our community and maintains quality service to residents.

FOR DETAILS ON FULL BALLOT LANGUAGE, PLEASE VISIT:

[AKRONOHIO.GOV/2020ISSUES](http://AKRONOHIO.GOV/2020ISSUES)

**ISSUE**

**6**

**MODERNIZING CITY COUNCIL PROCEDURES**

Modernizes City Council procedures, and improves transparency by allowing the use of online technology to openly share information and conduct business.

**ISSUE**

**7**

**EXTENDING DEADLINES FOR LOCAL ISSUES**

Appropriately extends deadlines for considering local issues and enhances government coordination for early voting in order to protect the rights of military and overseas voters.

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

# Summer Hall

Community Outreach Liason and Secretary to the Mayor

Summer Hall comes from a long line of strong, influential women in the Akron community. Her grandmother, Marian T. Hall, her great-aunt, Helen Arnold, and her mother, Sabrina Hall all had a lasting impact on Summer and her love for the City of Akron and its residents. As a City employee, Summer is following in their footsteps to make a big impact on her hometown.

## 1. WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL?

I was recently hired as the Community Outreach Liaison for the newly approved Public Art Commission. My duties in this position will be to facilitate a close, working relationship between artists and the City. Basically, helping to promote and coordinate new public art. Before this position, I was working exclusively as Secretary to the Mayor. This meant answering phone calls, responding to emails in the Mayor's inbox, assisting in writing proclamations, helping with paying contracts, facilitating the Mayor's Citizens Institute and the Mayor's High School Senior Town Halls and various other miscellaneous tasks.

## 2. WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE CITY OF AKRON?

I was born and raised here. I've been here 41 years. This is my home, where my family has made a name for themselves. My grandma, Marian T. Hall and my Aunt, Helen Arnold were

always trying to make a difference in our community so those are big shoes to try and fill. My mother, Sabrina Hall sat on many boards and cared so much for this community. Now I'm here raising my daughters with my husband, Dinero, so Akron is home. I feel like if I'm here in Akron where I'm from, it's my right and duty to try and be effective and make a difference, to use what God gave me: my voice, hands, my feet, my brain, to help the next person. It's not just family, if I know someone needing help, if I can help you find a way, I'm there. I just want to build a foundation for my family and for others.

## 3. HOW HAS ADVERSITY HELPED SHAPE YOU INTO WHO YOU ARE TODAY?

I think my struggles have had a huge impact on the person I've become. One of the biggest examples of that was losing my mom as a young adult. I left Akron for a little while to go to the University of Cincinnati. I had to come home though after my mom became ill. I also happened to be pregnant with Leah, my first child, at the time. My mom passed 15 days before my 25th birthday, and I was in shock. My mom had kids ranging from 6 -14 and so I couldn't mourn. Overnight, I had 4 siblings to take care of, on top of my own child. I decided for myself, "Okay, I now have these kids at home. And I have to find a way to provide for them, and get through this one day at a time." I had to make sure they had everything they needed because that's what my mom would do. So





many hiccups in life happened. But for some reason, God always provided for us. I just know at the end of the day, I did everything I could do for them to have a better life and that my mother is proud of me that I did the best I could. I've always been a fighter. You just keep pushing; I learned that time and time again from the strong women in my life, including my mother grandmother and aunt. I'm also so grateful to all the other wonderful role models in my life, like my dad, step mom, and everyone who has helped me and prayed for me along the way.

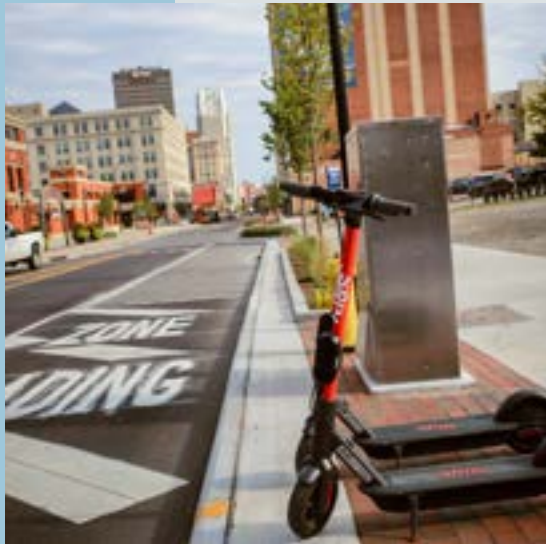
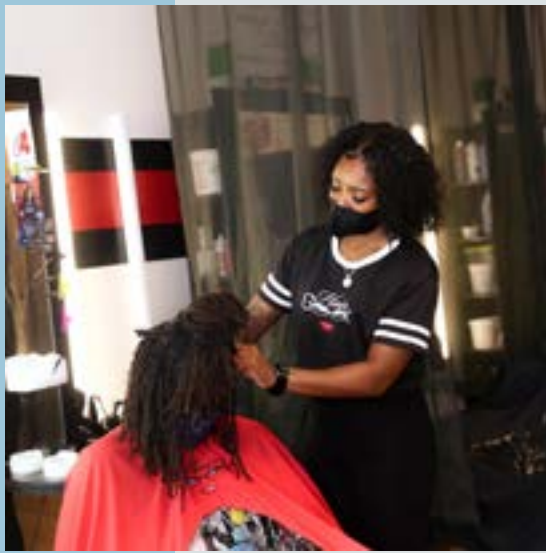


“I’m grateful for my struggles because they made me the person that I am. I always want to be an example to my children and my family that you keep going, you don’t stop. My upbringing: my background, my family, my friends, my school, all made me into the person I am today. All of that just made me someone who doesn’t give up. I’ll keep standing up for what’s right. I think that was what I was taught and that’s what I’ll continue to do.”

# PICTURE YOURSELF ON MAIN STREET.

Completing primary road work and reopening two-way traffic throughout Main St. is an incredibly important milestone in this project. Thanks to the investments we've made, the heart of downtown is now safer, more accessible, more beautiful, and more livable. This Fall, Mayor Horrigan is thrilled to invite visitors, workers, and residents alike to come and see the transformation for themselves. Hop on a Spin scooter, purchase an adult beverage in the DORA, take part in entertainment or programming at Lock 3, and earn extra rewards by supporting a local business while you're here. It's an exciting time to come back downtown, and we can't wait to see you on Main Street!





As a welcome back to Main Street, Lock 3 is offering a variety of safe, socially distanced fall programming options for residents and visitors to enjoy! Check out the calendar and list of events scheduled for this month. Visit [Lock 3 Live](#) or follow Lock 3 on [Facebook](#) for more updates and future programming.



## AKRON COMMUNITY,

Our world has been rocked by crises in more ways than one this year. But one such crisis is not new to many of us in the Akron community. Issues surrounding racial equity and social justice continue to permeate and negatively affect black people in our community. And now, for the first time in decades, the nation is once again collectively elevating this issue to the forefront in hopes of making meaningful change, and Akron is responding.

On June 5, 2020, the City of Akron declared Racism as a Public Health Crisis, to publicly acknowledge the need for change. The Resolution urged the Mayor to create a Special Taskforce charged with developing an Equity and Social Justice 5-year Strategic Plan. In July of 2020, Mayor Horrigan asked me to chair the City of Akron's Racial Equity and Social Justice Taskforce, and I'm honored to say I accepted.

This community has work to do. The effects of structural racism are still felt here in Akron, as iterations of our nation's past are woven into the fabric of our society today. Implicit biases are codified in laws, policies and procedures, which continue to perpetuate poverty, homelessness, the school-to-prison pipeline, wage-gaps, food deserts, health-care disparities and ultimately, the unequal economic growth of our community.

If there is one thing I know, it's that this community cares about each other. Working to unearth deeply-rooted seeds of injustice is not easy, and it will not be quick. But my heart is warmed, and my soul is uplifted to know that black people in this community have allies here, ready and willing to take on this challenge together.



*Joey Johnson*

Bishop Joey Johnson, Chair  
City of Akron Racial Equity  
and Social Justice Taskforce

# City of Akron Racial Equity and Social Justice Taskforce

## MISSION

To build public trust in the community by formulating meaningful recommendations of policy change to create a more racially equitable, socially just community and to bridge the racial wealth divide in the City of Akron.

## VISION

Akron, a welcoming City where everyone has an equitable opportunity to thrive.

### Values

- Inclusion and Collaboration
- Diversity and Community Focus
- Responsive and Adaptive
- Transparent and Accountable
- Racially just
- Focus upstream and where needs are greatest

## GOALS

Make recommendations to the Mayor in the following areas:

- Public Safety
- Procurement and Contracting
- Public Service and Neighborhood Assistance
- Recreation, Planning & Neighborhood Development, and
- Hiring and Human Resources

Make recommendations to business leaders and other elected officials in the Greater Akron area on how to become more equitable in their respective areas of governance.

Create a Pro-Equity Agenda for the City of Akron which will be outlined in a five-year Strategic Plan, to be delivered to the Mayor, City Council, and Greater Akron Community by December 2021.

Reconvene annually for five years to issue status reports.

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT:

# ADJUSTING TO A NEW NORMAL



Essential Worker: *Beverly, Equipment Operator*



Stay Home Family: *Theron and children*



Stay Home Family: *Neema and family*

For the last six months, talented photographer Autumn Bland from Todd Biss Productions has continued to photograph the life of Akronites and Northeast Ohioans in her incredible Portraits of a Pandemic photo series.

Behind each photo is a family or individual with a story and experience as to how they have adapted to life and a temporary, new normal. The diverse photo series documents both those who were deemed essential and went to work, as well as those families and individuals who have stayed home to protect those around them from spreading the virus.

Bland wanted to showcase that whether you're out working to protect and serve your community or staying at home to keep you and everyone around you healthy, both are valuable and come with their own struggles and challenges.

As part of her series, Bland was able to highlight some of the unsung heroes that served as essential City employees throughout the pandemic. As you'll see featured above, Beverly serves an Equipment Operator for recycling trucks in Akron's Sanitation Division. Also featured are Theron and his family, as well as Neema and his family quarantining together in their North Hill home.

If you are interested in seeing more of Bland's Portraits of a Pandemic Series, check out her [Blog](#).

Many of us are looking for ways to help support each other during these challenging times. The City of Akron wants to help you make every action count! To spur its economic recovery in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, the City of Akron launched the Akronite app. Akronite is a comprehensive city-centered software platform to increase community engagement, raise up locally-owned businesses, and help residents connect with downtown restaurants and retailers. The app gives retailers marketing tools to connect them with residents while incentivizing Akronites to shop locally by rewarding them with specialized blimps that are redeemable at participating Akron businesses.

If you haven't yet checked it out, all you need to do is download the app and safely link your credit card. You can search the discovery page for what fits your shopping and purchasing interests, and then join a story. When you use your linked card at local businesses or restaurants whose story you have joined, you immediately start earning blimps! Once you earn blimps, they can be redeemed at participating local businesses. To download the app, visit:

<https://akronite.app.link/Community>



University of Akron graduate and now a tenant at Bounce Innovation Hub, Kevin Nelson of NelDerm knew very quickly his company would have to shift their services to meet customer needs to thrive as a business throughout the pandemic.



NelDerm typically sells wound coverings, but once the pandemic hit, they realized they could pivot their product offering to sell what their customers needed most: face shields. Dentists' offices were depending on having PPE to be able to reopen their practices, and NelDerm wanted to be able to provide that at a reasonable cost. They leveraged their suppliers to produce face shields, and now have nationwide reach. They immediately updated their website to function as an ecommerce website. They didn't want to price gouge, they wanted to be fair and accessible. They even took midnight calls and ran deliveries themselves to help meet urgent customers' needs.

As a result of their efforts, Nel Derm has sold more than 2 million shields and tripled their amount of distributors.

# COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESOURCES

## DON'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP?

Call 211 or visit [211summit.org/](https://211summit.org/) for information and assistance on a variety of available services and resources, including emergency aid, housing, rent/ mortgage assistance, utility assistance, food and more.



### EVICTIONS

If you are facing eviction due to COVID-19, please contact Community Legal Aid to learn more about their Tenant Assistance Program. They offer a dedicated hotline number (330-983-2528) for those who are facing or fearful of an eviction and need legal help.

If you are behind on your City of Akron water bill, please visit [akronohio.gov/akroncares](https://akronohio.gov/akroncares) to see if you qualify for emergency funding to help with the cost of that bill. For questions, please contact Akron Public Utility Customer Service at (330) 375-2554 or 3-1-1.



### WATER BILL



### MORTGAGE & FINANCES

If you have questions about mortgage assistance or need help balancing your personal finances, call 211 or email the Akron Financial Empowerment Center at [FEC@UWSummit.org](mailto:FEC@UWSummit.org)





**FOOD  
ASSISTANCE**  
[ohio.gov](http://ohio.gov)

The Akron Canton Regional Foodbank is operating and maintaining its regular business hours of M-F 8-4 during the COVID-19 crisis. Call 330.535.6900 if you have any questions or visit [akroncantonfoodbank.org/covid19](http://akroncantonfoodbank.org/covid19).

Or call 211 or text "211 Summit" to 898-211 for referrals to walk-in food pantries

The Greater Akron Chamber has put together a list of resources for businesses including information on financial assistance and other resources to help your business navigate the economic impact of the pandemic. You can visit their website at [gaccovid19.org/](http://gaccovid19.org/).



**BUSINESS  
ASSISTANCE**

## MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Call 211 or visit [211summit.org/](http://211summit.org/) for information on a variety of local mental health resources available to you in your area. If you or someone you know are struggling with thoughts of suicide you can also call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 for 24/7 free and confidential support for people in distress.

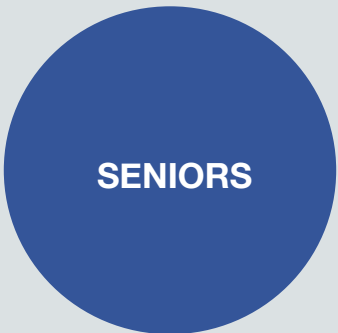


**EMPLOYMENT/  
UNEMPLOYMENT**

Please call Summit County Job and Family Services at 844-640-6446 or for more information, visit [Summitdjfs.org/](http://Summitdjfs.org/).

Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities is a leader in longterm care and an organization that helps older adults and people with disabilities thrive in the places they want to call home. They provide a comprehensive network of service providers, access to the most up-to-date information and a unique person-centered approach. They also provide family caregiver support programs, consumer protection and educational opportunities.

For more information, visit <https://www.dhad.org>.



**SENIORS**

# EVERY DAY OF OCTOBER

Registration starting Oct. 1 at any participating location

Check in at each location using the Goose Chase app

Complete the 5k loop within 5 hours to receive a special edition T-Shirt

**SOCIAL DISTANCED SOCIAL DRINKING**

We just want to be social!  
Join us for our first Social Distanced Social Drinking 5k.

Registration includes five 5 oz. sample drink tokens.

Participants are required to follow restaurant guidelines.



## LOCK 3 GET FIT PROGRAMS

### POUND

TUES | OCT 6TH | 6 - 7PM

### LINE DANCING

THURS | OCT 8, 15, 22, 29TH | 6 - 7PM

### ZUMBA

SAT | OCT 3RD | 10:30-11:30AM

### DRUM FIT

SAT | OCT 10TH | 10:30-11:30AM

REGISTER ONLINE @ EVENTBRITE



**COMING SOON!**

CHECK OUT OUR FB AND LOCK3LIVE.COM FOR UPDATES

**MOVIE NIGHT**

## TUESDAYS



### DOWNTOWN DOGGIES

WITH THE OPENING OF THE DORA AND RE-OPENING OF MAIN STREET TRAFFIC, THE PUBLIC IS BEING ENCOURAGED TO BRING THEIR DOGS DOWNTOWN FOR A STROLL. EVERY TUESDAY DOWNTOWN, WEATHER PERMITTING, LOOK FOR DOG-CENTRIC ACTIVITIES TO SHARE WITH YOUR POODCH AND BRING YOUR DOG SPECIALS AT OUR DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES. IN ADDITION, PARTICIPATE IN THE AKRON CANINE CHALLENGE AND RECEIVE INCENTIVES JUST FOR BRINGING YOUR POODCH TO THE PARTY.

#### HOW THE CANINE CHALLENGE WORKS:

1. Sign up for account on GOOSECHASE
2. Join the AKRON CANINE CHALLENGE GAME
3. Every Thursday (for 12 weeks) a new mission will be released
4. Participants will have 1 week to complete the mission
- 5 MISSIONS = #2 Bag Dispenser
- 8 MISSIONS = a collapsible water bowl
- 10 MISSIONS = T-shirt

DRINKS WITH DOGS 5:30-8:30PM  
THANK DOG BOOT CAMP 6:30-7:30PM  
OCT 27TH: HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST

## WEDNESDAYS



7:00 - 8:30 pm

Lock 4 Wednesday night concerts moving to Lock 3 to allow room for social distancing. Visitors will be asked to sit in designated sections, socially distanced. Please wear masks when not sitting, when not socially distanced and when moving about the facility. Beer, wine and snacks will be available for purchase. Guests are welcome to bring their own food from home or a nearby restaurant (tables will be available) and enjoy a show.

OCT.7	AZ!
OCT.14	ACID CATS
OCT.21	WE FUNK
OCT.28	SSD

## THURSDAYS

### GAME NIGHT 7-10pm

It is game time at Lock 3!

Come enjoy a different game every Thursday night. Prizes awarded each night for winners - t-shirts, gift cards to local downtown business and Akron Swag.

Register on Eventbrite to reserve your spot.

## SATURDAYS

Bubble Art  
Magic Show  
Halloween Fun  
Snow Queen  
Spookerheroes  
Storytime

### Monster ROCKtober

FREE outdoor family-friendly fun!  
Music + Dancing + Theater + Art + More

EVERY Saturday in October  
1:30 PM | 3:00 PM | 4:30 PM

All activities are outdoors in "socially-distant" marked spaces.  
Lock 3 Park in Downtown Akron

Yoga  
Josh the Juggler  
Dance Party  
Balloon Twisting  
Presented by the AKRON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM  
akronkids.org