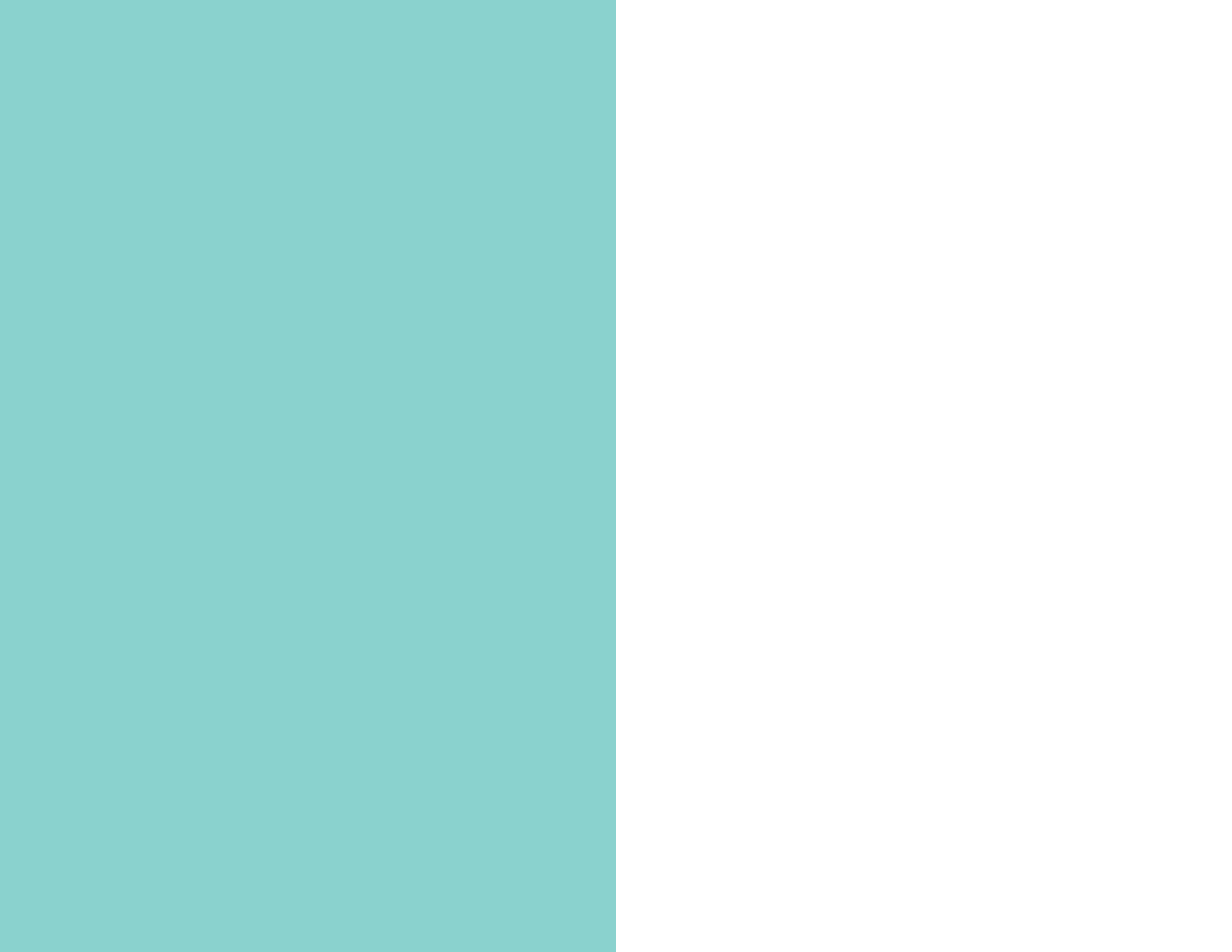


10 Things
We Learned
in Cincinnati

July 18 – 31, 2015

Stairwell's

a.k.a. Sarah Hotchkiss & Carey Lin



July 18, 2015

1. If we stacked all the stairs in Cincinnati vertically, they would be two miles high.
2. Our Cincinnati stairway walks book says only San Francisco has more public stairways than Cincinnati. But it's possible that Pittsburgh (with over 700) actually has the most.
3. A "coney" is chili served in a hot dog bun, topped with cheese and sometimes onions. ~~There is no hot dog involved.~~ There is a hot dog underneath the chili.
4. In Kentucky, you cannot buy wine or liquor in the grocery store. Only beer.
5. You frequently cross the state line between Ohio and Kentucky when in Cincinnati, even just to go to the grocery store.
6. You can make right turns on a red light but you cannot make U-turns in Ohio.
7. Daniel Libeskind designed a building ~~downtown~~ in Covington, KY shaped like a shell or a fan. It contains condos.
8. The All-Star game took place last week and was very well attended, around 130,000 people came (record attendance was 133,000, but we're not sure when that was).
9. There are good breweries in the area.
10. The Ohio River is the most polluted river in the U.S.

July 19, 2015

1. Keep Cincinnati Beautiful paints the boarded-up doors and windows of vacant buildings with colorful faux doors and windows.
2. The Main Street Steps are really really long.
3. The William Howard Taft National Historic Site is the smallest and least visited National Park, according to our stairway walks book.
4. In Mt. Auburn, Filson Pool's open swim hours are 1:00 – 5:30 PM, Monday through Saturday. Admission for adults is \$2.
5. VO5 shampoo is on sale at the OTR Kroger for \$.79 a bottle. It's normally \$.89.
6. Alleys have names here.
7. City buses can make change! (We think.)
8. We didn't see anyone else on any of the stairs we walked today, not one.
9. A puppy named Eleanor (Ellie) lives on Walker St.
10. Until 2012, city funds were allocated for stair maintenance, but no more.

July 20, 2015

1. The 1993 movie *Airborne* is all about inline skating the streets of Cincinnati.
2. So far, we haven't spotted any stairways with signs stating their names.
3. There were once five inclined plane railways in Cincinnati. None of them exist today.
4. The entrance to Fairview Park in Clifton Heights is difficult to locate.
5. Baby Alice turned one a few weeks ago.
6. On Straight St near Central Parkway there is a garden gnome holding a sign that reads "L.O.L."
7. At Rohs Street Cafe, near the University of Cincinnati campus, they will make you iced tea using any kind of tea they usually serve hot, if you ask.
8. At the restaurant Thai Express, they did not have any chicken wings today.
9. The mayor wants to close the relatively new bike lane on Central Parkway citing "parking confusion" and accidents that may or may not be related to the addition of the bike lane.
10. Compared to San Francisco, there is a utilitarian sameness to the stairs we've seen here – mostly cement steps with metal handrails stamped with "City of Cincinnati."

July 21, 2015

1. There is a Felix Gonzalez-Torres piece in the lobby of the Cincinnati Art Museum but no one at the front desk can identify it and there are no wall labels.
2. Cheapside Cafe in downtown Cincinnati serves kegged cold coffee, which we tasted for the very first time. One of us thoroughly enjoyed it.
3. The construction of I-75 bisected many neighborhoods on the West side, isolating some, such as Brighton, from the rest of the city.
4. Wave Pool's Boston Terrier, Bruce, likes to be scratched on the chest. He will put his two front paws on you to make sure it's easier to reach those spots.
5. Baby Alice really, really likes her new toy vacuum cleaner.
6. You can still see the ruins of the Mt. Adams Incline, one of the city's five inclined plane railways. It was the longest lasting, running from 1872 to 1948 (none of them survive today).
7. The Comet bar in the Northside neighborhood has a \$3 black and white photo booth but it's currently out of order.
8. Mt. Adams is home to two churches, one operational, the other magnificently decayed and currently undergoing some level of restoration.
9. We found the "best pool in Cincinnati," according to some, up an unmarked road by Playhouse in the Park.
10. We saw other people using the stairs for the first time! We're not sure if this is because of where we were or because of the 30% drop in humidity.

July 22, 2015

1. There is a post-apocalyptic basketball court in a field at the bottom of the former reservoir in Eden Park.
2. Two buildings near (the perhaps incorrectly named) Mirror Lake have stone exteriors. One is made with real stone, the other simulated stone.
3. On Keys Crescent there is a sign at the entrance announcing that the "Collins Ave steps are closed" to discourage would-be stair seekers from even entering the area.
4. The only Whole Foods in town is in Norwood, a separate city inside Cincinnati. Like the Vatican.
5. Bruce the Boston Terrier can't get onto the roof of Wave Pool because the ladder from the attic is too steep for him to climb.
6. Camp Washington Urban Farm is home to two donkeys who graze their fenced-in field at night.
7. The nearby salt dome is impressively large. The circular shape of the dome maximizes storage of salt for de-icing the roads in winter.
8. Eden Park contains a Presidential Grove, with one tree planted for each president. George W. Bush is a small magnolia tree.
9. The Cincinnati Art Museum guards don't seem to notice when you "accidentally" take pictures of works on loan.
10. The CAM's library contains a book titled Artists' Monograms and Indiscernible Signatures: An International Directory 1800-1991, an encyclopedia of amazing artist signatures.

July 23, 2015

1. The truck's fuel gauge stops indicating at a half tank. Skip gave us a heads up.
2. Since we're not locking the truck for fear of never unlocking the truck, leaving our proof of parking payment on the dashboard is a little risky.
3. The story of George Remus, infamous bootlegger who probably murdered his wife at Eden Park, influenced F. Scott Fitzgerald's character of Jay Gatsby.
4. The arts program of Keep Cincinnati Beautiful operates year-round, trading painting work for detective work and grant-writing during the winter.
5. Sometimes, when they don't hear from building owners, have sent many letters and can't get permission to paint a vacant building, the KCB workers will paint it anyway.
6. The Body Snatcher, a convenience store in Mt. Auburn, is still in operation, but has sporadic hours dependent on the owner's whim.
7. Pueblo St in Mt. Auburn appears on Google maps as a real street, but it isn't more than a dirt path and never was. Pueblo St in Mt. Auburn is incorrectly identified as a complete street in Google maps. The road abruptly ends after a few houses on both ends and turns into underbrush and trees.
8. The Camp Washington laundromat across the street from Wave Pool is closed for vacation this week, through 7/25. They will reopen on 7/27. We really need to do our laundry.
9. Mail deposited into the U.S.P.S. mailbox on Colerain Ave between Rachel St and Hopple St is picked up at 10:30 AM, Monday-Friday.
10. Chase Melendez, one of the artists with a studio at Wave Pool, is working until 2:00 AM most nights to prepare for an upcoming show in Delaware.

July 24, 2015

1. From the Roebling Bridge you can see five other bridges that cross the Ohio River to connect Kentucky and Ohio.
2. Bruce the Boston Terrier likes to sleep in suitcases. Today he slept briefly in Sarah's while we were out running errands.
3. Smale Riverfront Park was finished just a few weeks ago and boasts athletic equipment, two- and three-person swings looking out over the river and some amazing playgrounds.
4. You can make sketches of works in the Cincinnati Art Museum's permanent collection but you are asked to first request a permit from museum staff. You may use only pencil.
5. When asked, a Covington, KY public school student said he makes art because he "feels crazy." This answer was printed on a wall label for an exhibition of student work at The Carnegie.
6. There is a pink two-story house on Greenup St in Covington currently on sale for only \$29,000. It contains three one-bedroom apartments and is next door to a post office.
7. Along the riverfront on the Kentucky side of the Ohio River, a series of murals trace the history of Covington, KY. Cal's friend Scottie helped make them.
8. Many people seem to hold business meetings at the Braxton Brewery, where a flight of four 8 oz. beers is only \$6.
9. There is talk of adding shops and condos to the Purple People Bridge, like Ponte Vecchio in Florence, Italy.
10. At the Serpentine Wall in Sawyer Point Park, steps descend all the way down to the Ohio River.

July 25, 2015

1. There are three areas that comprise the Price Hill neighborhood: East Price Hill, West Price Hill and Lower Price Hill.
2. Incline Public House in Price Hill has great views and terrible music. We heard what is arguably the worst Beatles cover ever created (of “A Hard Day’s Night”) this afternoon.
3. In search of supplies for our first Cincinnati Field Trip tomorrow, we visited three different Family Dollar stores and made purchases at each of them.
4. Carey has had an annoying cough for a week now, but after consulting WebMD, doesn’t seem to have bronchitis or pneumonia.
5. Patrick Dempsey’s character’s outfits in the 1989 movie Happy Together are pretty ridiculously amazing.
6. The Mt. Adams property taxes are now prohibitively high for ordinary people looking to buy homes in the neighborhood.
7. Steps we think are the Ida St Steps are officially closed, with fallen rusted railings, abundant shards of glass and a “No Trespassing” sign, but still somewhat accessible.
8. We finally stumped Christian from Spring in our Steps, who has a seemingly inexhaustible knowledge of Cincinnati stair locations, with a photo from the Ida St Steps.
9. While searching for true Cincinnatians, many of the people we’ve been told were locals were not actually born here (i.e. Sarah Jessica Parker, George Clooney, Emilio Estevez).
10. Sarah’s favorite Pop Tart flavor is brown sugar and cinnamon. We finally bought some today at Kroger; they were on sale.

July 26, 2015

1. Baby Alice hates wearing shoes, a relatively new addition to her wardrobe.
2. The Spring House Gazebo was built in 1904, which means the graffiti reading “1-8-21” carved into its ledges may be nearly 100 years old.
3. People get nervous when you tell them to pick a partner and then hand them a bandana in an art museum without first telling them why.
4. Cincy by the Slice is disorganized when it comes to delivering beverages along with their pizza.
5. Sarah can kneel in the “deep” end of the Mt. Adams Pool and still easily keep her head above water. Carey cannot, though it’s 3’6” deep.
6. The only Cincinnati celebrity signature today’s Field Trip participants could not correctly guess was Carmen Electra’s.
7. Skip Cullen can name and locate all the artwork in certain galleries of the Cincinnati Art Museum, even while blindfolded.
8. We met a Segway tour on our Field Trip. Their leader was reluctant to interact with us, but we still managed to get a few high fives from them as our group passed each other.
9. You can pose in front of the Grant Wood painting Daughters of Revolution and look like a fourth member of the group.
10. We were very impressed when one of the Pictionary teams in the Michael Joseph chair sculpture successfully arrived at “melancholy breakfast” without too much difficulty.

July 27, 2015

1. There is a pedestrian path with stairs around one of the parking garages at Christ Hospital. Signs indicate this path will eventually take you to the hospital entrance. Instead, the steps lead to an exterior (locked) door of the parking garage that can only be opened from the inside.
2. We discovered partially buried mystery steps that go nowhere, visible only from the lower level in one of the parking garages at Christ Hospital.
3. The Body Snatcher is a convenience store in Mt. Auburn that takes its name from the auto body garage that used to occupy its building. We tried to purchase a Lemon-Lime Gatorade, but they were out, so we settled for a Fruit Punch.
4. The park ranger who gave us a brief tour of the William Howard Taft house continually referred to Taft's parents as "mom and dad."
5. The James Key house (built in 1819) sits at the end of Bigelow St behind an overgrown dirt driveway and a padlocked chain link fence. From Google maps' satellite view you can see it surrounded by trees.
6. The Listing Loon, a Northside bar, is very quiet on a Monday night.
7. Mt. Auburn was one of the first suburbs of Cincinnati before the city annexed the neighborhood in 1849.
8. Prior to 1849, the city did not enforce its laws north of Liberty St, an area known for its "liberties" (a.k.a. "drinking, gambling and carousing").
9. A plot of land near Christ Hospital used to contain the 54 Glencoe-Auburn Row Houses and the Gothic-style Glencoe Hotel. Following years of unsuccessful redevelopment efforts, the dilapidated buildings (also known as "The Hole" in the '90s) were completely razed in 2013.
10. The remains of the Glencoe-Auburn complex include a street sign for Adnored Ct, renamed in 1904 for the street opposite, Deronda Ct, but spelled backwards.

July 28, 2015

1. Baby Alice makes funny faces when sampling dishes from the lunch buffet at Dusmesh Indian Restaurant.
2. Alma St in Mt. Auburn is a short dirt path with a few boarded up buildings, overgrown weeds and swarms of hungry mosquitoes. Not recommended, especially in shorts.
3. There are many lizards in Cincinnati. One species was originally from Europe and brought to Cincinnati by boy who visited Milan, Italy in the early 1950s. Also known as European Wall Lizards, these creatures are so ubiquitous in Cincinnati they are now known as Common Wall Lizards.
4. Bruce the Boston Terrier cannot ride on airplanes because his squished facial structure would make it hard for him to breathe in the plane's cargo hold. He thus did not go to Italy with the Cullens this summer and the bits of food spilled by baby Alice were not speedily consumed as they typically are at home.
5. Tomorrow's high temperature is predicted to be 92 degrees, the highest since we arrived in Cincinnati on July 19. We are planning to stay indoors as much as possible.
6. If you accidentally leave the truck's headlights on after parking it, even for just 2 hours, its battery will die and it will not start the next morning.
7. All 65 online advance tickets for tonight's This Is OTR: Films on Gentrification and Resistance at The Mini Micro-Cinema are gone, but 65 additional tickets will be given out in person beginning 30 minutes before each screening (6:00 PM and 8:00 PM).
8. The Main Street Steps have 38 landings.
9. A planted garden above the Milton/Boal playground is not maintained by the Cincinnati Recreation Commission. It's unclear who keeps these roses pruned.
10. A Great Dane named Mickey also lives on Walker St. He and Ellie are friends.

July 29, 2015

1. The windshield wipers on the truck are not totally reliable.
2. There are currently zero female artists on view in exhibitions at Cincinnati's Contemporary Arts Center.
3. The Zaha Hadid-designed CAC building has really great stairs.
4. The CAC's top floor education center is amazing and fun.
5. The "officer-involved shooting" that took place last week, in which a University of Cincinnati police officer fatally shot Samuel DuBose in the head in Mt. Auburn after a traffic stop over a missing front license plate, has led to the officer's indictment.
6. The Taft Ale House was restored after decades of vacancy in a \$12 million refurbishment project. It would have cost \$500,000 to demolish the building.
7. Rhinegeist Brewery does not have air conditioning.
8. A 1980 slide-tape production *We Will Not Be Moved* documents the images and voices of members of the Over-the-Rhine community rallying to combat evictions and development in their neighborhood. Prospect Hill, where we'll walk tomorrow, is featured as a successful redevelopment project, more commonly known as gentrification.
9. Black and white 11"x17" photocopies at FedEx cost \$.22 each.
10. Cappel's in Downtown Cincinnati is a way better party supply store than San Francisco's Party City could ever hope to be.

July 30, 2015

1. If you can correctly guess the number and suit under your PBR cap at Milton's Tavern, the bartender will buy your beer.
2. The yellow plastic top imprinted with a smiley face we bought at Cappel's couldn't handle a tumble down the stairs.
3. Our Field Trip attendees were very good at guessing stair-charades.
4. Pueblo St, which stops and starts at Young and Walker Streets, was also supposed to continue towards Reading, but does not.
5. When the Field Trip group stood in height order, Skip was tallest, baby Alice was shortest and Cal was in the middle.
6. Nina brought her dog Pinto on the Field Trip and he enjoyed eating ice cubes at Milton's Tavern.
7. We ran into someone walking home up the Main Street Steps. He was surprised to see such a large group coming down.
8. There is a lot of poison ivy on Mulberry St between the Main Street Steps and Sycamore St.
9. If you have a large group of people walking on the stairs, you don't see as many lizards as you normally would when walking alone or in a small group.
10. The cooler is very heavy with both ice and drinks in it, but Sarah can still lift it.

July 31, 2015

1. The left side of the double burner hot plate in our kitchenette heats up much faster than the right side, which takes 15-20 minutes to boil even a small amount of water. It took almost two weeks to discover this.
2. Projects like Mark Dejong's *Circle House* and *Swing House* could only exist in a place like Cincinnati, where entire buildings can sometimes be purchased for as little as \$1000.
3. We wish we could come back to see the *Swing House* with only the staircase standing, before Mark Dejong removes it completely and installs a swing later this year.
4. When Camp Washington Chili caters your event, they will include equal parts of Greek salad and shredded cheddar cheese (one giant bowl of each).
5. If you ask Camp Washington Chili to provide coneys, four-ways and salad for 12 people, they will give you enough to feed 40.
6. Bruce the Boston Terrier can gulp down spilled chili faster than you can grab a paper towel to wipe it up.
7. When you call the Staples store on Reading Rd near Eden Park to ask if they have at least 250 nickel-plated thumb-tacks in stock, they might put you on hold multiple times and then tell you they are out of them. If you go to the store anyway to check for yourself, you might find that they actually have multiple boxes (each containing 200 tacks) and wonder if you called the wrong store or if they are just totally inept.
8. Freshly toasted pita bread can be so hot that you cannot cut it in half and open up the "pocket" part easily without burning your hands. Especially if you are not Carey.
9. You should not turn off the air conditioning in the Wave Pool gallery in the middle of the day. It will take until sundown with the AC blasting to get the space back to a semi-workable temperature.
10. Carey has finally gotten over her cold and now it's almost time to head back to SF. :(

