

# THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Your Independent Source for Local News and Opinion

Volume 1, Issue 1, June 28, 2005

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## Lakewood Observer Launched

# Lakewood Declares Its Freedom!

It is my great privilege to introduce Lakewood's only newspaper, *The Lakewood Observer*. What makes this paper different from the other papers available to our residents is the proud fact that our reporters, columnists, photographers, designers, and artists are deeply connected to life and work in Lakewood. We are Lakewood residents and neighbors covering our city's news, events, social issues, history, and excitement. Simply stated, we are filled with passion for knowing about life in our city. And our passion is built on years of experience in Lakewood. Our founders' team has over 300 combined years of living in Lakewood. Our volunteer staff has over 1,500 years of experience of living in Lakewood.

The *Lakewood Observer* will serve as the "hometown" paper produced by local citizen journalists who may be inclined to dive deeper into the stories noticed and unnoticed by *The Plain Dealer*, *Sun Post*, *Free Times* and *Scene*. However, the *Lakewood Observer*, as an experiment in home-based citizen journalism, is not in direct competition with other professional news sources.

As the most densely populated city between New York City and Chicago, Lakewood is uniquely situated to produce and deliver a local news source for what is going on here. With all our assets and talents, Lakewood cannot afford to miss legitimate news, announcements, and the very stories that make this town so unique and fun to inhabit.

In the eight months leading up to our first publication, we have found hundreds of stories that fellow Lakewoodites would find interesting and fun. Even more important are the stories and projects that will transform our

city. We hope to cover everything coming in the way of new developments. We are ready to tackle such heavy topics as Lakewood Currency, Café Universities, Building the Lakewood Brand, and Revitalizing Lakewood's Housing Stock. And, with your help, we will try not to overlook the story about little Bobby's first baseball game.

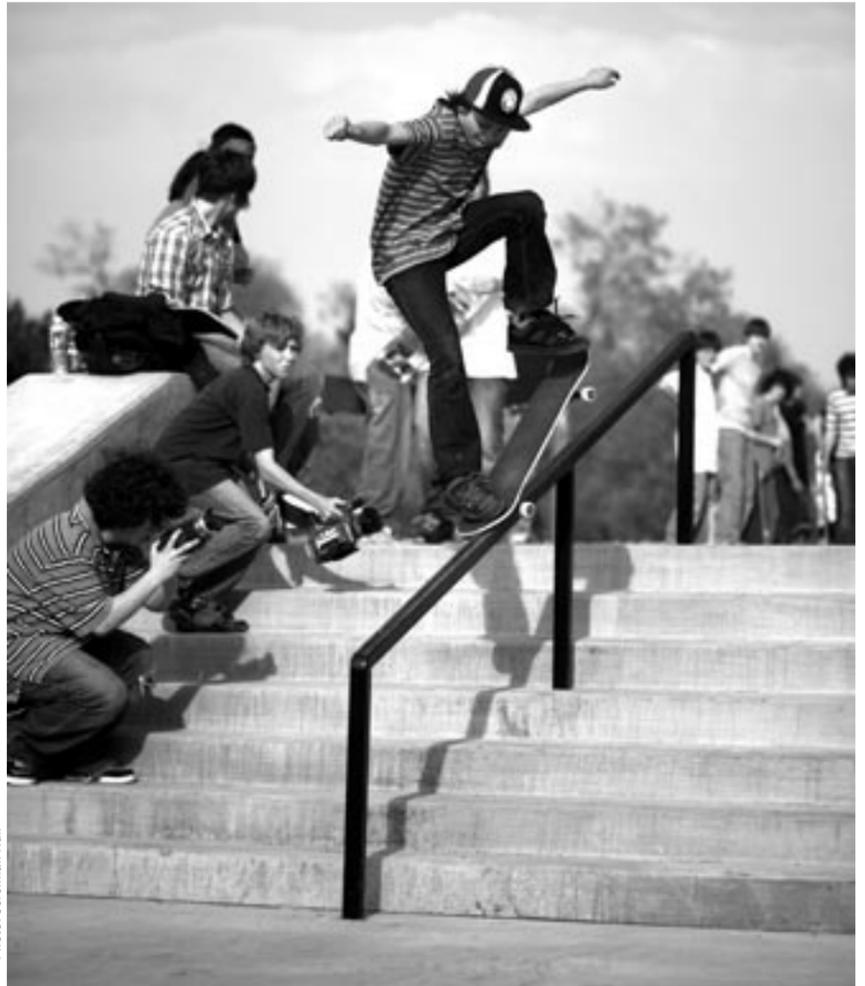
At the *Lakewood Observer* we hope to create a new way of seeing life in our city. We will focus on the particular and positive dimensions of everyday life in Lakewood, and on simple and complex things. That challenge, while large, is not impossible, because our staff is made up almost exclusively of people who live or work in this city. Their kids go to school with your kids. They walk next to you on your way down Detroit and Madison Avenues. They stop at Phoenix or Caribou for their morning coffee, much like you do. They attend one of Lakewood's great old churches, and they go to Lakewood or Madison Park, as do you. They are your neighbors, your friends, and your family.

We invite, in fact encourage, you to become a part of this exciting urban experiment in citizen journalism. All you have to do is decide to contribute, and we hope you do. As part of the *Lakewood Observer* team, you can report on everything and anything that has to do with this great city: from news at city hall, to an elementary school bake sale; from the parking problems on Madison, to little league triumphs. The *Lakewood Observer* is all about being in the know. Our goal is to make sure that every Lakewoodite learns more about this city than any resident has learned about any city in the past.

What really makes the *Lakewood Observer* different, and we think better, than all the other papers trying to service this city? We are "open source." Anyone can participate in this project—suggesting stories, writing stories, discussing stories. Come aboard. There is a seat for you at this very large table.

The most visible part of the *Lakewood Observer* is the very newspaper you are currently reading. The print edition is scheduled to appear every two weeks. The size of the newspaper will vary, depending on advertising and contributors' copy. Circulation is targeted at over 20,000 copies, nearly twice the circulation of other weekly papers in the area. The newspaper is free. The *Lakewood Observer* will strive to reach

(see **Freedom**, page 2)



Rodger Krebs executes a skateboard trick at Lakewood's popular new skate park.

## Mayor George's Welcome Letter

I would like to welcome to the Lakewood community, this first edition of the *Lakewood Observer*! This all-volunteer project is unique, and the opportunities it provides to remember our history, keep current, and plan for our future are invaluable. With a print and online version, this paper is sure to reach a wide audience in our city.

I want to recognize the editors and contributors to this endeavor. I know from my undergraduate days at Ohio State as a journalism major how involved and careful a process it is to bring out a new publication.

We are in the information age and our communication with each other is a process that makes Lakewood unique. Through the print and online version of the *Observer*, we will be able to keep up with current Lakewood news and events. Through the online "Observation Deck," we will be able to have civic discussions on the issues facing us.

Lakewood is a vibrant city.

Our 55,000 residents are perhaps the most diverse in the Midwest. Each one of us has the ability to thrive and prosper in our town. The future looks promising, too. The Lakewood Schools and Library are remaking themselves. They will be the center of the knowledge frontier for the next century.

All of this must be chronicled in a publication that is unique to Lakewood. I believe the *Lakewood Observer* will fill that role.

I will be a regular reader of the *Lakewood Observer* and will continue my open door policy. I also expect to participate on the "Observation Deck" for up-to-date discussions.

The introduction of the *Lakewood Observer* coincides with exciting new projects and developments in Lakewood. These endeavors will continue to make Lakewood, the city we love, even better and point out its uniqueness to those who want to come here to live and work.

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## Around Lakewood

### YMCA Breaks Ground on Expansion

LAKEWOOD – June 9, 2005 – The new Lakewood Family YMCA moved from concept to reality today as ground was broken to signal the start of construction on the \$10.5 million health and wellness center that will replace the current facility located at 16915 Detroit Ave.

“The new Lakewood Family YMCA is the result of a unique partnership between Lakewood Hospital, the City of Lakewood and the YMCA,” said Glenn Haley, president and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Cleveland. “Through this collaboration, we will establish a model for the future that will demonstrate how a city can work together with the not-for-profit sector to provide a city amenity that promotes health and wellness and fosters communication between generations.”

When completed, the 50,000-square-foot facility will house state-of-the-art cardio and strength training equipment; a multi-purpose gymnasium and aerobics studio; an aquatics center that features zero-grade entry for barrier-free pool access, swimming lanes, a spa and recreation area; and an outpatient rehabilitation center operated by Lakewood Hospital.

“We are proud to be part of this endeavor,” said Fred DeGrandis, chief executive officer of Lakewood Hospital and the Cleveland Clinic Health System – Western Region. “The Lakewood Family YMCA is a natural extension of the health care services we provide to the community. In addition to the outpatient rehabilitation center, Lakewood Hospital will offer educational wellness programs, public health screenings, and other community outreach programs at the Y.”

“This project gives us the opportunity to support an important community effort to enhance the health and wellness of our city,” said Jack Gustin, chief administrative officer of Lakewood Hospital. “We are happy to be part of it.”

Lakewood Mayor Tom George echoed those sentiments, “As a city, we don’t have the financial resources to build a giant recreation center like they have in other suburbs. The new Lakewood YMCA is a creative alternative that will enable us to address important community needs thereby enriching our city, while adding value to our entire community.”



Photo: Staff

From left to right: Fred DeGrandis, CEO Cleveland Clinic Health Systems Western Region; Susan Grimberg, Campaign Co-Chair; John McMillan, Campaign Co-Chair; Thomas J. George, Mayor of Lakewood; James Petras, Chairman of the Board of Directors, YMCA of Greater Cleveland, and Glenn Haley, President and CEO, YMCA of Greater Cleveland.

The structure itself, created by Doty & Miller Architects of Solon, will use “green” design elements to express a commitment to providing a healthy environment for all occupants and respect for resource conservation and the natural environment.

Construction is expected to last 18 months, with a projected opening date of January 2007.

The groundbreaking event also recognizes the successful completion of the Corporate Gifts Campaign and the official launch of the Community Campaign, providing all residents of the area the opportunity to get involved in and show support for this important community project. Call Culeen Carey, campaign manager, at 216-263-6854 for information or to make a contribution.

### Freedom *(continued from page 1)*

nearly every household in the city.

Another exciting dimension to the *Lakewood Observer* is the website. Our website team is as diverse and hardworking as the city itself. In their efforts to make the *Lakewood Observer* website relevant to the city, they have constructed an interactive event calendar, a photo gallery, a current news feature, a reflective history section, and a capacity for podcasts, which might include anything from local music groups and lectures at the library to city hall meetings and interviews with interesting neighbors. Our website is

brought to you new, fresh, 24 hours a day, and at no charge. Our website will serve as your single complete source for *everything* happening in this great city.

We plan to launch roundtable discussions wherein residents and non-residents can take part, suggesting story ideas, commenting on current topics and, more importantly, continuing discussion of issues reported in the paper and articulated on the website.

To bring critical insight to our city, we have identified some of America’s top urban-social experts and have asked them to take part in *Lakewood*

*Observer* discussions. Their response has been very positive. Knowing first hand how engaged this community is, they see Lakewood as one of the few inner-ring suburbs with a plan, a hope and a future. In essence, Lakewood is quickly becoming known nationwide as the city with ideas, with a creative vision of itself, with plans for success in the knowledge economy.

The *Lakewood Observer* is a gift from one group of residents to our fellow neighbors. This is our chance, once again, to become a community, not just a city. This is our effort to inform, to engage, to have fun, to entertain, and to shed some light on a great city, its people and organizations. This is our way for Lakewood to know and understand itself better than any city ever has.

Wyatt Earp once said, “Look, the town is getting a newspaper. Why, a town isn’t really a city until it gets its own newspaper. It’s what make us metropolitan.” The *Lakewood Observer* is part of a growing trend in America toward independent citizen-based newspapers. In fact, the television show “Democracy Now” reported recently, “It is the new, small, independent hometown newspapers that will take the cities, the people and the country out of the dark ages back into the light of day.”

Lakewood’s day has come.

—Jim O’Bryan, Publisher

### Lakewood Observer Mission Statement

The mission of the *Lakewood Observer* is to attract, articulate, and amplify civic intelligence and community goodwill in the city of Lakewood and beyond.

Our goal is to help Lakewood residents and neighbors learn as much as possible about the city. In its efforts to know Lakewood par excellence, the *Lakewood Observer* will illuminate the many facets of culture, arts, business, education, religion, and lifestyle this diverse city has to offer.

The *Lakewood Observer* will capture Lakewood life in the present, imagine its promising future, and celebrate its rich urban history.

The *Lakewood Observer* shall provide a sounding board for charities, institutions, schools, children, families, events, and City Hall. We intend to open a space for long-running dialogue with everyone who works, lives, or plays in the great city of Lakewood.

In this 21st century urban experiment, the *Lakewood Observer* will strive to construct for the city an open and unbiased ensemble of white papers for mapping community solutions, advancing responsible economic development and sustainability strategies, and tracking results.

Finally, the *Lakewood Observer* will invite the entire community to celebrate the vibrant mosaic of culture, nature, history, and personality we call Lakewood.

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**EDITOR AND PUBLISHER**  
Jim O’Bryan

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## Around Lakewood

# LakewoodAlive: Genesis, Goals and Next Steps

by Kenneth Warren

Mary Anne Crampton, president of LakewoodAlive, addressed a gathering of approximately one hundred members of the Kiwanis Club of Lakewood at the Masonic Temple on June 7. She spoke on citizen involvement, service to the community, and educational initiatives focused on economic development. Seeing that "our two organizations share a core common value," Crampton talked about "the genesis and mission of LakewoodAlive," as well as "the tools we are using to carry out that mission."

LakewoodAlive was launched in October 2004 "by a group of individuals who have an active interest in Lakewood's economic future," said Crampton. "We have a deep appreciation for the importance and the complexity of economic development as it relates to Lakewood's fiscal health and capacity. Many of us met for the first time during the course of citywide discussions about the proposed West End Development in 2003. We witnessed an outpouring of civic engagement on both sides of the issue during the 2003 election that we felt was too valuable to lose. We believed then and now that civic passion can and should be harnessed to protect the city's economic future."

The mission statement for Lake-

woodAlive indicates that the organization is "an independent nonpartisan citizens' group devoted to promoting economic development in Lakewood and enhancing how Lakewood is perceived inside and outside its borders. LakewoodAlive's efforts benefit all Lakewood residents by stabilizing and building our tax base, attracting and retaining residents, and preserving and improving the unique quality of life our inner-ring community offers."

LakewoodAlive membership is open to anyone at no cost.

Crampton believes that economic development is critical to preserving Lakewood's quality of life. "We need people and organizations who choose to work, live, play and invest here. It is people, and the financial resources they bring into our community, who maintain our roads, support our safety forces, champion our schools, build our parks, create our culture, and make this city such a wonderful place to live." Advocating smart economic development for Lakewood, Crampton outlined the many complexities facing a built-out inner-ring suburb. "Just for starters, smart local redevelopment

involves the cooperation and collaboration of property owners, city administration, developers, and financial resources. To be sure, economic development is not simply about shopping. It's about offices and industry. It's about homes, housing options, and housing standards. It's about diversity of both businesses and culture. It respects history, it is sustainable. Economic development is also about property values, jobs, income and property tax revenue, infrastructure, and zoning codes."

Crampton provided an optimistic assessment of Lakewood's position with regard to broader market trends across the United States.

"Lakewood is perfectly positioned to benefit from the renewed national interest in 'lifestyle' communities. We have a walkable city. We have the lakefront and the metroparks at our borders. We have spectacular architecture in terms of both quantity and quality. We have a strong school system. We appreciate history. We have the texture, strength and vitality that comes from diversity." LakewoodAlive is "a facilitator in disseminating solid, non-political information about these economic issues,"

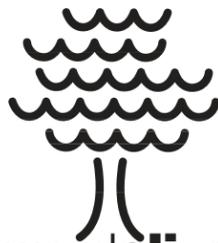
said Crampton. The organization seeks to "provide residents with the means to advocate on topics that are personally important to them. We believe that once informed on an issue, Lakewood residents will anticipate and embrace change in a manner that will protect our community's fiscal health."

LakewoodAlive's goals involve education and advocacy. Technology provides LakewoodAlive with communication and information tools to advance its goals. LakewoodAlive maintains an attractive website at lakewoodalive.com. There are links resources, including the Urban Land Institute, Smart Growth.org, and First Suburbs Development Council. The website features news articles relating to revitalization issues and Lakewood from various media sources.

Crampton next summarized recent LakewoodAlive programs that use the public forum as an educational tool. In December a moderated panel discussion entitled "Now What? A Candid Conversation About Lakewood's Economic Future" featured five local and regional professionals with experience in the inner-ring suburb revitalization effort.

More recently, in April, a two-part forum on housing featured Mike Summers, chairman of the Grow Lakewood

(see **LakewoodAlive**, page 19)



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## Around Lakewood

### Park It Buddy

by Don and Lynn Farris

Ask almost any business owner in Lakewood what the number one problem they face is and chances are you will hear parking. This parking issue spills over to neighborhoods, too, creating problems for the residents who need to park as well as generating safety issues and increased noise levels. Over the next several issues, details on several hot spots and possible solutions will be provided. In researching the parking problems Lakewood faces, it became apparent that there wasn't just one type of parking problem, but four distinct different types of parking problems that residents and businesses need to address.

The first is a high-volume parking problem. This problem exists when there is a facility in a neighborhood that uses a large amount of parking spaces. Examples of this type of parking problem are the Main Library on Detroit and Calanni Auto Service on Madison. In the first case, Ken Warren, the director of the library, seeks to mitigate the problem, working with the neighborhood and requiring employees park in a lot across the street, which frees up parking for library patrons. In the second case, Charlie Calanni has frustrated his neighbors by using

almost the entire available street parking, which affects other businesses and poses a safety hazard for the neighborhood. He has been unresponsive in assisting them with the problems he is creating.

Mayor George says, "Mr. Calanni has not been a good neighbor." It is the city's responsibility, George feels, to aggressively look out for the common good, and he has instructed the law department to investigate a comprehensive civil nuisance suit against Calanni Auto Service, as milder measures have not achieved acceptable results.

The second parking issue is our nightlife parking problem. This problem occurs primarily on Friday and Saturday evenings in the vicinity of restaurants and bars. Two areas that are experiencing significant problems are the West End and other areas on Detroit where several bars are located. Parking, however, is only a part of this problem. When the patrons end their evening, which is often late, incremental problems arise. Frequently the patrons who have not found commercial parking available have parked on residential streets, and their walk to their cars wakes residents.

The third type of parking problem occurs in the densely populated areas



Full meters on Madison Avenue show that ideas are needed to cure parking woes there and elsewhere throughout the city.

such as Edgewater and Lake Avenues on the east end of town. Most of these apartments and condominiums were built when households were typically a one-car family. Now families often have two or more cars and the parking issue is compounded. In some cases, residential boards have voted to give up amenities like tennis courts to add more surface parking, but the need for more parking remains.

The last area where we deal with parking problems is downtown Lakewood. Much of this is city-managed parking and Lakewood appears to be actively working on ways to better administer their parking. The city

has parking garages and surface parking lots; they have permit parking as well as metered parking. The fees from parking go into a fund that is set up to acquire additional parking areas.

There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution to these problems. The needs of commerce should be met, while respecting the rights of the residents who live here. In addition, most residents want parking to be esthetically pleasing. Over the next several issues, we will explore various options to these challenges. Lastly, we want to know about your parking problems. Please e-mail the *Observer* at [letters@lakewoodobserver.com](mailto:letters@lakewoodobserver.com).

### Snap Attacks in Lakewood Documenting Sam Phillips

by Kenneth Warren

Snap attacks have been breaking out across Lakewood ever since Sam Phillips, King of the Hand Snappers, began documenting the practice three weeks ago. Phillips produces a community video program called "Liberation Brew" for Adelphia Cable Access.

Phillips is Lakewood's internationally acclaimed hand snapper. He has appeared on "Real TV," "The Big Chuck and Little John Show," "The Arsenio Hall Show," "Maximum Exposure," "America's Funniest Home Videos," "Inside Edition," and the "Howard Stern Show." In fact, Phillips taught Howard Stern how to hand snap.

With video camera in hand, Phillips is searching the streets this summer for new and old styles of hand snapping.

"There is a kind of hand snapping called flubbing that young people are doing in Lakewood and Cleveland right now," reports Phillips. Phillips is interested in documenting the arts of spoon

playing and hambone thigh slapping as well. Recently Phillips met a one-hand snapper from Scotland, who informed him that one-hand snapping is on the rise there.

Phillips is teaching young people the art of hand snapping. He has never seen so many young people taking on the practice before. "Young people are falling down with snap attacks," he jokes. "You can't blame it on Ritalin, chemical exposure, or disgust over Bush administration policies, you call blame me," say Phillips.

Phillips professes the notion that Buddha could have been a hand snapper. At the Phoenix Coffee Shop, Phillips was able to confirm this observation about the hand-snapping Buddha with a traveling musician from Los Angeles. The musician told him about a spiritual ritual in the mountains where practitioners hand snap their wrists. Phillips says he is not yet absolutely certain that Buddha was a hand snapper and is continuing his research into the practice.




Sharon O'Donnell  
REALTOR

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## Around Lakewood

### Phoenix Coffee:

# Community Center? Coffee Shop?

by Han Liou

When Julie Hutchison started working for Phoenix Coffee in 1996, she couldn't have imagined that in only three years she'd be running the show.

In 1999, after eight years of lackluster sales and accumulating over \$20,000 in debt, the owner decided to sell the business to his best employee at a reasonable price: one dollar. Hutchison, a senior anthropology and dance major at Cleveland State, thought it was a bargain.

In 1999 she officially became the owner and for the past six years has had the pleasure of rebuilding Phoenix into an efficient and successful business. And in only six years, she has eliminated half of the debt inherited from the previous owner. Her vision, however, doesn't fit the contemporary, assembly-line mold.

Hutchison sees Phoenix as a café, art gallery and community center for conversation, relaxation and interaction. Phoenix is "more than a coffee shop," she says. From the moment one steps inside the door and tastes the atmosphere, you realize why it's so unique. With its natural wood flooring and countertops, warm incandescent lighting, and colorful local art displays, Hutchison takes the extra step to make Phoenix comfortable and inviting. With this in mind, she hopes to create something valuable for the community. "People are drawn to it," she says. "Our clientele is getting larger and larger."

Apparently, many Phoenix cus-

tomers appreciate Hutchison's ethic and frequently offer to contribute to the café. One example, Hutchison describes, is how, after purchasing a cup of coffee, a customer recently suggested upgrading the wires surrounding the cash register. To her surprise, the customer returned shortly thereafter with electrical tools and supplies in hand and performed the upgrade in exchange for coffee.

Experiences like this remind Hutchison that she's making her vision a reality. She is quick to add, however, that in addition to atmosphere, she'll put a cup of Phoenix coffee up against the competition any day of the week. Phoenix coffee is fresh because it is roasted and delivered on the same day, retaining much more aroma and flavor than grounds that have grown old on the shelf. In addition, she says, Phoenix coffee is "micro-roasted," in increments of only 20 pounds or less.

To understand how complex the roasting process is, one must know a little bit about the history of the Phoenix Roastery and the man behind it. Founded by coffee guru Carl Jones in 1990, Phoenix coffee beans are roasted, ground and blended at the downtown location and delivered on the same day. Jones uses a specialty roaster that controls the exact temperature of the beans to create his signature roasts. "It's a skill a lot of people don't know," Hutchison says. Combining a superior product and unique atmosphere is exactly what Phoenix Coffee is all about.

Any small business owner will tell you, however, that no matter how suc-



Photo: Staff

Erik Anderson enjoys a cup of joe in the afternoon sun.

cessful you are, there will always be challenges. Hutchison has had to learn how to overcome many obstacles and make changes to keep Phoenix open. "A lot of it was intuitive and trial and error," she says, "but I'm very fair and I don't play games." Hutchison says the biggest challenge for her was learning to balance the books or, as she calls it, "working behind the scenes." Over the past six years things have gotten easier, she says, and she has started doing most of these tasks with computer programs.

What does the future hold for Phoenix Coffee? Hutchison has big

plans, particularly for the next five years. This includes incorporating many aspects of her areas of study, such as hosting flamenco music and dancing events and exhibiting local and cultural art.

Increased advertising and marketing are necessary too, she says, in helping people to understand what Phoenix is all about. Above all, Hutchison wants the Phoenix to continue being a warm and inviting community café.

She encourages people to continue to "make Phoenix what they want it to be."

### Musician/Artists – This Space Is For You!

## Towards a Participatory Arts Media

by Matthew Charboneau,  
Arts and Cultural Affairs Desk

There is a popular joke among musicians that alludes to the absurdity and ineptitude of music journalism, as well as a general contempt for the media's coverage of the arts. To paraphrase, it defines a "music journalist" as a guitarist who could only learn three chords. I have told that joke, both as a personal reaction to a poorly received article on a band I was in, and also as a condolence to a local performing arts curator who was slammed for presenting an adventurous interpretation on the typical voice recital. I suppose I am qualified to take such a jab at the music press; I hold a double bass performance degree from a music conservatory—I know a lot of chords. The joke itself, however, is exemplary of the dichotomy between artists needing to promote their work to the general public, and their distrust of the local media to do so wholeheartedly and accurately.

Performing artists who depend on their craft to pay the bills have an odd

love-hate relationship with the media. On one hand they may cry foul when a review or feature does not capture the artistic essence or creative ethos of their latest work. They may fault the writer for showing a lack of knowledge about "pre-1971 Norwegian pseudo-psychedelic avant-garde noise instrumentals"—or whatever little-known genre in which the artist is toiling. They most often criticize the journalist for writing in a destructive form instead of constructively. On the other hand, the artist is dependent on the media if there is any hope of more than their five or six close friends showing up to a performance—especially in a post-industrial city with a small bohemian population such as Cleveland.

What can explain this adversarial relationship? Artists, typecast into the roles of passionate and emotional defenders of their personal expressions, might be quick to over-analyze any criticism of their work. Their distrust for the media runs deeper than just the arts coverage though. One explanation might be the state of modern journal-

ism. Sensationalism, self-aggrandizing reporters and anchors, glorification of the negative aspects of society, and routine conditioning for fear and stereotyping all are commonplace in modern news media. These conditions, combined with sensory-overload competition from entertainment entities, help contribute to the fact that fewer and fewer people under the age of 40 are paying attention to the news.

Another reason for mass-media malaise is the very non-participatory nature of modern journalism. The news media, often, reports events without delving into the causality behind the event or the opinions and feelings of the constituents involved with the story. In political features, the modern model of journalism more often than not adopts a conflict framework by pitting one candidate's ethics or morals against the other's. Amidst this adversarial climate the significance and relevance of the actual reader is marginalized.

How will we, the *Lakewood Observer*—yet another drop in the ocean of print media—counteract this

condition? By incorporating the citizens and readers into our mission. By proactively soliciting and disseminating the views of Lakewood-area residents. By highlighting local artists, dancers and musicians—not simply for promotional purposes or to hawk a CD, but to magnify the existing underground creative culture of Lakewood. This type of inclusive news is not a novel concept—the movement for participatory, or civic, journalism has been around since the early 1990s, either as implemented with success by communities across the country, or debated, chastised and ridiculed by the monoliths of traditional news media.

My goal, as Arts and Culture Editor, is to help eliminate the historic distinction between high art and low art and to counteract the notion that any one performing artist operates in a more legitimate field or medium than another. As such I will try to give an equal amount of page space to the conservatory-trained violinist as I do to

(see *Musician/Artists*, page 19)

## Around Lakewood

### Mr. Lou's Living in Lakewood

by Luis Gutierrez

Hello, Lakewood! Please allow me to introduce myself: My name is Luis Ignacio Gutierrez, a.k.a. Mr. Lou, Lakewood's only French-Cuban. I have dreamed of being a columnist for a good chunk of my adult life, and now I am being given the opportunity. Here it is, my first column for the first issue of the *Lakewood Observer*, a newspaper for Lakewood put together by people who live in and love Lakewood. My column will focus on how the idea of community has been made manifest in my 13 years living here. Hence, it seems appropriate that to begin, I share my own story.

Right up front I should tell you that I was not born in Lakewood. In fact I was not born anywhere near Greater Cleveland. Truth be told, I was born in New York City nearly 48 years ago. (Full disclosure: I'm a lifelong Yankees fan. I would, however, like everyone to know that if Lakewood had a professional baseball team, I'd be one of its most

ardent supporters. As for the Indians ... Come on!) My family—Mom, Dad, my brother and I—moved to Parma, Ohio, after I graduated from high school in 1975. I attended Tri-C West, got my associate's degree, and then took off for Hastings, Nebraska, where I completed my B.A. From Nebraska I headed back east to Long Island for graduate study in psychology. I did not complete my graduate degree; if you've had to read psych journal articles, perhaps you'll understand why. I did, however, stay on Long Island for the next 14 years, working with adolescents and adults with autism and mental retardation.

So, what brought me back to Ohio and how did I end up in Lakewood? In November of 1991 my father was diagnosed with cancer. A year later it became increasingly clear that, one, my father wasn't going to be around much

longer, and, two, my mother needed help. At the time my brother was working happily at the Mirage in Las Vegas while I was burning out working with the developmentally disabled. Neither of us was married or involved with a special someone, so returning home to be with our parents was a relatively uncomplicated decision. For me the decision marked a turning point in my life.

My brother and I spent the first four months of 1992 living with Mom and Dad in their small home in Parma Heights. Not knowing then that my father would be gone before summer's end, and having a dog and a cat that I had reluctantly farmed out to family friends, I convinced my brother that we had to find our own place. I had two criteria for our new home: It had to have two bedrooms; and cats and dogs had to be allowed. Finding a place with

two bedrooms was easy. Finding a place that would let me keep Blue and Isis landed me in Lakewood.

So, here I am, a 13-year resident of Lakewood. Someone who came from someplace else and by happenstance found a community of which he wants to be a part. Someone who is grateful for the web of relationships in which he has become enmeshed. Someone who has experienced firsthand what it can mean to be part of a community, and how rich and resonant the idea of community is, and how it sustains and lifts up its members.

What I hope is that there are people out there who enjoy reading stories and perhaps have a couple of good stories they'd like to share, stories that speak to this idea of community. I look forward to telling you my stories and to hearing yours.

*Mr. Lou looks forward to hearing from you. You can e-mail him at [redcuban@yahoo.com](mailto:redcuban@yahoo.com)*



Luis Ignacio Gutierrez, a.k.a. Mr. Lou

### All Ages Enjoy the Oldest Stone House

by Vincent O'Keefe

Have you ever wondered where the expression "sleep tight" originated? The answer lies in a bed not far from your own at the Oldest Stone House Museum in Lakewood Park. On a recent tour of the pioneer home, it was pleasantly surprising to see a group of young girls so interested in life long ago, especially on a warm Sunday afternoon.

Although small in size, the pioneer home-turned-museum is rich with artifacts from Lakewood life in the 1800s. Our gracious docent, Valerie Mechenbier, was kind enough to tailor the tour for younger folks while still appealing to the older "tourists." Not surprisingly, the girls were very intrigued by what appeared to be a key on a chain—actually an old-fashioned tooth-puller, called a "dental turnkey" in the 1800s. Another item of special interest included a yoke, which boys would use to carry buckets of water from the lake. It consists of a wooden bar with a chain on each end and an opening for the wearer's neck—not exactly an inviting device for your chores.

There are many other authentic period pieces in the parlor and kitchen, including a horsehair sofa, wind-up clock, melodeon, weaving loom, spin-

ning wheel, candle maker, and dry sink. In the upstairs bedrooms, our tour guide pointed out the pattern of thin ropes (similar to our box springs) beneath each mattress. Each night, the ropes were tightened for maximum comfort, hence the phrase "sleep tight." Also worthy of close inspection in the bedrooms are the bed warmers, chamber pots, hatboxes, hatpins, and children's dolls, as well as curiously low ceilings. On your way out, don't miss the gravestones behind the museum. You'll have to take the tour to solve this mystery. (Don't worry; no one is buried in Lakewood Park!)

John Honam, a Scottish weaver, built the stone house in 1838 on the northwest corner of Detroit and St. Charles Avenue. The house was a family dwelling for many years, but later served as a doctor's office, a post office, a grocery store, a barber shop, and an upholstery company, according to *Lakewood: The First Hundred Years*, an illustrated history book by Jim and Susan Borchert (available in the museum gift shop). In 1952, the house was preserved and moved to Lakewood Park, largely through the efforts of Margaret Manor Butler and the Lakewood Historical Society. In the 1970s, a basement was dug to serve as headquarters for the Lakewood Historical Society.



Photo: Rhonda Lojic



Photo: Rhonda Lojic

Free tours of the museum are available on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons.

The museum gift shop features a variety of items such as old-fashioned recipes, doll kits, note cards, and candles. There is also a valuable assortment of books on Lakewood's history, many of which contain fascinating photographs. Free tours of the museum are available on Wednesdays from 1–4 p.m. and on Sundays from 2–5 p.m.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Lakewood Historical Society can call 216-221-7343. The Society's

street address is 14710 Lake Ave. It can also be reached at [lakewoodhistory@bge.net](mailto:lakewoodhistory@bge.net) and at [www.lakewoodhistory.org](http://www.lakewoodhistory.org). The organization provides many services to the community, including the maintenance of a photo-file collection of over 8,000 images of Lakewood's history. It also serves as an educational resource for schools and residents, providing information on house histories, settlers, buildings, and streets. Special tours are available with prior arrangement.

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# Lakewood Schools

*Congratulations LHS Class of 2005!*

## Graduation Speeches

### The Theory of Six

by Rita Seabrook, Valedictorian

Our senior class has 480 students. If we wanted to travel somewhere together, it would require 10 school buses to transport us. If we wanted to walk somewhere together, we would stretch from this Civic Auditorium all the way to the corner of Bunts and Clifton, if we stood in a single-file line. If we stacked our classmates on top of one another, we would be over one mile tall, and nearly twice the height of the Sears Tower. With a class as large as ours, it seems impossible for all of us to know each other. I certainly do not know everyone sitting to my left today, but I do know a way that I could.

There is a mathematical theory that says any one of us is only six acquaintances away from anyone else in the world, and I can prove it using our graduating class. I do not know Ashley Hudson, but I do know Emily Tanner. She was my best friend through elementary and middle school, and we grew up on the same street. Emily loaned her jeans to J.P. Terranova for this year's talent show. J.P. wore them in his performance with some members of the band, The Radikills. The lead singer of The Radikills is Anthony Hartinger. Anthony, in turn, is a friend of Chris Heinrich. And finally, Chris has class with Ashley Hudson. So you see, I *do* know Ashley Hudson. And if we divide our class size by six acquaintances, we see our class is only 80 students large.

If we apply this theory to the entire world, we see the earth's population is not six billion; it is closer to one billion, which is only about 3.5 times greater than the population of the United States, instead of almost 22 times as great. Suddenly, distinguishing ourselves in the world doesn't seem so insurmountable. We could also say that we have a friend, who has a friend, who has a cousin, whose boyfriend's brother's boss lives in another country. Although many of us have never left North America, we can all say that we have friends in one of the world's six other continents. By this same theory, we can say that we know someone who knows someone else who knows Neil Armstrong, and together, we have all stepped on the moon with him. Today, the Lakewood High School class of 2005 will step off this stage as individuals, yet together. Suddenly, a potentially terrifying step isn't frightening at all because almost 480 friends are taking it with us.

Jean Guittou said, "We are all primary numbers divisible only by ourselves." I think what he meant was the only person who can prevent us from walking on the moon with Neil Armstrong, hitting a home run with Jackie Robinson or one day discovering a cure for cancer, is ourselves. We are all different and, by the same token, we are the only ones capable of dividing our potential. And because we are all unique, our lives will lead us in different directions, but we must remember, no matter where we go, we are only six acquaintances away from Lakewood High School.

### Giving Back

by Kelsey Laurel Paras, Salutatorian

Everyone on stage today has worked very hard to accomplish the goal of receiving his or her high school diploma. However, we must all remember that this would not have been possible without the constant encouragement and guidance of our teachers, parents, coaches and friends. To them we owe much gratitude and thanks.

I believe that the best way to honor those people who have made a difference in our lives is, in the words of President John F. Kennedy, "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." To live by our words of appreciation means to give back to the community through the mentoring and tutoring of younger students or other volunteer work.

The Lakewood Alumni Association recognizes and rewards students for their volunteer work. I am very grateful to have received the Charles Geiger volunteer scholarship for my work tutoring young violinists and chemistry students, and volunteering with animals at the Lake Erie Nature and Science Center.

Some of you here today have also acted upon President Kennedy's message encouraging service. Lisa Read has volunteered numerous hours at "Youth Challenge" with children who have special needs. Steve Knab served on a board at the Lakewood Charitable Assistance Corporation to organize the distribution of food baskets to Lakewood families. Lucia Pizzo, Rita Seabrook, Caity Walsh and Ajsela Xhemalaj have all spent their time volunteering at Lakewood Hospital. Everyone has benefited from one group's dedication to community service. We have all seen the team of students, including Zach Klemola, collecting recycling from the classrooms and offices. They sort paper, crush cans and, in general, help to make Lakewood High School a more environmentally responsible place. In addition, all of the career technical students participate in volunteer projects related to their fields. Many of the groups, including Leadership Academy, Business Professionals of America, Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, raised money to help Lakewood families or sick children. Skills USA designed games and coloring books for children in the hospital. They also helped Construction Trades build house and classroom walls. These students have already been dedicated to the goal of offering their time and skills to help improve Lakewood.

As we leave the comfortable refuge of Lakewood High School, let's not forget the lessons learned. Let us take them with us. No matter where we go in life, let us remember all of the people who have allowed us to be successful. Let us respect and acknowledge their dedication to helping you by doing the same for others. Let us utter our expressions of gratitude, and then live them.

Thank you and congratulations.

### Building a New Machine:

## Catholic Community Elementary Education in Lakewood

by Paul J. Nickels

The demise of the venerable St. Augustine Academy and the consolidation, due to the combination of rising costs and declining enrollment, of St. Clement, St. James and St. Luke's elementary schools has created an opportunity for innovative and cooperative leadership.

Subsequently named Lakewood Catholic Academy, the consolidation is being executed by parents, pastors, and parishioners from each of the three institutions who have chosen to adapt and make changes on their own terms. These volunteers, hoping to reverse a trend in Catholic education, worked countless hours on a series of consolidation committees.

Lakewood Catholic Academy, on track for success with the registration of 550 students from Lakewood and surrounding communities, was instantly catapulted into one of the largest Catholic elementary schools in the region.

More than just a new place for children to receive a "good, old-fashioned" Catholic education in Lakewood, this demonstrates that, through visionary thinking, Lakewood Catholic schools have managed to avoid the crisis of sudden closures that have wracked communities like Euclid and Cleveland in recent years.

Leaders from cities across the nation, including New York City, Chicago and San Francisco, have contacted the group through its website, lakewoodcatholicschools.com, to communicate that they are watching Lakewood's model of change for clues as to how they will handle similar situations in their own diocesan schools.

The unrelated closure of St. Augustine opened that campus as a possible location of the new elementary school, which had already been exploring a shared facility arrangement with the high school. Through the years, the three elementary schools educated tens of thousands of Lakewood resi-



Lakewood Catholic Academy, formerly St. Augustine Academy

dents, with St. Clement and St. James home to over one thousand students at a time.

The St. Augustine property owners have now successfully concluded negotiations to lease the extraordi-

nary facility, bordering the west side of Lakewood Park, to Lakewood Catholic Academy.

Paul Nickels serves as webmaster of [www.lakewoodcatholicschools.com](http://www.lakewoodcatholicschools.com)

# Lakewood Observer Looks Back at Raise the Roof!

by Bryan Wroten

A parade of lions and literary figures, a gigantic inflatable strongman, and a series of concerts ending with rocked-out do-si-do-ing were a few of the sights which attracted parents, children and other community members to Lakewood Public Schools Alumni Foundation's Raise the Roof on Saturday, June 4.

The purpose of Raise the Roof was to illuminate and celebrate the changes about to take place with the school system, said Jay Foran, event co-chair and Alumni Foundation member. "We have achieved so much as a community," he said of the plans to close several elementary schools and begin construction of new ones. It was time to celebrate, he elaborated.

The parade began in the Grant Elementary School parking lot and continued along Franklin to Madison before turning into the Harding Field. All Lakewood elementary schools participated as well as some high school groups. The elementary school groups carried banners. Lincoln Elementary students had wagon-sized floats of books such as *A Wind in the Door*, *Witch of Blackbird Pond*, and the Harry Potter series. Mayor Tom George, Assistant Superintendent Jan Soeder, and members of the board of education rode in cars as well.

Board of education member Linda



Photo: Staff

Emily Dziak Lockshire, Jay Foran, Teresa Coyne Andreani, and Celia Dorsch lead the parade and party.

Beebe said she was at Raise the Roof to ride in the parade. She said further that the event was volunteer run. "It's such an exciting time for the schools," Beebe said. "This is an event that exceeds its limits." Betsy Shaugnessy, treasurer of the Alumni Foundation and vice president of the board of education, said Raise the Roof is "just a good time to



Photo: Jeremiah Hull

Cars line up for the Raise the Roof Car Rally, won by the mother-and-son team of Kit and Patrick Hoffert in their Honda Hybrid.



Photo: Jeremiah Hull

Teresa Coyne Andreani speaks at the Wrecking Ball.



Photo: Jeremiah Hull

Superintendent Dr. Estrop looks ready for demolition.

be together as a community."

The events at Harding Field included a series of performances by Lakewood school music groups, face painting, an obstacle course, and tents set up by the Lakewood Historical Society, the YMCA, Lakewood Hospital, and Lakewood Public Library.

YMCA of Greater Cleveland Development Manager Culeen Carey said

the YMCA had a tent to inform the community of the upcoming changes for the Lakewood facilities. The existing building closed June 9 to allow for deconstruction of the structure. She said a new, 48,000-square-foot building should open by January 2007, or sooner, to serve residents of Lakewood. The construction of the new YMCA is expected to cost \$10.5 million, Carey said. Vol-



Photo: Staff

The Parade of Schools was something to see.



Photo: Staff

The little red schoolhouse



Photo: Bryan Wroten

The Lakewood Project let everyone hear and see why it's the hot ticket in town.



Photo: Bryan Wroten

McKinley's Lunch Bunch, a choir that sings during the lunch break, is directed by Margie Hildebrandt.

unteers so far have raised \$7.7 million through donations. One donor was Barbara Jacobs, who donated \$2 million. However, Carey said donations of every size are welcome. "The smallest donation was \$8 from a little old lady."

Parents kept up with their children as they rushed from one activity to the next. The line for the inflatable obstacle course, complete with giant slide, was at least 50 people long throughout the day. Girls and boys giggled at seconds of weightlessness in the Spiderman bounce room. A variety of school music groups continued to perform during the evening, including a joint choir of Garfield and Madison students in a final farewell to their schools, interspersed with Vive L'Four, the high school barbershop quartet. Audience members gathered around the stage and cheered loudly for the elementary, middle and high school groups.

One audience member was retired Plain Dealer music critic Jane Scott, a Lakewood High School graduate, class of 1937, and continuing Lakewood resident. She said she was enjoying the concert, calling the little kids "darling." She said she was especially

impressed with Vive L'Four. "I liked that Vive L'Four. They sounded different from anybody else out there," she said. "They are beyond their years in ability." Scott said Lakewood schools are good and she likes the school reconstruction project, but was unsure of the cost to the citizens. "If this were free, Cleveland would be in good shape," she said. Foran advised that the cost for the construction would come from bonds, like the \$96 million bond passed in March 2004.

The evening ended with a performance by the Lakewood Project, the high school's rock orchestra. The group played both classical and rock music arranged for them. Barnstormers joined them onstage to perform selections from their spring production, *Seussical the Musical*. The Lakewood Project concluded with their own set. A group of kids gathered in front of the stage to dance. Scott could not resist the tune of Kansas' "Wayward Son" and joined the kids up front. The show ended with a rock-version "Bonaparte's Retreat" complete with a modernized square dance provided by the audience.



Photo: Bryan Wroten

The big stage made it seem like Woodstock.



Photo: Bryan Wroten

The Vive L'Four barbershop quartet members Jake Hilty, Joe Trella, Matt Langenhop and Josh Laux.

# Lakewood Schools

## What's in a Name?

by Chuck Greanoff

What's in a name, anyway? Often, deception. The "People's Republic of China," after all, is not the "Old Line Maoist Bureaucrats' Dictatorship of China." The "Holy Roman Empire" was not Holy, Roman nor an Empire. It should surprise no one, therefore, that Ohio'sso-called "Community Schools," also known as Charter Schools, would have nothing to do with "community," and everything to do with privatization, profiteering, and sabotaging the very idea of public education.

Community schools cost Lakewood students \$240,000 last year and \$700,000 this year, but the issues go way beyond the lost educational opportunities these dollars represent. They include: the disenfranchisement of locally elected school boards and the citizens they represent; the grossly inappropriate application of market principles to a public good; the undermining of a community's ability to allocate resources in a rational, egalitarian manner; and the undermining of the social fabric and the fiscal integrity of public school systems across the United States.

Facing a legislature hostile to public education and backed by well-funded, profit-minded private interests, public school districts are seeking a legal remedy in the form of a suit, filed in the Ohio 10th district appellate court, asserting that community schools are unconstitutional. In their brief, signed onto, among others, by Lakewood, Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights, and Community Advocates for Public Education, the plaintiffs assert that: "Privatization of public education, by its very nature, is incompatible with the intent of the framers of the Ohio Constitution of 1851, which was to create a single system of public education guaranteeing an adequate education to each and every child in Ohio based on the Common School approach emphasizing the public benefits of an educated state citizenry."

The hundreds of exemptions they were granted from laws governing actual public schools further illustrate that community schools represent a de facto privatization—and a privileged, politically connected one at that. (Here are a few: training requirements for treasurers; requirements to adopt comprehensive school safety plans; requirements to retain certain chronic truants.)

One of the most insidious elements of community schools alluded to in the brief is the disenfranchisement of local school boards. Throughout the state, citizens elect school boards to hire superintendents and set broad policy with regard to resource allocation. In Lakewood, we just underwent a widespread community effort to rebuild and reorganize our schools to meet the emerging challenges of the next 10 to 50 years (i.e., declining enrollment, increased state mandates, etc.). Through this representative process,

Lakewood has worked to determine the optimal number of schools, and weighed and balanced the competing desires for reduced operational costs and maximum educational benefits.

Few Lakewood residents who participated in this democratic community effort realized that the state has set up a competing "public" school system, complete with "Virtual Academies," to bypass local governance and reap robust profits. For example, Bill Bennett's virtual academy takes in the standard \$5,000 every time a student enrolls, even though the cost of delivering this "education" is about \$1,000. In essence, we have little say in the number of schools our community funds and how our scarce resources are allocated.

Ah, but market competition is the universal elixir, the perfect 21st century remedy for all that ails us. Just ask David Brennan, leading Republican campaign contributor and proprietor of White Hat Management, whose network of "Hope Academies" stripped \$107 million dollars from public schools this year. Putting aside the dismal records of charter schools on state proficiency tests, at issue is the gross misapplication of market principles (actually, market dogma) to what the Ohio Constitution terms a "public good." This "faith-based" economics actually overlooks, or chooses to ignore, some fundamental principles laid out in any introductory economics textbook.

Take fixed costs: When a student leaves a public school for a community school, \$5,000 of state funding goes with him/her. Of course, \$5,000 in costs is not eliminated; the school still has to be heated, classrooms still need teachers, etc. The result is an inefficient allocation of resources and an increase in the per-pupil expenditures for school districts.

Some districts, including Akron and Lakewood, have or are setting up their own virtual, online community schools to not only provide parents and students with an educational option, but also to protect their resources from profit seekers like Bennett and Brennan. (Bennett, you will note, has spent years bashing public education. Time well invested, I suppose.) The state legislature is now attempting, according to the *Akron Beacon Journal* (April 23, 2005), to cap the number of public school district community schools, which are threatening to cut into the profits of benefactors like Brennan.

Ultimately, the economic realities of community schools may be their undoing or at least a check on their proliferation. Yet, the core issue is the movement to undermine the very essence of public education. By turning public education into a publicly financed "private good," the privatizers seek to destroy the concept of local, democratic control of community institutions. They slap hundreds

(see **Name**, page 19)



Photo: Kit Hoffert  
Councilwoman Mary Louise Madigan introduces the Taft students to City Council.

## Taft Students Acclaimed for Organizing Support of Animals

by Beckett Warren

In April, most fourth and fifth graders are eagerly awaiting the summer vacation that never seems to come soon enough. At Taft Elementary in room 202, Julie Lant's students are busily involved in the political process.

The students have been working on twin political organizing projects, Providing Animal Welfare Solutions (P.A.W.S.) and Kids for Animal Respect and Education (K.A.R.E.).

Scanning the situation quickly, one may think People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has adopted a class to help pay school costs in these tough budgetary times, much like Pepsi will place their machines in a cafeteria.

You'd be wrong; this issue is one the students chose themselves. The students brainstormed a list of possible issues to take up, which ranged from adolescent smoking to bullying.

"After a lot of discussion, the students unanimously decided to take on the cause of animal welfare," said Lant. "It is amazing how passionate they are about it." Students focused on "the prevention of animal cruelty, strengthening cruelty laws, fundraising for shelters, and educating other students and adults about training your pets so that they don't get returned to animal shelters."

Besides the teacher, the class had some additional help in achieving these goals. Pricilla Goodwin acted as co-facilitator and proved to be instrumental in carrying out the project.

First the kids began with research, and interviewed Rocky River's Animal Control Officer Mike Hearn about the frequency of animal cruelty in the area.

They then presented these findings to Judge Patrick Carroll and urged him to apply the harshest available sentences to abusers.

There exists empirical evidence to be concerned about animal welfare, "The kids did some research about the

connection between animal cruelty and people abuse, and found out that a child that hurts animals may grow up to be an abuser of people," Lant said.

Coming prepared impressed Judge Carroll, particularly with information that connected the pattern between acts of animal and human violence. "He was delighted and said he would take the children's input to heart when he does sentence people (for animal cruelty), and will consider the maximum sentence," Lant said.

The students were especially concerned with the case of the 84-year-old Fairview Park man who killed his neighbor's poodle. They monitored the progress of the case and even attended a hearing.

In an effort to observe all branches of government, Taft students from room 202 then went to Lakewood City Council, sponsored by Ward 4 Councilwoman Mary Louise Madigan, and proposed a law that would increase the severity of animal cruelty from a misdemeanor offence to a felony.

City council has been so impressed with these students that they honored them at the June 6 council meeting.

Naivety need not accompany youth. These Lakewood kids are very much aware of political realities such as building coalitions and the necessity of fundraising. To further these ends, Lant's students held several fundraisers, donating over \$700 to the Lakewood Animal Shelter and the Animal Protective League.

In addition to traditional donation drives and bake sales, the class instituted some innovative fundraising techniques. Realizing that many of their actions were to benefit the canine community, the students reached out to those trying to help by offering dog treats at their bake sales and grooming services at weekend fundraisers.

(see **Taft**, page 19)

## What's Going on at Lakewood Public Library?

### The Friends of Lakewood Public Library Present:

#### Center Stage Variety Series

Sunday, July 3, 7 p.m. Main Library Auditorium

"Getting into the Groove" features dancers, dance music, and a dance floor for you, too.

#### Calling All Armchair Sleuths!

Come to "Booked for Murder," our book discussion group for lovers of murder, mystery and mayhem. Our next book is *Haunted Ground* by Erin Hart. Farmers cutting turf in a peat bog make a grisly discovery. It's a case that will open old wounds. Come discuss!

Thursday, July 28, 7 p.m. in the Main Library Trustees' Room

### Lakewood Public Library and Lakewood City Schools: A Partnership for Academic Excellence

Over the last few years, the Lakewood Public Library and Lakewood City Schools have partnered on several projects intended to develop the next generation of Lakewood scholars. Through creative partnerships, innovative technology, and the enthusiastic participation of students, parents, teachers and librarians, the library and city schools are helping to build the bottom-line brainpower necessary to fuel Lakewood's future.

Here are some highlights of the partnership programs:

#### The Sharp Student Academy: Sharpen Up! and Princeton Review PSAT Preparation

Since 2003, the Lakewood Public Library has offered Lakewood students the Sharp Student Academy, a collection of programs designed to help middle school and high school students achieve better results through the application of smart study skills. Two highly successful Academy programs are the Sharpen Up! skills-building course and the Princeton Review PSAT Preparation course.

The Sharpen Up! program is a crash course for students who are looking to boost their grades or enhance their test scores by working smarter, not harder. Susan Crane, a retired Lakewood High School teacher, designs the class content with input from librarians and staff from the Electronic Services department. The course is held in the Main Library's Learning Lab and offers students tips and tricks to aid their scholastic journey. In this course, students discover and learn how to build upon their individual learning style, learn knowledge skills to improve test scores or comprehend subject matter, and how best to use electronic resources like the Internet and online databases to reduce the amount of time required to do their research. The course also includes ways to improve students' information literacy abilities, a much-needed skill for tomorrow's knowledge workers. Sharpen Up! is offered by the Electronic Services department several times throughout the year. The next

session is August 23, 2005 at 7 p.m., and more dates will be announced in the library's Fall 2005-Winter 2006 program guide, which will be available later this summer. Visit [www.lkwdpl.org/sharpenup/](http://www.lkwdpl.org/sharpenup/) for more information on this program.

The Sharp Student Academy also includes the Princeton Review PSAT Preparation course, initiated by Kathleen Baylog, LHS Gifted and Talented Coordinator, and paid for by the Lakewood Public Library Foundation. This course is an intense program for incoming high school juniors and is intended to deliver extraordinary results on the PSAT test. Many of the students who have taken this course have achieved not only high test scores, but also national scholastic recognition. In 2003, 14 participants were recognized for their superior performance on the test. Tim Hampton, Alex Ippolito, and Anna Wooley were recognized as National Merit Finalists; Jason Fuller was a National Achievement Semi-Finalist; while Kaitlin Alaimo, Mallory Beck, Diana Blank, Bonnie Ferran, Ben Howard, Lauren Huffman, Ben Kaplan, Gwen Shaw, Kathleen Spirgen, and Jennifer Toth were all honored as National Merit Commended Scholars. In September 2004, the Lakewood High School National Merit Commended Scholars were announced and included Erika Hanson, Jacob Hilty, Dana Plank, Kelsey Paras, Rita Seabrook, and Caitlin Walsh. Five of these six scholars participated in the PSAT Princeton Review program. An expanded nine-week PSAT Preparation program will be offered in September 2005, thanks to the ingenuity of Mrs. Baylog and the generosity of the Lakewood Public Library Foundation.

#### Student Book Discussion Groups

The Children's and Youth Services department worked with Principal Mike Pellegrino, teacher Robert Wood, and the Language Arts team from Horace Mann to offer book discussions from their summer reading list. Although open to anyone who wanted to participate, Horace Mann students were able to fulfill part of their assignment by participating in these discussions. A total of 123 students attended discussions of the following novels at Main Library: *Make Lemonade* by Virginia Euwer Wolff, *Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli, *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers, *A Single Shard* by Linda Sue Park, *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engel, and *The Bomb* by Theodore Taylor. At Madison Branch, a total of 26 students attended discussions of the following novels: *Hope Was Here* by Joan Bauer and *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo. This program was a success for both the Lakewood Public Library and Horace Mann Middle School and the discussion will be repeated this August.

Also in 2005, incoming freshman at Lakewood High School may complete part of their summer reading assignment by attending one of our book discussions. Visit [www.lkwdpl.org/youth/summer.htm](http://www.lkwdpl.org/youth/summer.htm) for more information on the August book discussion times and dates.

#### Booktalks in the Classroom

During the 2004-05 school year, the Children's and Youth Services presented 10 booktalk programs. In September, Andrew Harant and Chris Fries presented booktalks at Emerson Middle School, promoting some of the best books that have been written for middle-schoolers since 2000. In December, Mr. Fries started a monthly booktalk series at Emerson for a sixth-grade class. Each month, the teacher requested a certain topic and the Children's and Youth Services department selected books and materials accordingly. During each booktalk, the given genre and subject was discussed and dissected to provide clearer understanding for the students.

The model was very successful and was modified to be used for other classes at Emerson Middle School in February and Harding Middle School in May. Teachers were enthusiastic about the program, stating they would like more of these programs for the 2005-06 school year. The students, too, greatly enjoyed these programs. On numerous occasions many of the students have been seen in the Children's and Youth Services department trying to locate titles that were "booktalked." Ms. Hoy's Harding class sent Mr. Fries handwritten letters a week after his visit thanking him for the presentation. In these letters, many of the students took the time to express what books they were looking forward to reading. A couple of the students expressed that they were generally "non-readers" and that a couple of the titles piqued their interest. Also, the booktalks were written up in the *Emerson Exchange* school newsletter, which even included humorous blurbs and reviews from the students themselves.

#### The Library Goes to School

During the 2004-05 school year, Lakewood Public Library presented outreach programs to every one of the district's 10 elementary schools. Most of the programs were selected by teachers from our "Library Goes to School Menu," which has been continually updated to reflect programs wanted by teachers.

Some of the more popular programs have been "Brown Bag Book Clubs" (30-minute story times offered during a lunch period or designated class time), "Authors Unlimited" (programs that focus on particular children's authors), "Bring on the Beat" (programs that focus on musical concepts), and "Nameless Book Clubs" (book discussion groups for grades three through five).

Children's and Youth Services at Main Library alone presented 270 programs to a total of 7,410 Lakewood City School students during this school year! As if that weren't enough, the Children's and Youth Services team also presented story times to every Project 123 class and the Special Needs preschool classes biweekly throughout the year.

#### Free Databases a Click Away

From the library or at home, you can access thousands of electronic journals and millions of articles by using the specialty database EBSCOhost. Journal titles related to specific subject matter can assist you in unearthing that hard-to-find scholarly journal, newspaper, or magazine article. Note: Certain titles may offer only article abstracts and not full text, and new issues of some magazines may be released to EBSCOhost on a delayed basis.

From the EBSCOhost website: "MasterFILE Premier, designed specifically for public libraries, provides full text for more than 2,000 general periodicals covering a broad range of disciplines including general reference, business, education, health, general science, multi-cultural issues, and much more. In addition to the full text, this database provides indexing and abstracts for more than 2,700 titles. This database features: 5,000 full-text *Magill Book Reviews*; 433 reference and travel books including the *World Almanac & Book of Facts*; full text from 84,074 biographies; 86,135 full-text primary source documents; *American Heritage Dictionary*, 4th Edition; and an Image Collection of 107,135 photos, maps and flags. MasterFILE Premier offers PDF back-files as far back as 1975 for key publications including *American Libraries*, *Foreign Affairs*, *History Today*, *Judaism*, *Library Journal*, *National Review*, and *Natural History*."

EBSCOhost is not just for scholarly articles. Articles from popular magazines (including *Business Week*, *Consumer Reports*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Health, Inc.*, *Martha Stewart Living*, *Newsweek*, *New Yorker*, *PC Magazine*, *Popular Science*, *Redbook*, *Rolling Stone*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Time*) are available for viewing or printing.

Can't make it to the library and need to get an article? By using your Lakewood Public Library card and an Internet connection, you can access EBSCOhost at home or work. Visit our home page at [www.lkwdpl.org](http://www.lkwdpl.org) and click on the "OPLIN Databases" link. The remote access page will appear, then choose Lakewood Public Library from the drop down list and enter your library card number. At the OneSearch page, you can use the OneSearch interface or click on a specific database to use it exclusively.

#### Website Watch

The Family Support Consortium is a collaboration of the Heights Parent Center, Shaker Family Center, and the City of Lakewood Family Room. Together, members of the Consortium have over 40 years of experience providing programs and services, that strengthen families and build community. All members of the Consortium offer programs explicitly grounded in the principles of Family Support. For more information about the consortium's programs, services, and upcoming events, go to [www.lkwdpl.org/gcfc/about](http://www.lkwdpl.org/gcfc/about).

# City Hall Beat

City Council Meeting 6/20/05

## Smoking, Grass, and Zoning Out

At 7:37 p.m., Council President Robert Seelie brought the council to order for its June 20, 2005, meeting.

Rugby anyone? Lakewood is the place for female ruggers, winning this year's high school Ohio state and national championships. While council prepared a resolution of congratulations, Mayor Thomas George recited with great pride the Lakewood team's accomplishments in the exciting championship series.

Accepting the council resolution was the team's coach, Andre Bruwer. Bruwer, in acknowledging the resolution, gave a brief history of the girls' rugby club and expressed hope that the club will achieve team designation to encourage better support. Currently, the national champions have no home field, using Edgewater Park as their practice field and trees as goal posts. Despite these obstacles and club status, coach Bruwer said that this year the team was ranked eighth in the nation out of 256 teams.

Under old business, Councilmember Seelie (Ward 3) gave a committee of the whole report on the Charter Review Commission Recommendations. That commission presented to council two versions of an amended charter. One suggested minor changes within the current mayor-council form of government and the other suggested a change to a city manager form of government. Seelie indicated that the committee of the whole strongly supports the mayor-council charter proposal and will consider those recommendations.

Seelie then gave a committee of the whole report on in-house tax collections. It was determined by Finance Director Vic Nogalo that Lakewood could better and less expensively col-

lect taxes than the Regional Income Tax Agency. The committee's report supports that and recommends that the city switch from RITA to in-house for tax collections.

Councilmember Denis Dunn (at large) disputed the predictions showing a savings. Councilmember Ed FitzGerald (at large) pointed out that if the city does not realize the anticipated savings, it could, at any time, switch back to RITA for collections. Mayor George indicated that switching to in-house collection would provide better customer service, an important component of the administration's overall financial strategy.

In a resolution to change to in-house collections, the vote was 5 to 2 in favor with Councilmember Dunn and Councilmember Mary Louise Madigan (Ward 4) voting against.

The next item of old business was the proposed ban on indoor smoking to include bars and restaurants.

At the last council meeting, the Clean Indoor Air Commission presented its extensive report to council, recommending that council expand the prohibition of indoor smoking to include bars and restaurants.

Meanwhile, The Lakewood Hospitality Association—a group of tavern and restaurant owners—had been circulating an initiative petition exempting bars and restaurants from the ban. With these two competing proposals being put in front of council at the same time, Council President Seelie set Monday, June 27, at 6:30 for the committee of the whole to meet and address these two proposals.

Council heard comments before receiving the initiative petition and the committee of the whole report. Seelie

emphasized that any comments were likely to be repeated at the upcoming special meeting.

Councilmember Dunn, the primary proponent of extending the no smoking ban offered arguments that have been used to support this ban in many past presentations. Despite the extensive and complete presentation by chairman Joe Gibbons, co-chair Paul Wingenfeld apparently thought that the commission's work was not getting due consideration from council. He expressed that opinion in a letter that was read into the record by a member of the Clean Indoor Air Commission.

Once again, members of the audience presented their side of the issue. The apparent solidity of the commission's report and its process came under question. Members Cecil Yates and Joannie Johncock, both tavern owners, revealed that they thought the commission was inherently biased and never properly considered their views.

The primary question that council was considering was whether or not to receive communications from Councilmember Dunn supporting the Clean Indoor Air Commission and the letter of criticism from Wingenfeld. In a rare move, council voted against receiving the communications by a vote of 5-2 with Dunn and Councilmember Ryan Demro (Ward 2) voting yes, to receive.

In corridor comments (an exclusive feature of the *Lakewood Observer*), longtime council observer Frank Murtaugh could not remember council refusing to receive a communication. This action was a clear rebuke to Councilmember Dunn.

In new business, Councilmember Michael Dever (at large) wants to establish a Citizen Infrastructure Committee. Dever, who chairs the public works committee of council, indicated that in the next few years Lakewood will be facing sewer reconstruction to comply with state and federal standards. Costs are expected to exceed \$100 million.

This committee is needed to review this effort and coordinate the sewer upgrade with other infrastructure upgrades. It will review plans by

the city engineer and contractors and disseminate information to the community. Mayor George pointed out that not only was this a good idea, but that the Ohio EPA requires that the city establish a citizen review committee.

Councilmember Patrick Corrigan (Ward 1) is proposing an increase in fees charged to property owners if the city has to cut overgrown grass and weeds. Corrigan indicated that due to a backlog of foreclosure cases at the county level, property maintenance at the local level is ignored by owners of properties being foreclosed. He wants the costs incurred by the city to be recoverable by placing liens on the affected properties.

Also placed on first reading was a change in zoning designation of three schools that are to be eliminated. The proposed change is from public school to planning development designation. This is the first step in determining the future use of these properties.

In closing comments, Police Chief Thomas O'Malley announced that the police cars are getting a new look. One new cruiser has received a lot of public comment and the rest of the fleet will soon be updated.

Reported by Stan Austin—Lakewood Observer City Council reporter.

### Become an Observer!

The *Lakewood Observer* is looking for people, ages 18-100, to get involved in the paper and the city. We are looking for volunteer writers, photographers, designers, and illustrators to help with the production of the paper. It does not matter if you are a professional or amateur, our editorial staff will be glad to help.

If you are interested, e-mail to: [editor@lakewoodobserver.com](mailto:editor@lakewoodobserver.com) or register online at <http://lakewoodobserver.com/forum>

**News releases**—If you have information on an event, organization, program or news on *anything* that has to do with Lakewood, send it to: [city.editor@lakewoodobserver.com](mailto:city.editor@lakewoodobserver.com)

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## People Around Lakewood

### Cellist Justine Endress Receives Scholarship

Justine E. Endress of Lakewood was awarded with the Mount Union College Music Proficiency award from Mount Union College. These awards are given to students who demonstrate exceptional talent in music. Each recipient must first audition and demonstrate the required skills. Awards are offered to instrumentalists and/or vocalists and to both music majors and non-music majors. Amounts range from \$600 to \$5,000 per academic year.



Endress, the daughter of Jeff and Tina of Lakewood, is a freshman music major with a concentration in cello performance. She is a 2005 graduate of Lakewood High School where she participated in the Lakewood High School symphony and chamber orchestras, symphonic treble choir, The Lakewood Project Rock Orchestra, and received the Director's Award for 2005.

Mount Union College is a private, liberal arts college located in Alliance, Ohio. Established in 1846, the College offers 45 major fields of study to its 2,400 students. Mount Union's 115-acre campus includes 32 major buildings, two of which are located in the National Register of Historical Places.

### John Lovano's Stained Glass Stained Images



Photo: John Lovano



Photo: John Lovano



Photo: John Lovano

John Lovano has lived in Lakewood for a long time. He works as a cement truck driver. During a period when he was injured and in a neck brace, he took up stained glass for a hobby. I think we are all glad he did. Working from everyday objects and familiar designs and logos, John reveals them in a whole new light as stained glass.

Pieces like the Harley Eagle featuring over 343 pieces of glass, Mickey Mouse balancing Walt in a bubble, and even his NY Yankee pieces make you feel like you are in a place of worship.

Here is a small sample of his work. These are not for sale, but he does take on commissioned work for homeowners, businesses, and sports fans. Check out the "hobby" of one of Lakewood's Finest at [www.stainedimage.com](http://www.stainedimage.com).

## Levin College Names Dr. Ned Hill Vice President for Economic Development

The Cleveland State University Board of Trustees has approved the creation of a new University position—Vice President for Economic Development.



Dr. Edward W. (Ned) Hill, Professor and Distinguished Scholar of Economic Development at Cleveland State's Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, has been named to the position, effective July 1.

"Ned Hill is a highly respected and nationally known economic development expert whose advice and counsel are sought—and followed—by government agencies, civic organizations, planners, policy makers, and political leaders of both parties," said President Michael Schwartz. "This appointment recognizes Dr. Hill's outstanding credentials, enhances his ability to be a significant resource and key consultant to a wider audience, and strengthens Cleveland State's position as a key player in the economic development of our city, region and state."

Dr. Hill, one of the University's top faculty members, will remain in the

classroom and continue to teach both undergraduate and graduate classes. He was awarded Cleveland State University's Distinguished Faculty Award for Research in 1998 and a merit award for research in 2002.

"Being appointed Cleveland State University's first Vice President for Economic Development is an honor that is a reflection of the superb group of students and colleagues that I have had the privilege to work with over the past 20 years at the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs," said Dr. Hill. "The College is dedicated to engaged scholarship, where research, teaching and public service are blended together. This has resulted in an opportunity to think about and act on the critical economic development opportunities that confront our state, region, and city.

"President Schwartz has charged me with acting as a bridge between the University and the economy, where the economy and economic well-being of the people of Ohio are my primary concern. I have been asked to help connect the University to the demands and opportunities that the changing economic landscape of Ohio present. I could not ask for a better assignment," he continued.

Dr. Hill joined the University in 1985. He was promoted to Professor and Distinguished Scholar in the fall of 2001. He is also a Nonresident Senior Fellow of the Metropolitan Policy Program at The Brookings Institution, an independent public policy research organization in Washington, D.C., and a Nonresident Fellow at the Institute of Urban and Regional Development at the University of California at Berkeley. He writes on economic development and urban public policy and edited the *Economic Development Quarterly* from 1994 to 2005.

He is the author of two books, co-editor of five books, and author of over 70 articles, book chapters and columns. He was part of a joint Deloitte Consulting-Cleveland State University team that wrote *Industry-Based Competitive Strategies for Ohio: Managing three portfolios* in 2005 and *Manufacturing Pennsylvania's Future* in 2004. *Ohio's Competitive Advantage: Manufacturing Productivity* was released in 2001. In 2005 the Russell Sage Foundation is publishing Dr. Hill's analysis of the impact of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 on Manhattan and the New York region as a business location; the Brookings Institution will release his study of Ohio's gasoline tax in a book

on transportation policy; and the *Journal of the American Planning Association* will publish his study of the competitive position of America's major central cities in the competition for jobs.

He earned a Ph.D. in both economics and urban and regional planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1981.

He was elected to the board of Cleveland's Westside Industrial Retention Network (WIRE-Net) in 2002; elected to the Board of Directors of the Urban Affairs Association from 2002 to 2005, where he was the secretary-treasurer in 2003 and 2004; appointed to the board of advisors of the Generation Foundation in 2001, the Council on Competitiveness' Center for Regional Innovation Experts Group in 2003, the Board of the Ohio MEMs society in 2003; and he advises the Knight Foundation on economic development investments. Gov. Bob Taft appointed Dr. Hill to the Urban Revitalization Task Force in the fall of 1999. He was a member of Leadership Cleveland's Class of 1997 and a member of the board of the Cleveland Zoological Society. Dr. Hill and Harold Wolman were awarded the Robertson Prize from the editors of *Urban Studies* in 1994.

# Minding the Issues

By Gordon Brumm

## Lakewood, the “American Dream,” and Classical Athens

As a college freshman I took a Humanities course that dealt in large part with classical Greek literature. During one lecture, Professor Havelock mentioned that the ancient Greeks, meaning primarily the Athenians, lived better than we do. There was no chance to discuss this remark in class, so through all these decades I have wondered what he meant. Perhaps Lakewood will show me.

Classical Athens had a population roughly comparable to Lakewood. Like Lakewood, Athens was a walking city. Beyond that, the comparison begins to fade, of course. We have no Sophocles or Aristophanes, no Thucydides, no Plato, no Pericles. On the other hand, we don't have any slaves. The classical Athenians did not have movies or television by which they could view the works of Shakespeare or Arthur Miller or Tolstoy, nor did they have a library that allowed everyone to read these works.

More than any of these things, though, is a city's perception of the good life. The ruling conception in our nation today is the “American Dream.” To the Puritans in New England, the American Dream meant creation of a virtuous community defined by their understanding of the Bible. To the Founding Fathers, it was a Republic devoted to preserving the Rights of Man undefiled by European corruption. To Southern planters, it was a life of wealth and power, built on slave labor.

All these ideas dissolved in the brainless media mixmaster to the most simple-minded common denominator; namely, having enough money to live a secure middle-class life with house and yard included. I can think of nothing more vacuous, shallow, and just outright vulgar than what we now see advertised as “the American Dream.”

In contrast to the contemporary

“American Dream,” Professor Havelock might have set out the words of Aristotle. Aristotle said:

“The human good (happiness) is activity in accordance with excellence, and if there be more than one excellence, in accordance with the best and most complete.”

It is no coincidence that Aristotle lived much of his life in Athens, for Athens was a city devoted to pursuit of human excellence. It was large enough, and diverse enough, to offer a variety of viewpoints from which citizens could learn as well as test their own ideas. It was a participative city—an arena in which individual citizens exercised their creativity and intelligence through debate and joint action with one another, expressing their own identities while still being bound up in the community. The city existed for the purpose of allowing its citizens to live better lives in the process of mak-

ing a better city.

The contrast between the Athenian ideal and the “American Dream” is plain. The former is active, creative, and self-critical; the latter is passive, consumerist, and smug. For the Athenians, the city was the focus of those common activities that constituted the good life. For the “American Dream,” the city is merely a means through which citizens pursue their individual goals.

Lakewood's future is open. We can lift ourselves above the dreary “American Dream” and share the Athenian dream of a participative city whose citizens use their creative intelligence to craft a better community. Kids' Cove, the dog park, and the skateboard park are forerunners. *The Lakewood Observer*, we hope, will be among many projects that display a new spirit of committed creativity and intelligence. Athens on the Lake? We can do it.



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# Slife of Life

By Dan Slife

## Education and Experimentation in a Post-47 Lakewood

The dust seems to have settled. Political fallout from the defeat of Issue 47, the West End Development Project, has resulted in a shift of office holders, one that did not exactly elect a unified platform on the issue of development, however much that development seemed a key friction point leading to a populist-style victory for several candidates. What has changed significantly in the months following 47's defeat has been the level of conscious citizen participation in civic life. In this regard Issue 47 can be conceptualized, in essence, as the "crack that let the light in." The community was polarized along two lines, either for or against the project. The need to preserve and save our city in these tough times of changing life conditions was not the polarizing issue. Rather, the most effective way of getting there became the trigger point dividing the city. Each side was convinced that they knew what was best for the city.

Underlying the semantics of the opposing political arguments lies a fundamental dichotomy in approach. The crack can be seen as a split in the way the community realizes self-actualization. There is split between certainty and uncertainty. There is a split between educating and experimenting. The "light" that we might choose to "let in" entails the integration of both approaches. That is, if we're serious about transforming this community on any terms, we have to get down and dirty with a pragmatic,

quasi-Athenian style polis. Once there, we may overcome the split.

We are on the way. Pushing a program of education, LakewoodAlive is a substantial civic engagement. Formed after the fateful election cycle, LakewoodAlive has become a "portal to information about economic development for the community," says Vice President Jay Foran. Ultimately, LakewoodAlive aims to educate and engage the community on issues of economic development. Informed discussion about economic development is the goal. As programs of education assume a known outcome, LakewoodAlive knows that economic development will strengthen our city's tax base and thus our quality of life.

In recent months, At-Large Councilman Dennis Dunn began proposing several experimental topics that are directly related to the changing needs of our community. Dunn has been exploring the mechanics of community currencies and inquiring to what extent Lakewood might benefit from Improvisational Economic Devices (IEDs) in general. Complementary Currencies, or IEDs, are circuits of exchange mediated by either direct or electronic exchange for goods and services. LakewoodAlive has also recognized the need to educate the community about IEDs, as evidenced in their informational program. The LakewoodAlive homepage contains the link to a Lakewood Public Library pathfinder on the subject ([www.lkwdpl.org/city/lakewooddollars/index](http://www.lkwdpl.org/city/lakewooddollars/index)).

org/city/lakewooddollars/index).

For five weeks in March and April, Lakewood Public Library hosted a program entitled "Lakewood: Future Tools." A series of lectures presented in collaboration with Dr. Larry Keller of CSU's Levin College, the program took experimental aim at education. The program covered multiple approaches to engaging the city on a grass roots level. Topics ranged from social science methodology to sustainable development and beyond ([www.lkwdpl.org/futuretools/](http://www.lkwdpl.org/futuretools/)). In one lecture, "Articulating Lakewood's Future: Generation X and Generation Y," a panel of young Lakewoodites with a love and vision for the city stepped up to the plate and put it on the line. One panelist voiced a radical vision of a car-free city. Another panelist, Vince Franz said, "we need to amplify what is already good in Lakewood" in response to a collegial debate between a few panelists concerning economic development strategies.

Amidst the community discussion, economic development remains largely undefined. The common explanation is that economic development is the expansion of tax base via redevelopment efforts that raise property values and thus tax revenues. Can economic development be the creation of jobs or alternative means of exchange to render housing affordable while working to meet basic survival needs for the shrinking lower-middle to middle class that occupies a vital core of our precious city? Is it the enticing of franchise establishments with tax abatements and other subsidized means for obtaining capital investment, bringing low-paying jobs and bland, soulless retail to town?

In their purest form, cities are about people. They are social centers within which frequent human contact germinates reciprocity in human relationships. Conversely, in mainstream cultural terms, cities are becoming more like consumption centers where reciprocity between individuals is replaced by the relationships each individual shares with the goods and services they consume. "The important local amenities are no longer schools and churches, as in the ethnic enclaves of the urban mosaic described by the old Chicago school," writes T. Nichols Clark in *The City as Entertainment Machine*. "A residential population of young professionals with high levels of education and lower incidence of children creates a social profile geared toward recreation and consumption concerns."

Clark paints a picture of the young upwardly mobile living with the growing class of have-nots in America's old industrial areas. Two seemingly dichotomous elements so familiar to post-modern America are thus revealed in their functional 21st century relationship to each other: the "information economy" and a widening of the income gap. Clark points out that "there is a rise of the individual citizen/consumer in explanatory power, which follows from

increases in citizen income, education, and political empowerment. ... The growth of this 'new class' however coexists with substantial numbers of structurally disadvantaged within the city, and the development of the Entertainment Machine is structurally uneven." The "structurally disadvantaged" to which Clark refers to are, within his context, those suffering the effects of deindustrialization.

If Entertainment Machine is the answer, Lakewood may have its work cut out for it. Lakewood draws its greatest civic strength from a high level of city services including public schools, public library, safety forces, parks and recreation, and let's not forget, the Cushman-powered backyard garbage collection.

In his article entitled "The Rise of the Ephemeral City," Joel Kotkin makes the argument that "Even at their best, places like Cleveland and Philadelphia will never be able to compete on a global scale with the likes of San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, London, Berlin, and Paris for the dollars of young professionals, the nomadic rich, and tourists. "There are simply not enough yuppies to go around," demographer William Frey says. These "cool city" wannabes are unlikely to be anything other than "me too" copies of hipper, more alluring places. It would make more sense for these cities to work on the basics—public safety, education, regulations, taxes, sanitation—so they could woo entrepreneurs and cost-conscious homeowners. The amenities will follow once there is a market to consume them" ([www.metropolismag.com/cda/story.php?artid=1260](http://www.metropolismag.com/cda/story.php?artid=1260)).

Watch out Cleveland! In Kotkin's context, Lakewood is a bricks-and-mortar town. If we are ready, the rebuilding can begin. We already have the foundation: the need to stabilize our tax base—initiated plans for redeveloping the West End, our need to push beyond that framework has energized the community.

The common thread in all these civic happenings is economy. What is it? Do we work within the system or devise ways to buffer or sidestep it with local exchange circuits? The best approaches will ultimately combine elements of both. As Lakewood citizens become more engaged, there will be endeavors that both educate and experiment. As Lakewood citizens take into account the complexity of a globalizing world, the city's survival will hinge on its capacity for education and experimentation.

Globalizing pressures have pushed Lakewood's collective persona to a cracking point. Our comfortable lifestyles here are not in line with the Third World economic model that's pushing down to the old industrial urban areas with such zeal. If we need more light in Lakewood, we will have to transform the economy of ourselves through education and experimentation.



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	\$5 Large – Single Topping Pizza	\$5 Large – Single Topping Pizza	
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## Lakewood Eats

### Thai For Two

by Kristen Barker and Bob Togliatti

The Thai Kitchen is a “must go” for all Lakewood residents who are eager to enjoy a delicious meal at a reasonable price. (Isn't that everyone these days?) First-timers will be hooked after sampling the Crispy Spring Rolls or the Chicken Satay appetizer. If you are feeling adventurous and enjoy a little spice, try the chicken and coconut milk soup also known as Tom Kar Kai.

A few of our favorite dishes include Pad-Thai, Pad See-Ew (rice noodles, sweet dark sauce and vegetables), and Keang Musamun (tasty curry with potato, peanut and onion). All meals can be prepared with your choice of chicken, beef, shrimp or tofu. Don't forget to check out the specials and exciting new dishes when they appear on the menu. They should not be overlooked. Most dinner entrees are priced around \$8, while lunches run about \$5 per plate.

Proprietors Suriya and Numtip Chuaypradit, a.k.a. Jimmi and Jum, opened the doors to the Thai Kitchen in 1997. They came to the United States in 1975 from South Thailand. Their mission is to serve good-quality authentic Thai cuisine, and that they most certainly do!

This small, tidy establishment holds about six tables which seat anywhere from two to four people. A good portion of their business is carry-out, but it is always a treat to dine in and enjoy a sweet Thai Iced Coffee while the intoxicating aromas fill the air.

Thai Kitchen is open for business every day but Tuesday. The restaurant is located at 12210 Madison Ave. in Lakewood, on the north side of the street between Ridgewood and Winchester—look for the neon sign in the window, just after the Family Dollar Store.



Below, Numtip and Suriya Chuaypradit, a.k.a. Jum and Jimmi, in the kitchen.



## Chef Geoff

By Jeff Endress

With the summer season comes the time to move our kitchens outside and enjoy the wonderful scents and tastes that only grilling can produce. Almost everyone knows that a handful of wood chips tossed on a charcoal or gas burner can add a new dimension to the flavors of grilling. But let's take the issue of smoke a bit further.

Smoking is a slow process which exposes food to minimal heat and, at the same time, engulfs the meat in



constant smoke. While it is possible to smoke meats in a standard gas or charcoal grill, often the result is either a dry piece of meat or one lacking in the desired smoke flavor.

To take your outdoor cooking to the next level, use a smoker designed to minimize the heat and maximize the smoke. Some larger charcoal grills have separate smoking chambers that channel smoke from a combustion chamber which does eliminate some of the heat

and produce good results. There is also a “water smoker,” where the food is placed on racks over a pan of water. I recommend using chunks of wood rather than chips, as chunks burn more slowly and give better smolder. Whatever you use, it is important that the wood be well soaked (at least overnight). The heat not only causes the wood chunks to smoke but also keeps the food moist as the pan releases steam. Meco and Brinkman are two brands generally available at Home Depot and Wal-Mart for about \$70. You may also want to consider a “cabinet” style smoker, which can be charcoal, gas or electric. Typically, this style will cost less than \$140 for gas without a propane tank and slightly more for electric.

Most smokers do require some attention, both to temperature as well as adding wood. To take full advantage of your time on the hammock, look into the Bradley Smoker, produced in Canada. This cabinet-style unit features a refrigerator-style seal and separate heating element. Pre-formed disks of smoking wood are automatically fed into a smoking chamber and they do not need soaking. Because combustion is kept to a minimum, so is the heat, and it is possible to smoke even delicate bay scallops without drying them. As you would expect, this labor savings comes at a price; the Bradley starts at about \$350.

### Smoked Barbequed Brisket

One well-trimmed beef brisket  
1 tablespoon coarse pepper  
1 tablespoon coarse salt  
1 tablespoon brown sugar  
1 tablespoon Hungarian paprika  
1 tablespoon fennel seed  
2 large Vidalia onions, thinly sliced  
2 heads garlic, minced  
2/3 cup prepared barbeque sauce (I like Masterpiece if not making homemade)  
Smoking chunks (Mesquite or Apple recommended)

Combine pepper, salt, sugar, paprika and fennel. Rub mixture into meat. Place meat in smoker and keep temperature below 150°. A 3 lb. brisket should smoke for 3–4 hours.

Spread 1 sliced onion and 1 minced head of garlic on a sheet of heavy duty foil. Place smoked meat on top of onion and garlic. Spread remaining onion and garlic on top of meat. Pour sauce over and seal the foil into a packet. Cook in a 250° oven for 2 hours (or on a very slow grill).

Serve sliced thinly on sourdough rolls topped with garlic/onion/sauce mixture.

### Announcing the Lakewood Observer Kitchen Gadget Guru Competition!

As a regular part of the culinary feature, we will be hosting a great competition. Periodically, which means as the spirit moves me, we will publish a photo of a mystery kitchen implement. Both the proper name and use and the most inventive name and use will be eligible for some spiffy *Lakewood Observer* prizes. The rules are simple:

1. Each contest will begin at midnight on the date that the issue is published.
2. The first e-mail submission for the correct name and use received (as defined by the e-mail header) will be awarded the prize indicated for that particular gadget identification.
3. All submissions for inventive name and use must be received by the deadline indicated for the particular gadget identification and the prize will be awarded solely at the discretion of the editorial staff of the *Lakewood Observer*.
4. Winners' names and descriptions will be published in the *Lakewood Observer*.
5. Employees and family members of the *Observer* staff are not eligible.

# “Lakewood on the Threshold” Feature Series

## Installment 1: Series Overview, Introduction

by Tom Powell-Bullock

*About This Series: The “Lakewood on the Threshold” series of articles will tackle the questions facing Lakewood as a still-robust inner-ring suburb in the midst of a struggling “old economy” region, a beachhead of community strength which, while facing regional economic challenges, yet retains key ingredients needed for a sustainable, successful community that can meet the needs of the workers of a knowledge-based economy-of-tomorrow. What are Lakewood’s choices in this time of economic transition, and how will the decisions we make today affect our community tomorrow?*

*As this series poses questions, we hope it will spark a community-wide discussion to help profile Lakewood’s present assets, identify alternatives for our future, and evaluate proposed development plans.*

In Northeast Ohio, reports of closed plants and manufacturing jobs fleeing overseas are a long-familiar mantra. Cleveland’s dubious distinction of “poorest big city in America” hangs as an albatross upon the neck of the entire region. Recent forfeiture of 1,500 government jobs (500 at NASA Glenn Research Center, 1,000 defense accounting jobs downtown) prompted Alex Machaskee, *The Plain Dealer’s* president and publisher, to renew calls for region-wide planning to reverse Northeast Ohio’s economic decline.

“We are teetering between greatness and despair in Northeast Ohio,” said Machaskee. “We need an overarching vision to give us the ‘big picture’ and to promote prioritization based upon the community’s interests and the initiatives that already are underway.”

This same call to arms might equally apply to the entire Midwest—and (to some extent) the entire nation—for we are in the midst of a decades-long transition between the old manufacturing economy-of-yesterday and a knowledge-based economy-of-tomorrow which stretches back at least to the 1970s.

What are Northeast Ohio’s alternatives in the midst of this economic transition? Such times force communities to tackle difficult dilemmas, such as choosing between low-wage jobs at a Wal-Mart in the Steelyard Commons (cruel irony)—or no jobs at all. Could there be a third way, a solution that presents not a lose-lose, but a win-win, option?

Although macro-economic trends hurt Ohioans and worry observers such as Machaskee, not all conditions are bad. In the midst of Northeast Ohio’s sprawl of hiccupping economy lies Lakewood, a still-robust inner-ring suburb, a bright beachhead of community strength which, while facing regional economic challenges, yet retains several key ingredients needed for sustainable, healthy community life through these years of transition.

Indeed, Lakewood has strengths stemming from its venerable status as

### What is sustainable economic development?

“The goal of community sustainability,” according to the Sustainable Communities Network, “is to establish local economies that are economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible.”

A sustainable economy also “integrates long-term economic growth, environmental quality and social fairness” and captures the full costs of “pollution, traffic congestion, and health risks” typically not accounted for, according to Redefining Progress.

According to the Northeast Ohio think tank Policy Matters, sustainable planning focuses on “retention and upgrading,” seeks “to cooperate instead of compete with neighbors,” and promotes “good jobs that will survive the next decade and the next generation.”

Sources: Sustainable Communities Network ([www.sustainable.org/economy/econ\\_index](http://www.sustainable.org/economy/econ_index)); Redefining Progress ([www.rprogress.org/newprograms/sustEcon/index](http://www.rprogress.org/newprograms/sustEcon/index)); Policy Matters ([www.policymattersohio.org/road](http://www.policymattersohio.org/road)).

an older suburb which, paradoxically, could place it on the cutting edge: Pre-World War II land use, housing, and population patterns have come full circle and are now critical components for forming “livable communities,” the very latest in urban development thinking. Actualizing Lakewood as a community-of-tomorrow ready to meet the needs of economy-of-tomorrow workers would blaze a trail for other Northeast Ohio communities.

### Lakewood as a Livable Community

Lakewood, to be sure, shares some woes in common with its neighbors. Like Cleveland, Lakewood has been losing population for years: After retaining a stable population of 70,000 for five decades, Lakewood began shedding residents in the 1980s until reaching 56,646 in 2000.

But by other measures, Lakewood is ahead of its fellows. For example, in April 2005 unemployment in Lakewood stood at 1,600 workers, or 4.8 percent, according to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This compares favorably with the 5.8 percent unemployment Cuyahoga County-wide and 7.7 percent unemployment in Cleveland. Further, a 1992 county housing survey found that 95 percent of Lakewood homes were sound or needed only minor repairs. This high rate, plus continuing appreciation of home values, puts Lakewood’s housing stock well above the inner-ring suburb average.

But Lakewood can be optimistic about its future for reasons beyond such measures. Lakewood could become a livable community.

A “livable community” is the opposite of urban sprawl: a city planned around neighborhood living rather than automobile commuting, with workplaces and retail shopping blended among residential areas, and

with public spaces and architectural design fostering a distinctive identity and cohesive community fabric.

“Livability” is closely related to another term, “smart growth,” which rejects auto-centric planning and single-use enclaves (i.e., malls, business parks, subdivisions) in favor of blended development that improves not just developer bottom lines but also quality of life, corner-store commerce, and the environment. Smart growth revitalizes existing neighborhoods instead of sowing sprawl along an ever-advancing exurban fringe that leaves blighted disinvestment in its wake. It also reduces commute times, sparing both the environment and hectic family schedules.

Simply put, a livable community is what results from smart growth: a compact town with a distinctive identity and mixed-use development supporting a socio-economically diverse population through a blend of affordable and high-value housing and allowing residents to walk, bike, ride transit or drive to work, shop or mingle with neighbors.

How does realizing Lakewood’s potential as a livable community hold promise for the future? A livable community is the counterpart of the economy-of-tomorrow. While our community can’t be economically self-sufficient, but will ride regional market cycles, we can prepare for the economy-of-tomorrow by developing ourselves to house its businesses and meet its workers’ needs.

Regional economies “beaten down by manufacturing’s long decline, continue to suffer,” notes the business journal *Inc.* magazine. “On the other hand, communities that can attract skilled workers and nurture knowledge-based or service-industry businesses are thriving.”

What are skilled workers, the drivers of the economy-of-tomorrow, seeking in prospective home communities? *Inc.* reports that “young, educated workers, the raw material of growth” are abandoning “high-cost urban centers” for communities with “low costs and high quality of life.”

The trend of tomorrow is to create a sense of community to counterbalance the anonymity and dispassion of

market change, which grinds through companies and sheds jobs with all the concern a wood chipper has for deadwood. Compared to Europe, the American system provides workers fewer protections, exposes them to more mobility, more churning of job markets and greater uncertainty.

*Inc.* cites as an example the growing information and business services sector in Boise, Idaho, and attributes much of its success in attracting Sili-

### “What are the attributes of a livable community?”

- “Mixed-use development brings housing, commercial, retail, civic and office development into closer proximity, placing more destinations within reach of a short walk, bike ride or transit trip.
- “Compact development makes more efficient use of land, preserves open space, lowers infrastructure costs, supports neighborhood retail and transit services, and brings destinations closer together.
- “Slow, interconnected traffic-calmed streets ensure safe, convenient pedestrian and bicycle circulation without impeding vehicle circulation.
- “Pedestrian-scale design balances automobile circulation and focuses on making environments that are comfortable, pleasant and pedestrian-oriented.
- “Transit-oriented and transit-adjacent development places higher intensity development within close proximity to transit stops, making transit a more viable alternative to the automobile and increasing ridership for the transit system.
- “Increases in ridership generates revenue to fund higher levels of transit service.
- “Mix of housing types provides housing choices and equitable access to services for people of all income levels and life cycles.”

Source: Excerpt from Local Government Commission fact sheet, “Neighborhood-Scale Planning Tools to Create Active, Livable Communities” ([www.lgc.org/freepub/land\\_use/factsheets/neighborhood\\_planning](http://www.lgc.org/freepub/land_use/factsheets/neighborhood_planning)).

### What is Smart Growth?

“Smart growth,” according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), “is development that serves the economy, the community, and the environment” and “recognizes connections between development and quality of life.” It simultaneously achieves:

- “Healthy communities”—meaning a “clean environment” which accommodates growth while “preserving open space,” “reusing land,” and “protecting water supplies and air quality”;
- “Economic development and jobs”—to “create business opportunities and improve [the] local tax base”;
- “Strong neighborhoods—which provide a range of housing options,” feature a “greater mix of housing, commercial and retail uses,” and create “a sense of community”; and
- “Transportation choices—that give people the option to walk, ride a bike, take transit, or drive.”

Smart growth restores “vitality to existing cities and older suburbs” instead of abandoning existing infrastructure and rebuilding it on “open space and prime agricultural lands at the suburban fringe.” This curbs “increasing commute times and longer distances to stores, schools and other daily needs.”

Source: U.S. EPA, “About Smart Growth” ([www.epa.gov/livability/about\\_sg](http://www.epa.gov/livability/about_sg)).

con Valley workers to Boise's "human values, its sense of community and cooperation." [Source: *Inc.* magazine, "The Best Places For Doing Business in America 2005" ([www.inc.com/magazine/20050501/bestcities](http://www.inc.com/magazine/20050501/bestcities)).

This trend works in favor of Lakewood, a town with many quality-of-life-enhancing assets. Tim Laskey, a Lakewood accountant and outgoing president of the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce, can rattle off a list of such qualities in rapid succession:

"Our location on Lake Erie is a benefit; the fact that we're located near the downtown metropolis of Cleveland is a benefit. If you're working downtown, it's a short commute—saves gas and wear and tear on the car compared to the drive from Avon. You're also close to downtown entertainment and cultural activities such as pro sports teams and Playhouse Square. People in Lakewood can make better use of those facilities," says Laskey.

### Smart Growth Principles:

- "Mix Land Uses"
- "Take Advantage of Compact Building Design"
- "Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices"
- "Create Walkable Neighborhoods"
- "Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place"
- "Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environmental Areas"
- "Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities"
- "Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices"
- "Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective"
- "Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Development Decisions"

Source: U.S. EPA, "About Smart Growth" ([www.epa.gov/livability/about\\_sg](http://www.epa.gov/livability/about_sg)).

Further information: Sustainable Communities Network ([www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/principles](http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/principles)).

He also cites Lakewood's unique retail as an attractive asset. "Lakewood has lots of small businesses that aren't chains. In outlying suburbs, you see the same old things, whether retail or restaurants, and what you see in Avon is the same as what you'd see in Oklahoma or anywhere across the country. Chain store strip malls don't give a distinctive character," Laskey observes. "But in Lakewood, the local taverns are one-of-a-kind, and the owner is often a local resident. The same goes for CPA firms, florists and other businesses."

Enhancing Lakewood's "livable" traits would further augment Lakewood's quality of life and sense of community and would make it a competitive prospective home for future-economy workers over the next several decades.

### Already on the Path to Livability

Indeed, Lakewood, as an inner-ring suburb, already has many attributes of a livable community. Having grown up in the decades before World War II when streetcars, not automobiles, were

commuters' mainstay, Lakewood neighborhoods were laid out in grids radiating from major avenues lined with stores and streetcar tracks. The result closely resembles the ideal town described in guidelines drafted by the Local Government Commission, an association of city leaders and planners dedicated to livable community development:

"Towns of the type built earlier in this century—those compact, walkable communities where you could walk to the store and kids could walk to school, where there was a variety of housing types—from housing over stores to single-family units with front porches facing tree-lined, narrow streets—these towns provided a life style that now seems far preferable to today's [exurban] neighborhoods." [Source: Judith Corbett and Joe Velasquez, "The Ahwahnee Principles: Toward More Livable Communities." *Western City Magazine*, Sept. 1994. ([www.lgc.org/freepub/land\\_use/articles/ahwahnee\\_article/page01](http://www.lgc.org/freepub/land_use/articles/ahwahnee_article/page01)).

Because of its streetcar history, Lakewood is a walkable community, with neighborhoods built on a pedestrian, rather than automobile, scale and with corner stores and parks within strolling distance. *Walkability* is one of the prime attributes of a livable community, and in Lakewood's case, it is acknowledged and cherished—the city's most-cited strength at a March community meeting convened by the visiting Downtown Assessment Resource Team.

Implicit in the foregoing description is another Lakewood attribute of livability, *mixed-used zoning*. Commerce and workplaces close to neighborhoods are key assets of livable communities, because they break up the segregation of single-use enclaves linked only by umbilical cords of (traffic-clogged) highway, and they end the monotony of commuting not just to workplaces, but also to stores, parks, churches and schools. In Lakewood, commercial corridors on Detroit and Madison Avenues and on West 117th Street provide many dining options (taverns, restaurants, coffee shops) and unique retail offerings (bakeries, antiques, home furnishings, musical instrument and hobby shops).

Concededly, as a bedroom community, a majority of workplaces for Lakewoodites lie beyond city borders, so residents engage in a significant amount of daily commuting. But here, again, its early-suburb status serves the city well: Proximity to downtown Cleveland yields some of the lowest commute times in the region.

Further, Lakewood's fortuitous location also places it close to the regional airport and to Interstate 90 and the Route 2 shoreway. Together with the city's several bus lines and nearby RTA stop, these benefits add up to another livable trait: *a choice of multiple transportation options*.

Another infrastructure strength is Lakewood's housing stock, which, as mentioned above, is surprisingly healthy given its age. Equally important to livability is its available *mix of housing types*: low-cost and high-value, apartments and single-family homes, units to rent or own.

This strong housing stock supports

a dynamic, heterogeneous population in terms of age and income level (while racial diversity is low, though growing in recent years). The middle class is alive and well in Lakewood: Roughly 20 percent of households fall in each of the \$35,000–\$50,000 and \$50,000–\$75,000 brackets, with another 15 percent in the \$25,000–\$35,000 range. Education levels are also strong: Roughly 42 percent have higher degrees and another 20 percent have some college studies. The flower of Lakewood's population is its disproportionately large share of the young: Roughly a quarter of residents fall between 20 and 34 years of age—double the rate of other western suburbs. *Inc.* magazine terms young, educated workers "the raw material of growth."

Lakewood's population enjoys both robust city services—strong public schools, good roads, a top-rated library, accessible local government—and multiple recreation options: a YMCA, the Beck Center for the Arts, 75 acres of city parks, the Rocky River Reservation, and Lake Erie (enjoyment of which will be increased by the lakefront revitalization currently

of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University. "The marketing should be national, noting the opportunities to start and grow businesses in a community where your children will walk to a neighborhood school, you can walk to your work, and all the urban amenities are just a walk away."

Given the many strengths it already possesses, attaining livability for Lakewood is more a process of drawing out and building upon strengths rather than initiating a 180-degree turn.

Increasing public access to Lake Erie at the Lakewood Park lakefront is a prime example of drawing out an existing strength's full potential. While already appreciated for scenic views, enjoyment of the lake will be greatly enhanced when the lakefront project adds a quarter mile of wheelchair-accessible, landscaped walkways and enables swimming from a publicly accessible beach.

Examples of other improvements to build on existing strengths might include strengthening transit to increase transportation options, bolstering local commerce to augment neighborhood-accessible retail and

### Sparking a Dialogue

The ancient Greek philosopher Plato believed that true knowledge couldn't be conveyed in the written word, but only through dialogue. He insisted on live conversation as the primary means for evoking understanding in another person.

Like Plato, we don't presume to have captured all the answers here. We hope, instead, that the discussion begun in these pages sparks a continuing conversation in your own circles—in coffee shops, over dinner, by the office water cooler, across the hedge with your neighbor. We have merely posed some questions to frame the dialogue: The real conversation will be conducted—and the real answers uncovered—by you.

We especially invite you to share your ideas on these issues in the *Observer's* web discussion groups, the "Observation Deck" ([lakewoodobserver.com/forum/index](http://lakewoodobserver.com/forum/index)), which provide a forum for the dialogue to continue and expand in fruitful directions.

underway at Lakewood Park). This rich, locally available array of choices contributes to a high quality of community life.

Together, these "livable assets" nurture and support a strong community spirit, evident in such Lakewood institutions as a renowned Fourth of July parade, summer movies in the park, an open-air vegetable market, high attendance at community meetings, numerous civic associations, and multiple web forums devoted to city issues. Community spirit is important because it is contagious, breaks up the anonymity of big city living, and attracts prospective residents. As Lakewood Library Director Ken Warren observes, "Ultimately, it's the quality of human relationships in both neighborhoods and institutions that make people feel good about living in a place."

### Realizing Livability in Lakewood

How can Lakewood continue as a regional mecca for young workers and increase its appeal to middle income families? Fully realizing Lakewood's potential as a livable community would attract not only these, but all population groups.

"Lakewood needs to market the community, emphasizing the affordable family environment, excellent libraries and schools, urban density with mixed uses, and proximity to downtown," says Dr. Larry Keller, a professor at the Maxine Goodman Levin College

employment, and improving streetscape aesthetic design to enhance Lakewood's distinctive identity and sense of place.

Laskey describes how restructuring Lakewood retail districts could simultaneously boost commerce and a sense of place. "Lakewood's not going to compete with the big box stores, but we do have all these unique, trendy shops which offer something you can't get anywhere else. If you concentrate this retail together into one location, you can form a three- or four-block district which allows shoppers to walk from one store to the next, to the next. This offers a very attractive alternative to the big-box-store-on-the-highway model," says Laskey.

### Development Options

Lakewood's future is far from settled. While our community is strong, its full potential will not be tapped without sound choices and effective leadership.

If Lakewood holds such promise, how is it to be realized? Development plans will certainly play a leading role, and the best will catalyze further change.

Mary Anne Crampton, president of LakewoodAlive, observes that work on one project can lead to additional development. "The reality in Lakewood is that capital funds will always be tight, so collaboration is essential to any development effort. And when you've had a cross-section of individu-

# Spilled Ink

## Threshold *continued from page 18*

als and organizations working together on a project, that synergy often points the way to the next step," she says.

City planners and business leaders have outlined several development plans in recent years, including improving downtown Lakewood's commercial appeal, developing the intersection at Madison and Hilliard, and enhancing commerce in the Scenic Park District.

An effort to improve downtown Lakewood's commercial appeal is picking up steam. Main street revitalization specialists recently toured Lakewood's downtown, assessed its retail and streetscape design, and diagnosed problems to be addressed. Incorporating feedback from a March community meeting, the consultants recommended, among broader measures, beautifying Lakewood's downtown streetscape to present to visitors a coherent image, identity and sense of arrival. Improving sidewalks, parks and plazas would build on Lakewood's walkability to lure strolling shoppers to a destination district and retain them with charming offerings such as public spaces and sidewalk dining.

Developing the major intersection at Madison Avenue and Hilliard Road could provide a much-needed commercial boost in the arm. The area's strengths include its central location, good access (bus routes on both major streets), green space (nearby Wagar

park), and the historic theater, which could be restored to anchor new development.

Enhancing commerce in the Scenic Park District continues to be a priority, despite discontinuation of the erstwhile West End project. The area remains ripe for some form of commercial and residential development which could serve as an attractive gateway to traffic entering Lakewood and as a destination district alluring commerce and tax dollars.

The *Observer* hopes to review these and other development proposals in future issues.

### Future Installments in This Series

In future installments of the "Lakewood on the Threshold" series, we hope to examine additional facets of the question of Lakewood's future, such as:

- Main Street Revitalization: Should Lakewood's downtown streetscape be redesigned?;
- Future Visions of Lakewood: A review of development alternatives proposed by the study project "Lakewood Grow";
- Future Economies: Where does Lakewood fit in the economy of tomorrow?

## Name *continued from page 10*

of mandates only on public schools, while exempting community schools. They ignore basic economic principles and plunge ahead with more and more community schools with virtually no public oversight. They construct state proficiency tests that "grade" school districts without regard to demographics, resources, etc., leading many to erroneously believe that aggregate, de-contextualized data can actually tell something meaningful about how an individual child will do in a given school district.

All this makes sense only when one understands the forces arrayed against public education. Beyond those with pure profit motives are those who simply don't believe in the institution. Supporters of public schools, weighed down by cyclical levy campaigns, funding crises, etc., have been slow to recognize the ideological underpinnings of a movement that is not out to reform but to destroy public education and apply the universal elixir.

## Taft *continued from page 10*

These efforts haven't gone unnoticed. The Youth for Justice Summit honored the class with a prize presented by Hope Taft, for Most Outstanding Achievement.

"Our students were the youngest participants, being fourth and fifth graders," Lant said. However, "There was great interest in our project and lots of compliments. Ours was the most unique and well-presented issue.

"While we were in Columbus, one of our fourth graders spoke so knowledgeably about the issue, one of the judges stopped her to ask 'How old are you? I can't believe you know about the law like this,'" Lant said.

This program has not only been highly successful in promoting civic education, but it also nicely fits with Language Arts and Social Studies curricula. "The Language Arts curriculum requires that students produce letters that address specific needs and informational reports supported by facts, details and examples," Lant said. The

## LakewoodAlive *continued from page 3*

commission and president of Summers Rubber Company, and Dr. Tom Bier, director of housing policy and research at Cleveland State University. Dr. Bier stressed the importance of well-defined and well-enforced housing standards to maintain Lakewood as a place attractive to investment. Information about the pending state tax credit for investment in historical structures was also presented. At a second session, inner-city housing experts and City of Lakewood employees presented practical information about housing revitalization options and explained to us the role the housing department plays in the building and remodeling process.

Crampton then spoke about the goal of advocacy. In creating advocates, Crampton said, "LakewoodAlive does not take positions on political issues. LakewoodAlive strongly encourages its members, once informed or educated about an issue, to become advocates of their personal position. We believe that the citizenry should lead our government, not the other way around. As we become informed on a given matter, our city officials want and need to hear what we have to say."

In a final effort to clarify the organization, Crampton emphasized:

1. LakewoodAlive is not a city or government sponsored group. We are not agents for our city government and officials or potential developers. We are a citizen's advocacy group.

2. LakewoodAlive is not a booster organization. We believe all of our members love Lakewood and have its best interests at heart; however, we will equally and honestly examine our strengths and our opportunities as a community.
3. We are not an organization seeking to promote our position on elections and/or issues. We do firmly believe that economic development is an imperative for any city to be sustainable and attractive to its residents. We believe honest and open debate contributes directly to people's willingness to be open to the changes that come with economic development. Building awareness and knowledge among our citizens will contribute directly to the health and well-being of our community.

Looking ahead, Crampton forecast "starting in June and in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce's 'Light Up Lakewood' campaign, LakewoodAlive will be compiling a comprehensive listing of all retailers in Lakewood by product category and by geographic location so as to encourage shopping in Lakewood." LakewoodAlive is also considering forum topics for the fall including those that may be generated in light of the Grow Lakewood Commission Report or other topics of high relevance to the city's future.

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LIQUID INTELLIGENCE

students must also "Investigate self-selected issues, use persuasive strategies by establishing a clear position in support of a proposal, and communicate their findings.

"Also, the Social Studies curriculum requires that the students collect, organize, evaluate and synthesize information from multiple sources in order to draw logical conclusions," Lant said.

Many speak of the need to engender a sense of civic engagement among the youth of America, and it is happening in Lakewood with the help of Julie Lant and Pricilla Goodwin.

## Musician/Artists *continued from page 5*

the heavy metal guitarist. The work of amateur local writers and poets will be given the same consideration as works by published authors with agents. Dance works and other creative performances will be reviewed and reported regardless of whether they take place in a proper recital hall by a well-rehearsed troupe or on a street corner outside of the Phoenix by an impromptu group of ecstatic teenagers.

The *Observer's* Arts and Culture desk will maintain an open submissions policy for audio recordings, books, zines, poetry, and the general promotion of cultural events. In addition to the print version of the *Observer*, our website will offer web page hosting ser-

vices to any area artist or musician. Each individual artist or group may have one page to promote their schedules, contact information, MP3s, writing, or poetry. Interested parties can contact the *Lakewood Observer's* editors for details on the guidelines for web page submission. Artists and musicians can send materials for review or consideration to Matthew Charboneau, Arts and Cultural Affairs Desk c/o The Lakewood Observer.

My mission goals within the larger context of the *Lakewood Observer* are to engage the local arts communities in a grass-roots manner, and to help build a participatory network within the creative class of Northeast Ohio through inclusive journalism.

CORNER

**AROUND THE SALOON & CAFE**

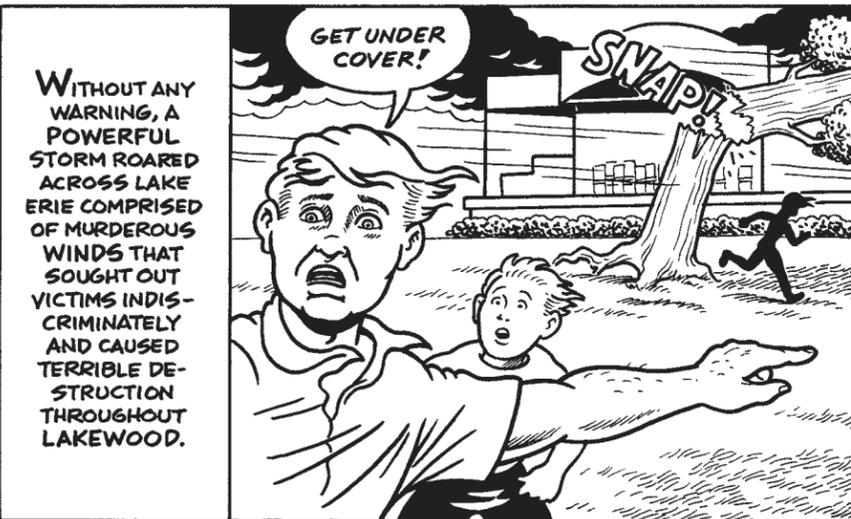
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# THE FOURTH OF JULY STORM

STORY BY SCOTT MacGREGOR  
ART BY GREG BUDGETT  
and GARY DUMM



WITHOUT ANY WARNING, A POWERFUL STORM ROARED ACROSS LAKE ERIE COMPRISED OF MURDEROUS WINDS THAT SOUGHT OUT VICTIMS INDISCRIMINATELY AND CAUSED TERRIBLE DESTRUCTION THROUGHOUT LAKWOOD.



THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE HAD ARRIVED AT LAKWOOD PARK TO WATCH HOLIDAY FIREWORKS JUST AS THE STORM ROLLED IN LIKE A TON OF BRICKS. WHEN TWO TEEN-AGERS DISAPPEARED UNDER A FALLING TREE, PEOPLE STOPPED PANICKING AND SPRANG INTO ACTION.



OFF DUTY DOCTORS AND NURSES, MANY ON FOOT, RUSHED TO THE HOSPITAL TO CARE FOR THE INJURED AND DYING.



I'll never forget the great fourth of July storm. The way our community responded said a lot about our city, then and always. It truly was our "FINEST HOUR."

