

THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Your Independent Source For Local News And Opinion – An Official Google News Source

Volume 4, Issue 9, April 29, 2008

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Mayor Edward FitzGerald Delivers

Lakewood's State Of The City Address

by Mayor Edward FitzGerald

First, I would like to thank Superintendent Estrop for making this wonderful new facility available to us this evening. Garfield School is a perfect example of what Lakewood can achieve when we work together, and it is particularly compelling because this building is a blend of the new and the old Lakewood.

I would also like to thank Council President Mike Dever and all of the members of Lakewood City Council for their attendance here this evening. Lakewood is fortunate to have an excellent City Council, and I say that not

just because they have been supportive of my efforts in the first 100 days. Although, I would not say it is often or as loudly if they hadn't been. But, I say it because they have an oversight function, which I respect, and which they have exercised in these 100 days, and our local government is the better for it.

It is my mission here this evening to do two things: first, to briefly assess the current state of affairs of the City of Lakewood; and secondly, to outline

your city government's plans for action in any area of endeavor where we can move our city forward.

In just two years, our city will mark the 100th anniversary of its incorporation as a city. In those 100 years, the city has faced a succession of major changes, from the initial development of our current housing stock and infrastructure systems, the development of our commercial corridors, the economic upheaval during the Great Depression, to our rapidly growing population in the years following World War II and the development of Gold Coast area. Each generation of Lakewood leadership faced different challenges, but each generation found its way through the obstacles and preserved our city's status as a strong and vibrant community.

In the last few years, however, a subtle change occurred in our public policy discussions here in Lakewood. As we began to face more traditionally urban problems, instead of facing these problems with the candor these situations demanded, it became popular or prevalent to deny that Lakewood had any significant problems. And anyone who claimed that Lakewood was facing a serious crisis ran the risk of being accused of lacking sufficient pride in our city. This approach to our civic dialogue had the additional political benefit of insulating our political leaders from any real responsibility for making progress against a formidable set of problems.

While this trend may have been politically convenient, the timing could not have been more inconvenient for Lakewood's well-being. Because, as nearly everyone now admits, in the last few years, our city has faced a wave of challenges, any one of which would tax the ability of the city to deal with it. As far back as the 1980s, the poverty rate of our city began to climb. At the same time, the growth in our income tax revenue was anemic at best. Our housing stock, much of which was created at the beginning of the 20th century, was rapidly aging and required ever more vigilance and more investment. At the same time, the phenomenon of urban sprawl began to affect our city, as new investment, as well as affluent residents, began to leave Cleveland and inner-ring suburbs like Lakewood for the surrounding counties, taking their resources with them.



photo by David Lay

A city government, which had a reputation of being responsive, failed to adapt to changing fiscal realities and continued to increase the size of local government. Investments in technology were insufficient by any standard, and we did not match the productivity gains realized in the private sector. The number of employees and the resulting cost of city government continued to rise.

We eventually reached a peak of 555 full-time employees, while the number of total employees grew to in excess of 700. All of this took place while our population was falling from a high of over 70,000 down to nearly 50,000. Consequently, a budget surplus of millions of dollars dwindled down to almost nothing.

And all of this happened just at the moment in time when we needed those resources more than ever before, creating a perfect storm of civic challenges which truly threatened this

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Public Safety Initiative

by Christine Gordillo

Starting this summer Lakewood residents should see more police officers on the streets and in the parks thanks to a public safety initiative Mayor Edward FitzGerald and Police Chief Timothy Malley unveiled during a public meeting on April 23.

The comprehensive plan, which will be rolled out over this year and next, places a premium on officer visibility and neighborhood involvement, with a particular emphasis on block watches. "We wanted a strategy that could have an everyday impact on people's lives," Mayor FitzGerald told a crowd of about 60.

The higher visibility and community input will start with the hiring of four full-time officers who will serve as neighborhood police officers in each of the city's four wards. The police chief expects those officers "to be the face for policing in their neighborhood."

The ward officer's cell phone number will be prominently displayed in the ward and he or she will spend a significant amount of time on bike or foot patrols getting to know the ward and identifying problem houses and residents in each ward. Ward 4 on the

eastern end of the city will be the first neighborhood office up and running when it opens its doors at Fedor Manor, 12400 Madison, in early June. Officer Mike Fritsch is assigned to the ward.

Patrol offices in wards 1, 2 and 3 will be operational in 2009. Veteran officers Rick Busi, Angie Ortiz and Kevin Fischer will be assigned to those respective wards.

"I see this as a way to become more proactive and communicate better (with residents) ... to improve life in Lakewood," Ward 1 resident Busi said of his new assignment.

The beefed up police presence will also come with the addition of 8-10 part-time officers whose primary assignment will be patrolling the city's parks, whose deteriorating condition and sense of safety has been of great concern to many residents. Video surveillance now employed at Madison Park will be expanded to Lakewood Park as well.

The part-time hires will also help relieve full-time officers of administrative duties so that they can spend more time on patrol. The department hopes to have some of these new officers hired by the end of the year with the remainder in

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Events & Notices

The Lakewood Observer is pleased to publish Notices on a first-come first-serve basis. Please be patient with us as we have a limited amount of free space available for these items. All notices must be submitted through the Member Center at www.lakewoodobserver.com

You Are Invited To Become An Observer!

Every 2 weeks the Lakewood Observer relies upon the independent contributions of Lakewood citizens to provide our readers with news and insights into life in Lakewood. As the name suggests, the Lakewood Observer, is designed to present a snapshot of Lakewood through the eyes of its community members.

The talents, opinions, and hard work of a wide variety of individuals have been showcased over the 4 year history of the LO. But, as we all know, Lakewood

is a diverse, dynamic place to call home, which in turn makes the comprehensive portrayal, definition, and analysis of the city in its entirety, a very tall order. Only by expanding this pool of dedicated individuals will the LO continue to move forward as a truly revolutionary, open-source journalistic endeavor.

The final product in front of you is the result of a local, community based process, which includes volunteer writers, photographers, and editors. You too can join these energetic, commu-

nity conscious individuals of all ages who share a common goal, i.e. supporting the creation of news, views, opinions, and human-interest stories, highlighting the many facets of culture, arts, business, education, religion, and lifestyle that Lakewood offers.

And here's how!

If you are interested in becoming a writer, photographer, or editor for the LO, contact Dan Slife at city_editor@lakewoodobserver.com or 216.316.2628.



I received a wonderful letter from Ryan Patrick Demro. Ryan who was a councilman for Ward 2 mentions that he is looking forward to moving into his new quarters at Officer Training School. His heart and mind is still in Lakewood, and is looking forward to some leave time around the 15th before getting deployed. "I will be back on the Deck as I am in need of some local discussion." Ryan we will be here waiting, and very proud of everything you are doing.

20th Annual Sale On The Grounds

by Paula Reed

This is the 20th year for the Lakewood Historical Society's popular Sale on the Grounds, held at the historic Nicholson House, 13335 Detroit. Throughout the year, society volunteers collect, sort and price donations

from the community for this annual fundraiser, and the huge variety of merchandise runs the gamut from antiques and architectural salvage to hats, handbags and housewares. Also available are collectibles, jewelry, pictures, frames, decorative items, furniture, electronics, craft and office supplies, garden accessories and tools. This year's contributions include a huge collection of bird figurines. Items range from gently used to those that are new, still in their original packaging and, of course, antique and vintage offerings. The proceeds from the sale help maintain the Oldest Stone House and Nicholson House, and support the society's educational programming.

Kick-off for the sale is the Patron Preview Party on Friday, May 2nd from 7:00-9:00 p.m. For a donation of \$10, you can skip standing in the Saturday morning line and shop early in a festive atmosphere, enjoying beer and wine provided by Rozi's, and light hors d'oeuvres. Reservations for the Preview Party are a must, and can be obtained by calling the Historical Society at 216-221-7343 or by visiting the website at lakewoodhistorymuseumstore.com.



People wait all year for this great sale.

Sale on the Grounds is open to the general public from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 3rd. And don't worry about missing breakfast or lunch while you shop--our food stand will be selling muffins and coffee, hot dogs, chips, brownies and drinks.

You'll also be able to enter the raffle for our Instant Wine Cellar--100 bottles of wine valued at over \$2000. Tickets are \$5 each or 3 for \$10. The winning ticket will be drawn during the September 6th Patron Party prior to the Come Home To Lakewood house tour, but you need not be present to win.

Your last chance to pick up bargains is Sunday, May 4th, from noon to 3:00 p.m. Don't miss this fabulous sale--you won't know till you get there what wonderful treasures you'll find!



Meet Lakewood's Newest Resident - Ian Matthew Markling

Matthew and Kathleen Markling are proud to announce the arrival of Lakewood's newest resident. Ian Matthew Markling was born on April 8, 2008, at 5:39 p.m., weighing in at 8 pounds, 14 ounces and 19.5 inches in length. Declan and Nevan are very excited to have another brother. The Markling Family is proud to call Lakewood Home.

Church Of Ascension's 2nd Annual Night At The Races: Friday, May 2

Staff Writer

Derby Day is the theme for the Church of the Ascension's 2nd annual Night at the Races charity event to be held Friday, May 2. Doors open at 6 p.m. at the church, 13216 Detroit Ave.,

Lakewood. A silent auction is also part of the festivities. Beverages and food will be available. Proceeds assist in funding the ministries provided to the community by the church. More information is available by calling the church office at 216-521-8727

Fedor Manor: Come Join Us In Celebrating 25 Successful Years!

The event is "TEA WITH BABUSHKA", 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm, Saturday May 17th, 2008 at the George E. Fedor Manor, 12400 Madison Ave. Lakewood.

Three courses of eastern european specialties and desserts will be accompanied by three distinct teas that will compliment the savories and pastries.

There will be unique door prizes and a special raffle for a beautiful cut crystal bowl.

Proceeds will benefit the George E. Fedor Fund, which provides vari-

ous activities for the residents who are Seniors. We are celebrating 25 years of a clean, safe living environment, while meeting the residents day-to-day needs, supporting activities and social functions.

Tickets are \$40 each and as a 501-3 organization, \$20 of each ticket is tax-deductible.

Only 100 guests can be accommodated. Reservations and checks must be received by May 5th. Call 216-226-7575 for more information.

Reserve your tickets today:

Your information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Of Tickets: _____

Check: _____

Mail to:

Fedor Manor
12400 Madison Avenue
Lakewood, OH 44107
Make checks payable to the George E. Fedor Fund.



THE LAKWOOD OBSERVER

Your Independent Source for Lakewood News & Opinion

The LAKWOOD OBSERVER is published biweekly by Lakewood Observer, Inc., 14900 Detroit Avenue, Suite 309, Lakewood, OH 44107.

216.228.7223

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Lakewood City Council

Health Services Shifting, Police Initiative Unveiled

by Stan Austin
City Council Reporter

In a busy week for council, historic action was taken at the regular Monday meeting and the presentation of the Public Safety Initiative was heard at the committee of the whole on Wednesday.

Michael Dever is starting to imprint his style on meetings with a signature opening. In this case it was "Good evening. I'm Michael Dever, President of Lakewood City Council. Welcome to the April 21, 2008 meeting." In the past, an abrupt, "the meeting will come to order," usually served as a public salutation.

During budget hearings the administration proposed quite a few changes in the 2008 budget. Some changes represented sharp departures from past practices. In the case of Lakewood's Health Department its elimination was proposed as a cost cutting measure. It was felt by the administration and council that comparable services could be provided by the County at a reduced cost. Specifically, council had the second reading of a contract with the District Advisory Council of Cuyahoga County, Ohio General Health District for the provision of public health services within Lakewood. If passed on the third reading at the next meeting, this will end the 98 year history of Lakewood's Public Health Department.

Terry Allen, Health Commissioner for the Cuyahoga County Board of Health was in the audience to answer questions.

According to Dottie Buckon, Director of Human Services, the transfer of all of the services from Lakewood to the County Health Department will save approximately \$100,000 annually. The county agency has a per capita rate schedule of charges to a municipality for its services. Also, any fees from permits or inspections formerly performed by Lakewood's department will now go to the county department.

Dever called for comments from council and after several moments of silence Nickie Antonio (at large) remarked that the employees who staffed Lakewood's department had a lot to be proud of and served Lakewood well. "We will miss the people who have gone."

Mary Louise Madigan (ward four) directed her comments to Allen and said "we know you will take good care of us."

Under new business was the first reading of an ordinance to grant an easement to AT&T for its Lightspeed project for placement of equipment at 1422 Belle. The immediate discussion reflected a long brewing resentment

about this project by members of council. It will be recalled that several years ago AT&T sought to enter into the transmission of video content to subscribers. This required installation of large refrigerator sized boxes of sophisticated communications hardware throughout Lakewood. Kevin Butler (ward one) may have summarized council's frustration when he observed that "this project no longer resembles what we agreed to three years ago. There are many more installation locations than I remember in the original agreement and the number of boxes per location has increased."

Dever, who originally voted against this project stated that he would summon representatives of AT&T for an explanation.

That meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Wednesday night, the committee of the whole met to hear Mayor Edward FitzGerald and Police Chief Tim Malley present the Public Safety Initiative. The perception of an increase in crime and quality of life issues played a large part in this past Fall's campaign for council and mayor. This Initiative is FitzGerald's response to that perception.

The whole package contains elements that have been started in the last several years combined with new approaches.

Under the broad heading of visibility one police officer will be assigned to each of the four wards. They will focus on neighborhood policing and operate a sub station. Chief Malley announced the assignment of Officer Mike Fritsch to ward four. He will be working out of an office in Fedor Manor for foot, bike

and motor patrol. Officer Kevin Fischer will be the ward three Neighborhood Police Officer (NPO). Lakewood Park and the downtown business area are among specific patrol responsibilities for him. Office selection will proceed for that ward. Officer Angie Ortiz will be the NPO for ward two. City Center and Kaufman Park are among the areas that will receive her attention. Officer Rick Bussi will handle the NPO duties in ward one. The west end bars, businesses and apartments are his primary focus.

At the Monday meeting, Malley submitted a request to hire part time officers as part of this project. They will be used for additional patrols in the parks. Also, they will perform such tasks as transporting prisoners in order to free up the full time officers for more active duties.

Two grants will provide for two additional cars with grant specific assignments

County Prosecutor Bill Mason was on hand to describe new procedures between Lakewood and his office to speed up the processing of felony cases which will result in savings by reduced court appearances and less time for defendants in Lakewood's jail.

U.S. Marshal Pete Elliot described the violent fugitive task force which had just completed a "blitz" on April 16 in which 11 arrests were made.

And, completing the visibility effort will be West End Bar Patrols. A consortium of bar owners will hire off duty Lakewood officers to be visible in that area.

Other aspects of the Initiative include the increasing use of video cameras, an upgraded dispatch system, and a reverse 911 system.

Auxiliaries Are Awesome

by Stan Austin

Read any issue of the Lakewood Observer and you'll find many articles promoting races, runs, walks and community festivals. Add to that a calendar packed with high school sporting events in one of the region's best stadiums and you have the recipe for an active, vibrant community.

What makes all these events safe and successful? It's the Lakewood Auxiliary Police. They are the ones in the gray uniforms that we all see at the Lakewood Arts Festival, football games at the high school, Community Festival at Madison Park and many other community events throughout the year.

"Doc" John Rusnak is the Major of the Auxiliaries. They are under the direct command of the Lakewood Police Department and are supervised by Lt. Brian Joyce. According to Joyce, the force, originally established as part of Lakewood's Civil Defense operation, was incorporated into the Lakewood Police Department in 1968.

Rusnak said "I am really proud

of the service that we provide to Lakewood." He added, "we are currently looking for more volunteers."

Joyce indicates that the requirements for being considered are simple. "You must be 18 years old and we give a preference to Lakewood residents." The reasons for volunteering can vary. Some just want to serve the community and enjoy this type of activity while others might combine this with law enforcement studies at local colleges. Along with the help at big events, many Auxiliaries ride along with regular police officers, serving as another set of eyes and ears.

Training includes firearm familiarization and general police procedures. A volunteer should expect to tally about 200 hours a year and attend monthly meetings. This is wrapped up with an annual awards banquet.

According to Joyce, there are currently 20 Auxiliaries. "We're looking for 30," he said.

If you are interested in this vital volunteer service to Lakewood stop in at the front desk of the police station and pick up an application.

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Lakewood Public Library

Hidden History:

Northeast Ohio And The Underground Railroad

by Ben Burdick

Living in Ohio, it's hard to overlook our state's strong connection to the Underground Railroad. Placards abound in hundreds of towns, dedicated to folks who broke the law and opened up their homes to runaway slaves. And yet, for all the trees in this forest, it's difficult for us to appreciate the breadth and depth of this secret social network. By the same token, from the comfort of modern commuter culture, it's nearly impossible to imagine making the trek across difficult terrain that now lies hidden underneath landscaped highways.

To help us reclaim a sense of this history, Debbie Laveck of the Ohio Underground Railroad Association has put together a staggering visual presentation that will guide us through our local stretch of the Underground Railroad from Lorain County to the Pennsylvania Border using books, maps, photographs and other artifacts. Join her at the Lakewood Public Library on Monday, May 12 at 7:00 p.m. in the New Main Library Auditorium. This program is co-sponsored by the Lakewood Historical Society and the Friends of Lakewood Public Library.

There are over seven hundred documented historic sites in Ohio associated with the Underground Railroad. Of these, over one hundred and fifty of the sites were documented by the Ohio Underground Railroad Association. Functioning as the research arm of the Friends of Freedom Society, the group works with local historians, librarians, research-

ers and activists to preserve and commemorate the cultural landscape of the people associated with the Underground Railroad. The workload for Ohio's eighty-eight counties is divided amongst twelve regional coordinators who share their work

in a statewide FOFS database used in the production of handbooks and heritage programs.

Our speaker, Debbie Laveck, hails from the organization's North East Region that includes Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake and Lorain

counties. She has a special interest in imagining the lives of children in American history. Look for a selection of her her favorite children's books about the Underground Railroad to be featured in the display of items that accompanies her lecture.

Connect With The Music Of Duo In The Pocket

by Martha Wood

When playing jazz the term "playing in the pocket" refers to playing perfectly in time. It has also been described as an almost spiritual experience where musicians are taken to a place where they allow the music to take control. Find out what being in the pocket is all about when Duo in the Pocket performs for Lakewood Public Library's "Sunday with the Friends" series on Sunday, May 4 at 2 p.m. in the auditorium. The program is free and open to the public.

Guitarist Conrad Reeves will be holding down the rhythm while Dave Kasper plays warm melodies on saxophone. Duo in the Pocket takes a unique approach to the traditional jazz styles of Zoot Sims, Scott Hamilton and Stan Getz. Kasper and Reeves formed the group last year in order to give themselves the opportunity to play intimate performances in small venues.

Twenty-three year old Kasper started taking saxophone lessons at Educator's Music in Lakewood shortly before starting the 5th grade. He received his degree in music from

Cleveland State University and he has always been involved in pushing the limits of jazz saxophone. "I mainly play tenor saxophone, but I have been working quite a bit on my alto saxophone and my doubles in my free time," says Kasper. He has had the honor of playing with luminaries that include the Temptations, Paul Ferguson, Ernie Krivda and Howie Smith. He stays active in the Cleveland music scene and he's looking forward to putting out some new, original material this year. Dave will be busy this summer playing in several of his own groups including Dave Kasper Quartet, Big Brother's Brother as well as Duo in the Pocket and he also plays with Ernie Krivda and the Fat Tuesday Big Band.

Conrad Reeves is currently finishing up his senior year in high school and this fall he will be attending Oberlin Conservatory of Music on a full scholarship. Conrad met Dave while doing post secondary work at Tri-C. Reeves frequently plays at gigs in and



around Cleveland and in January 2007 he performed at the International Association of Jazz Educators conference in New York City with one of twenty selected college ensembles. He currently studies under the guidance of guitarist Tony Pulizzi.

Come experience live jazz with Duo in the Pocket in the intimate setting of Lakewood Public Library's new auditorium on Sunday, May 4 at 2 p.m.

Pilot Program At Lakewood Public Library

by Andrew Harant

"When I'm in my uniform, people are always assuming I'm a flight attendant," says pilot and Lakewoodite Lynda Meeks. "Many people are surprised when I tell them that I am a professional pilot. Most people don't know that women have been flying since 1910, and there are more and more girls getting their pilots' licenses every day."

At age 24, Meeks first learned to fly while in the Army, where she piloted UH-1 "Huey" helicopters. Also in the

Army, she flew C-12 airplanes. Since leaving the military, she flew Beech 1900 airplanes for a regional airline, and now flies a Citation V for a private airline.

Meeks is involved with Girls With Wings, an organization that uses "aviation to entertain and educate girls about their limitless opportunities for personal growth." On Saturday, May 3, in Lakewood Public Library's Auditorium at Main Library from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Meeks will entertain, educate and inspire kids through activities about airplanes, flying and being a pilot.



Lakewood Public Library and Lakewood Early Chidlhood Program joined together on April 15 in the library's Main Auditorium for a special storytime to celebrate Week of the Young Child. A fabulous 52 parents, children and teachers attended.

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Lakewood Public Library



The Lakewood Public Library hosted the Lakewood High School “Everybody but the Seniors Art Show” on Thursday April 24th. Pictured here left to right are art teachers Todd Urban, Jan McAndrews, Sandy Norris, Arline O’Lear and Amy Sedlak.



The West Shore Career Technical students prepare to pick-up the grounds at the Lakewood Public Library in anticipation of the April 19th “Spring Clean Lakewood Day” as part of their job placement training. What a great job they did!

Lakewood Public Library Events Calendar

Sunday with the Friends Duo in the Pocket: In the tradition of Zoot Sims, Scott Hamilton and Stan Getz, Duo in the Pocket presents a horizon-widening afternoon of jazz. Conrad Reeves holds down the rhythm on guitar while Dave Kaspar lays out warm melodies with saxophone. **Sunday, May 4 at 2:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium**

Lakewood Historical Society Northeast Ohio and the Underground Railroad: Debbie Laveck uses books, maps and other artifacts to visually guide you through Northeast Ohio’s stretch of the underground Railroad, from Lorain County to the Pennsylvania border. **Monday, May 12 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium Lakewood**

Public Cinema The Searchers (1956) Directed by John Ford PG*: He had to

find her...John Wayne gives the best performance of his career as Ethan Edwards, an angry, perhaps obsolete man who finds refuge in an obsessive search for his niece, captured by Comanche so many years ago. “Some day, this country’s gonna be a fine, good place to be. Maybe it needs our bones in the ground before that time can come...” **Saturday, May 3 at 6:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium *our suggested rating**

Fine Arts Understanding Visual Arts: Where is the room in our increasingly hectic daily lives for fine art and design? Everywhere. At lover Jim McNamara discusses and demonstrates the value of great art with slides taken from the treasures of the Cleveland Art Museum. **Thursday, May 15 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium**

Educator Resources from the Cleveland Museum of Art: Come spend a casual evening with members of the Education Department of The Cleveland Museum of Art. Information on programs for schools such as Art To Go suitcase presentations, Distance Learning videoconferences and Educator’s Academy (formerly The Teacher Resource Center) will be shared. There will be handouts, discussions, sample materials for teachers and plenty of opportunity to ask questions and plan ahead for 2008-2009. **Thursday, May 22 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium**

Pilot Program: Pilot Linda Meeks will entertain, educate and inspire children through activities about airplanes, flying and being a pilot. **Saturday, May 3 from 10:00 a.m. until noon in the Main Library Auditorium**

Family Weekend Wonders: Make the library a part of your family weekend time with programs featuring stories, activities, music and crafts for children. Our staff will provide materials and ideas for families wishing to continue reading and storytelling at home. The programs are free and there is no need to register in advance. **Choose the day and time most convenient for you.**

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Upcoming Themes:

May 2, 3, 4	World of Tomorrow
May 9, 10, 11	Face Talk, Hand Talk, Body Talk

Day and Time

Friday	10:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	10:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m.
Sunday	2:00 p.m.

In the Madison Branch auditorium

Homework ER: for students in kindergarten through eighth grade: Need a little extra help with your homework or just want a cool place to work? We transform part of the library into the Homework ER with helpers and a cart full of resources. Homework ER will be closed for school holidays and vacations. No need to register. **Tuesday, September 4, 2007 – Friday, May 23, 2008. Monday-Thursday, 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. at the Madison Branch**

Four O’clock Club: for students in kindergarten through eighth grade.Join the Club! Come for a different activity each weekday. No need to register.

ACTIVITY	DAY	TIME
Make-It-Take-It (craft day)	Mondays	4:00 p.m.
Marvelous Mysteries (surprise day)	Tuesdays	4:00 p.m.
Twist, Shout, Act It Out (movement, music and drama)	Wednesdays	4:00 p.m.
Games Galore (game to play or make)	Thursdays	4:00 p.m.
Make-It-Take-It (craft day)	Fridays	4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, September 4, 2007 – Friday, May 23, 2008 At the Madison Branch		

Lakewood City News

A Stellar Event At LHS!

by Liz Guscott

On April 5th the Lakewood High School East Cafeteria and Civic Auditorium were teaming with hundreds of fitness and bodybuilding enthusiasts. The "2008 Vyotech Nutritional NPC Natural Ohio Drug Tested Bodybuilding and Figure Championships" received a record number of fans. Hundreds filed into the East Cafeteria for the fitness expo and to buy tickets for the bodybuilding and figure contest. When asked about the turnout, two Columbus representatives from supplement company Gamma-O commented on the crowd's diversity and numbers. Other vendors agreed that the volume of people was larger this year. Mike from Vyotech Nutritionals, the title sponsor for three years, said, "This show differs from others. Part of it is bodybuilding and part is family-oriented." He also mentioned the classy atmosphere from the drug testing aspect and that many age groups come to enjoy it.

The satisfied vendors recognize the efforts of the promoters Dave Liberman of Mentor and Todd Pember of Amherst. When asked about the show's success, Liberman states, "If I repeat our spring event in the fall (October 4, 2008), I'll be very happy. From the feedback, it looks to be even bigger and better!" The morning prejudging brought over 800 spectators, an all-time high. The evening finals brought in over 1,200 audience members, which helped raise \$1,700 for the American Cancer Society.

The overall winners received super-sized trophies and branded jackets from Vyotech Nutritionals. The overall winner of the Men's Open was Isreal Ocasio. The Master's Men Overall winner (over age 35) was Kevin Malone. Jason Janov earned the title of the Junior Men's Bodybuilding champ. The Teenage (ages 15-17) Men's Overall winner was Justin Compton. Susan Ball won the Women's Open and Master's Bodybuilding award. In the Women's Figure competition, Sue Knott won the Figure Open and Stacy Helfinstine won Master's Figure Overall. Each competitor worked intensely for his or her contest. When asked about her training for the figure event, first-time

competitor Tina of Lakewood said that she trained at her gym twice each day. It has been exhausting but rewarding as she is not focused on winning but rather journeying through the process.

Another event highlight was the appearance of Jay Cutler, two-time Mr. Olympia, who posed for audience members and freely signed photos for eager fans. A crowd of 100 came to his bodybuilding seminar after the prejudging. They cheered when he announced his intent to return in April of 2009.

From 9:30 am onward, the halls of LHS were at times swimming with fans and supporters. Awaiting entrance to the prejudging were people like Lindsay and Amy from Michigan, who were there to cheer on two bodybuilders. From Canton, Ohio, husband and wife Arlene and Stanley were anticipating their figure competitor granddaughter. Later in the day, two spectators from Columbus were asked their opinions of the show. One answered how he liked the new expe-



The Civic Auditorium stage is ablaze with trophies as the crowd thickens for the morning prejudging.

rience, the different types of people and the amazing aspect of seeing how their different body types get sculpted.

The next show, "2008 Vyotech Nutritionals NPC Natural Northern USA Drug Tested Bodybuilding & Figure Championships" will take place at the Lakewood Civic Auditorium on Saturday, October 4, 2008. The guest

poser will be eight-time Mr. Olympia, Ronnie Coleman. Sponsorship, entry and ticket information can be found by visiting www.daveliberman.com or calling 440-942-5634.

Liz Guscott is a proud Lakewood resident and personal trainer. She welcomes comments to be sent to liz-guscottpt@gmail.com.

St. Cyril & Methodius Annual

by Dan Slife

On Wednesday, April 16th Lakewood Public Library employee Dan Slife joined attorney Thomas Corrigan and former world traveler turned substitute teacher Paul Dalalau to judge this year's student poetry contest at St. Cyril & Methodius School.

"The students put on an impressive performance," stated Slife. "It was clear that each student had invested an immense amount of time and energy in their project."

The poetry contest initially "Commenced in 1920" and "continued on for 40 years" according to Carol Shakarian of St. Cyril & Methodius. After a brief hiatus beginning in 1960, the annual contest resumed in 1971.

All students are expected to participate in each year's event, kindergarten through eighth grade. Each student must memorize and recite one poem. Over a six week period, teachers choose finalists who go on to compete in the final round, in front of the entire school,

teachers and parents. Four finalists in each grade made it to the final round. Winners in each grade received trophies commending their performance.

2008 Poetry Contest Winners:

Jimmy Greathouse - Kindergarten
Ella Elbiry - Grade 1
Isabella Chudy - Grade 2
Mason Wunderle - Grade 3
Andrew Jackson - Grade 4
Kristina Kopasakis - Grade 5
Anjelica Berrios - Grade 6
Matthew McMaster - Grade 7
Chloe Murray - Grade 8

Jazzercise Offers New Classes

by Karen Kilbane

Two new Jazzercise dance-fitness classes opened in Lakewood the week of March 31st. Jazzercise instructor Karen Kilbane has added the classes to accommodate new participants and to provide current participants with a greater choice of convenient class times.

The new classes are taking place on Monday and Wednesday evenings at 7PM at The Lakewood Health Campus Assisted

Living Facility at 1381 Bunts Rd., directly across the street from Giant Eagle.

"I'm excited about the growth of Jazzercise locally," said Kilbane. "Jazzercise offers a unique blend of fitness and jazz dance that Lakewood residents have discovered is a lot of fun. The new classes make it easier for participants to enjoy a workout where and when it's convenient for them."

The 60-minute Jazzercise class includes a warm-up, high-energy aerobic

routines, muscle-toning and cool-down stretch segment. Jazzercise is a program for people of every age and fitness level.

The workout program, which offers a fusion of jazz dance, resistance training, Pilates, yoga, and kickboxing movements, has positively affected millions of people worldwide. Benefits include increased cardiovascular endurance, strength, and flexibility, as well as an overall "feel good" factor. For more information on Jazzercise contact Karen Kilbane at 440 356 0337 or at kkjazzercise@yahoo.com.

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Lakewood Observer



From left to right, Les Wilson, John Brinkman, Ray Gerber and Greg Hillow.

The Lunch Bunch

by Jennifer Scott

For those of you who have never had lunch at the Hylander you'll have no idea what this article is about. Those of you who have been there will smile and think "Oh yeah, those guys are always there." Every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (Tuesday they are all at Kiwanis) you can find an eclectic group of men from noon until one having lunch together. There is Les Wilson, retired owner of Wilson and Sons Landscaping, John Brinkman, owner of Brinkman-Dress funeral home, Greg Hillow, insurance agent, Tex Phillips, retired salesman and Tom

McDonough, retired from the City of Lakewood, just to name a few. These gentlemen solve all the problems of the world at lunch from politics and city planning to health and family issues. They give the waitresses plenty of ribbing as well. The Hylander is located in the heart of Lakewood, a great place to stop in for a quick meal, a cup of coffee, or our own Gary Rice's favorite rice pudding. The staff is always friendly and ready to greet you when you arrive. The atmosphere is that of the classic hometown restaurant. Stop in some time and check out the menu, you'll see what I mean.

USPS Safety Corner

SAFETY TIP: With spring here already, it is easy to get caught up in the atmosphere of warm sunny days. We let the kids out, the pets run and everyone is out planting, walking, playing, and driving about. Along with all these good things can come some dangers if precautions are not taken. For example, pets and children need to be watched and prevented from straying into the street where motorists, including postal delivery vehicles, are traveling. If landscaping, please remove tools and other obstacles from our regular travel path, so there is no chance of us tripping or falling. If you have large holes in your yard where the carrier walks, please fill them in. This will prevent carriers from ankle sprains or more severe injuries.

F.Y.I: The National Association of Letter Carriers will be having it's annual food drive on Saturday May 10, 2008. Our customers are encouraged to participate by donating non- perishable food items. We do not recommend items in glass containers for safety reasons. Simply leave your items in bags by your mail box and your friendly postal carrier will collect the food. Even a single item makes a difference to a hungry family. The food collected helps fill local food banks. With the threat of food banks closing due to lack of donations, we need your help. You are also more than welcome to come by, say hi, and drop food off at the post office.



INCREASE! INCREASE!
INCREASE! Will it ever end? Probably not. As most of you already know, the price of postage will increase by one cent on May 12, 2008. Unfortunately as costs such as gasoline go up, so does our cost of stamps. When gas prices increase by one penny, it costs the post office as a whole close to a million dollars or more company- wide. On a positive note, check with your local post office and inquire if they have any "forever" stamps left for sale. They are still .41 cents and will always be considered first class postage no matter what future price increases come our way.

WANTED: If there are any local groups that would like to volunteer to help with our local food drive, please contact us as soon as possible. Call (216)-226-9691 and ask for Carmen or Pat.
As always we welcome any comments or suggestions.
Your Postal Safety Committee

"My apartment here is large and bright. I am happy living at Lakewood Senior Health Campus with good friends who, like me, enjoy being active. We have many activities to take part in. We go on outside trips to stores and restaurants. I've been so busy lately, I've had to do my laundry on Sunday! If you need assistance, the staff are all kind and caring people. I encourage my friends to come and enjoy living at Lakewood Senior Health Campus. I should have moved here sooner!"

*~ Marian Siddall
One Year Resident*

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Lakewood Schools

Lakewood High's Olliver Petkac Wins Big At Regional Science Fair

by Rachel Bibler

Like many of his fellow students at Lakewood High School, Olliver Petkac has long been fascinated with the 'whys' and 'hows' of the natural world. "Collecting gemstones, fossils, and rocks has been a hobby of his since we can remember," according to Olliver's parents. So when students in Olliver's ninth-grade accelerated geophysics course were given an assignment to create a science project requiring original research, Olliver didn't think twice about which topic to choose for his project. "I knew I wanted to heat treat crystals and gemstones to see if I could change either their color or their clarity. It was the only project that I wanted to investigate," Olliver said. Olliver and his classmates were faced with the challenges of brainstorming ideas, collecting data, taking measurements, and making conclusions. Such tasks challenge the budding high school scientist.

Objections from his teacher that the project would be too difficult to undertake for a high school student did not sway Olliver. He had done prior experiments at his home growing up, using a variety of heat treatment methods, such as a propane lighter and his mother's oven, even collecting detailed findings about color changes and clarity of gemstones upon heating. So when his teacher raised objections several times that the project was not feasible, Olliver was not discouraged.

He did extensive research and collected data during winter vacation. Olliver became frustrated when he discovered that he could not get access to a gemstone kiln (the device used by jewelers to heat treat gemstones) and almost scrapped his idea. Still determined, he did more research and found primitive yet viable ways to carry out his experiments. Olliver's methods, included the building of both his own forge for use with a propane torch and a charcoal oven that was able to sustain a temperature of over 1000 degrees Fahrenheit for about 12 hours. Thanks to LHS art teacher Todd Urban, he was allowed access to the ceramic kiln in order to carry out a third set of experiments. The stones Olliver used were clear quartz crystals, rough amethyst, citrine, and rough rubies. A total of 56 stones were divided into 6 test groups for the purpose of learning which stones, if any, incurred changes in either color or clarity under various conditions. Olliver evaluated which conditions could be predicted and/or controlled to produce specific colors and effects. "The project was hard, sometimes frustrating, but I would do it again...because of the great satisfaction in doing something I love."

In February of 2008, Olliver

Petkac's science project was one of only 5 chosen from LHS to be displayed at the Northeast Ohio Science and Engineering Fair (NEOSF) which was held at Cleveland State University. According to his teacher, Olliver's project was chosen from Lakewood High School based upon the originality of his idea.

During the week of March 10th, judging and presentation of awards took place. There were close to 600 projects accepted and on display that week. Olliver knew that he would be required to stand by his project for over 3 hours while judges approached him with a barrage of questions. Armed with only a notebook, pen, and guts, the student let the judges know of his disability, voluntarily, and for the first time in his life. Olliver has a profound hearing loss in both ears, using hearing aids to help him in his daily communication with others. Self-disclosure of hearing loss is often times difficult and is an important step in self-advocacy for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. This may be partly due to the invisible nature of hearing loss itself and lack of public understanding of the impact of hearing loss on social interaction. With knowledge of this student's hearing loss, several judges wrote comments in a notebook, not knowing perhaps, how the student would respond. Those who wrote their questions were surprised when Olliver answered them verbally, clearly, and in great detail.

On the evening of March 13th, 2008, Olliver was called five times to collect prizes and awards. By the close of the event, he received a cash prize, a chemistry book, a Barnes & Noble gift card worth \$50.00, an award for best materials project, and, most impressively, 2nd place in the category of chemistry. Afterward, when asked by a CSU staff member if it was as scary as he imagined it would be, the student shrugged and said "No. It was nothing, really".

This summer, he and his fam-




Left: Olliver stands with pride alongside his project display while holding the second place trophy for chemistry at the Northeast Ohio Science and Engineering Fair . Above:: Internal fractures after kiln treatment

ily plan to take a trip to Ruby City, North Carolina where he will spend 2 to 3 days mining his own gemstones. "I can't wait. The coolest part will be watching the miners blow up small sections of caves." Olliver's other interests include art, painting, photography, playing basketball, and playing video games.

I met Olliver when he was three years and his family was looking for a baby-sitter. In baby-sitting Olliver, throughout my high school career, I had the pleasure of connecting with a very creative, imaginative individual,


who has become a great friend. It is my experience with Olliver that led me to graduate work in audiology and great interest in working with children who have hearing loss.

Olliver's success in academics and life can provide hope and inspiration for other families and individuals adjusting to hearing loss. His accomplishments in science demonstrate that love of knowledge and life cannot be contained, only challenged by such life situations. Without a doubt,in meeting his challenge, Olliver is soaring to the top of his class.




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Lakewood Observer

West Shore Chorale Honors Founder Judge Robert Lawther

by Kelly Kutler

In 1968, Robert Lawther was serving as Mayor of Lakewood and singing tenor in the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus. Frustrated by the lengthy commute required to sing on the East Side, Lawther became determined to form a chorus of equal quality and professionalism closer to home. Undaunted by the challenge of starting from scratch, Lawther put his famous “if you build it, they will come” attitude into full swing. He selected twelve of Lakewood’s most talented church soloists and called a meeting to pitch his idea. Several months and much hard work later, the 82 voice West Shore Chorale made its debut at Lakewood Civic Auditorium, under the direction of B. Neil Davis. This year, thanks to Lawther’s original vision and tenacity, the Chorale celebrates 40 years of making music on the West Side.

On May 17, the West Shore Chorale will formally honor Judge Lawther at its 40th Anniversary Ruby Celebration Benefit at Mr. Winton’s Den, 12700 Lake Avenue, from 6 until 8:30 p.m. Conductor, John Drotleff, says the group is thrilled to acknowledge the contributions of its prominent founder. “Robert Lawther has been a public servant all his life and starting the West Shore Chorale has been one of his greatest gifts to the community,” says Drotleff. “Thanks to Judge Lawther’s willingness to turn an idea into concrete action, this organization has thrived for 40 years, given hundreds of concerts, and brought joy to thousands of West Siders.”

Back when it all started, Lawther says his goal was to create a chorus with

the ability to perform challenging classical repertoire. “I wanted the Chorale to tackle material too difficult for most church or community choruses to master,” says Lawther. “I thought that West Siders deserved to hear the finest music by the finest musicians.” To that end, Lawther approached B. Neil Davis to serve as the Chorale’s first conductor. As Musical Director at Lakewood High School, Davis had already led two of his choirs to number one slots at state competitions. “I had no doubt that Neil was the man for the job,” says Lawther. “We invited him to lunch and told him to start auditioning singers.”

Peggy Walk remembers seeing the local paper notice announcing auditions for the West Side’s new chorus. A singer at Lakewood’s Trinity Lutheran Church since she was 11 years old, Walk knew she had to be part of the experience. “I remember shaking so much through that audition that it was a miracle I could sing,” says Walk. And the competition was substantial. The open auditions drew over 150 hopefuls. “I heard some wonderful voices during those first auditions,” says B. Neil Davis. “It was difficult to narrow them down.” In the end, however, Davis chose 82 of the area’s best singers- including Walk.

Lawther says that the group got off to a rocky start with their debut concert, but gradually made adjustments in program selections and enjoyed tremendous community support. As the concerts continued, audiences grew larger. B. Neil Davis became President of the Ohio Music Education Association and Bill Appling took his place as conductor. The Cleveland Press dubbed Lawther “Lakewood’s Musical Mayor,”



Above: West Shore Chorale performs at Lakewood Civic Auditorium, February 1969. Right: Judge Robert Lawther



while the group performed throughout Cleveland to positive reviews and enthusiastic crowds.

Chorale Conductor since 1984, John Drotleff, believes that today the group remains true to Lawther’s vision. “We’ve created a niche with choral works that are too small for the Cleveland Orchestra and too difficult for most local choruses,” says Drotleff. The Chorale’s 40th Anniversary Spring Concert on May 4, will feature Mendelssohn’s Symphony No. 2, Lobgesang, with full orchestra and the Hiram College Choir. “The Lobgesang probably hasn’t been heard in this area for at least 25 years,” says Drotleff. “It’s a gorgeous piece celebrating the 400th Anniversary of the printing press. We think it’s right in line with what Judge Lawther envisioned the Chorale performing.”

Over the years, the Chorale has also reached out to the community by collaborating with the Canton Symphony, the Cleveland Women’s Orchestra, Avon Lake High School, Avon Lake Learwood Middle School, the Beck Center Children’s Choirs, the Lakewood High School Symphonic Mixed Choir, and many others. The group’s impressive resume includes performances in England with John Rutter, and concerts for the Ohio Choral Director’s Association, and the Ohio Music Education Association.

Reflecting on their history together, Chorale members recognize that Judge Lawther’s idea gave rise to much more than a superb West Side chorus. Since its inception, the Chorale has been an anchor in the lives of both the singers and audience members. Original members Peggy Walk and Thomas

Glynn still sing with the Chorale today and serve on its board of trustees. A member since 1970, Diane DeFrasia says the Chorale has played an integral role in her life. “I’ve loved music since I was a little girl,” says DeFrasia. “This group has given me a way to express it and something to be proud of. I can go into a rehearsal feeling terrible and by the end, I’m a new person.”

Although Lawther eventually left the group, he remains a loyal patron and a fixture at concerts. He went on to serve 31 years on the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court bench, spearhead the expansion of Lakewood Hospital, initiate the renovations of Winterhurst Ice Rink, and take the lead in revitalizing Lakewood neighborhoods. “There are so many beneficiaries of Judge Lawther’s accomplishments in this community,” says Benefit Committee Co-Chair, Colleen Kane. “The members of the Chorale are grateful to be among them.”

The West Shore Chorale’s 40th Anniversary Ruby Celebration Benefit honoring Lawther is open to the public. Friends and associates of Judge Lawther are encouraged to attend. Tickets are \$75 and include heavy hors d’oeuvres, a carving station, wine, beer, soft drinks, and entertainment by Lakewood High School Men’s Quarter, Vive L’Four. For reservations or more information, call 216-228-3747. For concert information and tickets, call 216-221-1639 or visit www.westshorechorale.org.

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State Of The City

State Of The City continued from page 1

city. The sub-prime mortgage crisis, with the resulting wave of foreclosures began impacting our city's neighborhoods. Over the last 10 years, there was a slow increase in crime, until it has reached the boiling point in some of our neighborhoods. Our police department responded admirably to the situation. Our officers are more productive than ever and the number of arrests increased almost every year. But despite their best efforts, there's no doubt that the overall security of our neighborhoods has declined, and that is a story which is told not only by crime statistics, but it is a story that all of us have heard from our friends and neighbors, or perhaps that we have experienced ourselves.

Last year's municipal elections stood for one simple, overriding principle: the voters of Lakewood knew that their city was in trouble. And they insisted that we do something about it, immediately. So, we have.

In December, we brought in the state auditor's office to confirm what we already knew- that our city was more than \$4 million in debt, and decisive action must be taken. Working together with City Council, we passed a city budget, which for the first time in recent memory, actually spends less money than the previous year's budget. Not "less" as a rate of spending, or any other definition of "less" according to an accounting trick. I mean, literally, it spends less money than the year before. This was not possible without tremendous sacrifices that were made by city employees. Health care plans were changed, benefits were limited, and positions were also eliminated. And although some of the decisions were painful, this is the first time that city officials can tell their constituents that their local government is actually getting smaller.

As the Plain Dealer noted in their recent news coverage and editorials, many suburbs are facing the same set of challenges as we are, while also finding themselves in a precarious financial position.

But we are taking this crisis as an opportunity. Our goal now is not to just survive, but to be a regional and even national model in overcoming



photo by David Lay

these issues. It was not enough for us to simply rein in our budget, or reduce the size of our local government so that we could limp along to the next year. Our goal was to make cuts of such a magnitude that we would have available funds to take action on the crucial issues which I just described.

In particular, our goal was to have funds available to make investments in four major areas: public safety, our housing stock, technology, and economic development. It would have been easier to defer these investments to another day, when we might have more funds available. But these problems just can't wait. And many of our residents are not in any mood to wait for action on housing or public safety. So the time to act was now, and we passed a budget which allows us to respond.

At the same time, we have demonstrated beyond any shadow of a doubt that we are rapidly restoring fiscal stability and responsibility to the city, and we are regaining the trust of our people to handle their financial affairs. This year I will be proposing a Rainy Day Fund to encourage us to save even more for the future. And this year's budget was not only balanced, it also provided for a \$500,000 surplus, the largest budgeted surplus in four years.

Not spending more money than we take in is a basic principle we must live by. My parents, who grew up in the Depression, taught me to live within my means, and I bet your parents taught you the same thing. Businesses and families abide by that principle, and your government should too. And that kind of fiscal responsibility is not a Republican Party principle or a Democratic Party principle, it's an American principle, and I'm determined to make it a guiding policy of Lakewood government.

Lakewood residents are getting fed up with crime, and they wanted a local government that approached crime as a public safety problem, not just a public relations problem. I agree with them.

Last week, after forming a task force made up of myself, Chief Malley, our city prosecutor, residents in the community, as well as the Captains of Lakewood Police Department, we unveiled a 25-point public safety pro-

gram for Lakewood.

Its primary points include adding four new full-time police officers, adding up to 10 part-time officers, instituting neighborhood police stations across the community, working aggressively with the Lakewood Schools, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, and setting up block clubs and block watches in every single neighborhood in Lakewood.

The good news is that the residents are responding. They are signing up for block clubs and block watches in record numbers, they are embracing our more visible and aggressive law enforcement tactics, and they are welcoming the change to a neighborhood-based law enforcement strategy. And I am particularly proud that our police department is embracing this change of strategy as well, for they are full partners in this effort to restore our previous levels of safety to this community.

I plan on taking the same approach with our housing crisis- a very focused task force followed immediately by implementation of an action plan. One of our citizen working groups has already laid the groundwork for this effort. By this July, we will have our plan for re-inventing our building department complete, and we will enter a new era of high expectations for our homes, high-rises and commercial areas. Working together with Lakewood Community Progress, Inc., one of our local non-profit organizations, we will be funding a major neighborhood-based housing strategy. Every neighborhood will receive an annual quality of life assessment, with a plan for correcting deficiencies, working with homeowners to improve their properties, and, when necessary, citing and prosecuting unresponsive property owners. And if that unresponsive owner happens to be a major financial institution, that will not shield them, because our law department is poised to use every means at our disposal to enforce our standards, whether it be against the owner down the street, or a bank in New York or Los Angeles.

Also, for the first time, we have set aside funds to directly purchase foreclosed and abandoned properties. We can then turn these properties over to

a non-profit corporation, and the proceeds from any sale will go into a fund to purchase more properties.

The use of community groups and non-profit corporations is one creative way to achieve our hopes for Lakewood. A public purpose does not need to always be performed by a public employee paid a salary by the taxpayers. Community organizations and volunteers play a crucial role, and sometimes elected officials just need to get out of the way and let them do what they do best. Part of the way to evaluate the strength of a community is by the number and activism of its civic organizations, and by this standard, Lakewood is still strong. Part of my role as mayor is to encourage the citizens, through these organizations, to take a larger role in our civic affairs. As one example, a few weeks ago, I invited all of the pastors of all of the various faith communities in Lakewood to City Hall to meet with us and discuss issues of mutual concern, an invitation that had not been extended to them in over four years.

And while relying on those outside government is wise, we are also mindful that we must establish the highest possible standards for public service in Lakewood. My goal is to establish a merit system within City Hall. Bit by bit, we are changing a culture which placed too much emphasis on who you knew as opposed to the quality of work. We have employees who have worked for the city for 20 years, and have never been evaluated. That is a failure of management, not the workers. And I am happy to report that many of the employee unions are embracing the need for change and are making suggestions for new ways of providing services.

We recognize that Lakewood cannot lead the way in the efficient and effective delivery of services unless we modernize our technological systems. As in other areas, we convened a working group made up of Lakewood residents with technical expertise. Their report, done in conjunction with

continued on page 16

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Lakewood News And Business

Public Safety Initiative

continued from page 1

place by early '09, Chief Malley said.

The cost of hiring these new officers comes directly from the city's general fund. Overall, the program will cost \$550,000 annually to operate, according to Chief Malley in a recent Plain Dealer report. Many of the remainder of the police visibility components will be paid for by a variety of governmental and law enforcement agencies in the form of grants and other programs. "(We knew) we needed to reach outside the community to get help in implementing the new strategy," Mayor FitzGerald said.

Included among the programs that are funded primarily by outside entities are:

- A special assignment car paid by a combination of funds from the U.S. Dept. of Justice's Justice Assistant Grant Program and the Law Enforcement Trust Fund, which disburses assets from confiscated funds and merchan-

dise of criminals. The car, which began its patrols April 16, will cruise the parks in warmer months from 5-9 p.m.

- A patrol car funded by the Ohio Homeland Security Northern Border Initiative will allow an officer to patrol areas such as Lakewood Park, Scenic Park, the tracks, the MetroParks and wastewater treatment plant and utility substations.

- A zip code blitz, where the police department in cooperation with the U.S. Marshal's Violent Fugitive Task Force identifies and arrests Lakewood residents with outstanding felony charges. The first blitz was conducted on April 16 and resulted in 11 arrests.

- A West End bar patrol where off-duty officers will be hired by a consortium of West End business owners to be a visible presence in that popular nightspot area that has been a constant source of complaints by nearby residents. Nine bar owners so far have

signed on to the initiative.

Beyond feet on the ground, the police department also is planning a number of moves that focus on improving communication between the city and its residents. Chief Malley outlined department web site improvements that would allow users to access reports, file reports, look at city crime statistics and serve as a clearinghouse for block watch information. Also in the works is a reverse 911 system that can notify the entire city or a specific neighborhood via phone, email or text message.

Behind the scenes, an improved computer-aided dispatch and records management system will improve the speed of communication between dispatch and patrol cars. It will also allow the department to integrate state and federal databases so that officers on the street have all the information available to do their job.

Mayor FitzGerald and Chief Malley both stressed the importance of residents' involvement in the new strategy. "It has to have a citizen component if it's going to work," Mayor FitzGerald said.

To that end, the existing neighborhood block watch program will take on more prominence. "We want to get as many of those going as possible," Chief Malley said. Currently, 50 watches are officially signed up with the city. The new neighborhood patrol officer will be the department liaison for each ward's block watch groups.

Carol Mason, co-captain with Mara Manke of the Lakeland Avenue (between Hilliard and Detroit) block watch group, said she and her neighbors have noticed a "significant difference" since starting their group a year-and-

a-half ago. "It's safer, cleaner and more fun," she said.

Youth prevention programs will also be emphasized. The police department is applying for 2009 funding for the Gang Resistance Education and Training program administered by the U.S. Marshal's offices and the Dept. of Justice. The program would be a complement to the D.A.R.E. program that has been so well-received in Lakewood. And next month, meetings will begin on a new Youth Safety Initiative. The plan is to bring partners such as the police, the city's Youth Services department, the Lakewood City Schools and the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court together to develop a comprehensive response to juvenile intervention.

City council members had a chance to comment on the new plan after its presentation. All thanked the chief and mayor for "grabbing the bull by the horns" as council president Mike Dever said, and tackling these very tough issues. All agreed that the initiative will allow them to do a better job of responding to constituents' concerns. With a neighborhood patrol officer in each ward, council members will now have a point person to whom they can refer residents.

Mayor FitzGerald candidly told the audience that the initiative "will not be a solution to all (our crime) problems ... but it gives a signal to the community that we're aggressively trying to take on the challenges."

The mayor also told the audience to stay tuned for the next major initiative he's preparing to roll out: a neighborhood-based housing strategy for the city he hopes to have ready this summer.

GreenSmartGifts Opens

Staff Writer

April 21, 2008)— Saturday, May 3 marks a significant day in eco-conscious shopping as GreenSmartGifts, an earth-friendly shop, will open in Lakewood. Located at 14534 Detroit Avenue, directly across from Lakewood Hospital, the shop will promote "living green and giving green".

After working 23 years in the corporate sector, Lakewood resident Mary Evans dreamed of opening her own retail store; but her goal was to own a store with a purpose. GreenSmartGifts has allowed her to combine a love of retail with a love of the earth to create shopping that makes a difference.

Shoppers of GreenSmartGifts can expect to find a wide range of products that support the concepts of green and conscious consumption, such as soy candles, organic baby clothing, gardening supplies, wooden toys, personal care items, and jewelry and paper goods constructed of recycled products. GreenSmartGifts also offers a variety of tote bags to help encourage the reduction of plastic bag usage.

Wherever possible, local suppliers will be used in order to reduce emissions from transport.

In addition to selling gifts, Evans uses GreenSmartGifts to raise awareness about environmental sustainability — proving to customers that it really is easy being green. In the store, there is a section that is dedicated to home items such as rechargeable batteries and laundry detergent in capsule form. Shoppers will also find "green tips" in several places around the store, as well as a children's area with educational books and a coloring station.

GreenSmartGifts will be open Tuesdays through Thursdays from 9 am to 6pm; Fridays and Saturdays from 9am to 7pm; and Sundays from noon until 5pm. GreenSmartGifts is closed on Mondays.

A grand opening celebration will be held on Saturday, May 3 with drawings for discounts and gifts held throughout the day.

Mary Evans may be contacted at GreenSmartGifts at (216) 712-7980 or via email at mary@greensmartgifts.com.



Volunteers from Lakewood High School Freshman Class Julie Gluvna, Jennifer Walls, Tori Dubis and Erika Johnson

Main Street Student Volunteers

by Mary Anne Crampton

As Observer readers know, Main Street Lakewood is a volunteer-based organization. From streetscape design to events like Light Up Lakewood, Band-2Gether and Walk+Roll Lakewood, to working with City Hall to encourage investment in our downtown, resident volunteers make it all happen. On Thursday, April 19, four students from Lakewood High School's freshman class came by to help collate material for Main Street Lakewood's first-ever

merchant membership drive. These young students helped to fold, organize and stuff 155 packets of information to be delivered to local merchants. What would have taken the better part of a day by Main Street's single staff person (me!) was finished in about an hour with this efficient and cordial group! Julie Gluvna, Jennifer Walls, Tori Dubis and Erika Johnson were encouraged to help out by Mark Dubis of The Dubis Group, the volunteer webmaster and designer of the Main Street Lakewood website, mainstreetlakewood.org. Thank you, team!

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Lakewood Opinion

The Three Soldiers

by Peter Sackett

It can't get any better than this. (Hillary vs. Barak) vs. John. These guys are our best, right?

Well, lets take a look.

McCain lacked the guts to fight back in 2000, when he was at the perfect age to earn the presidency. He fell apart under the pressure of South Carolina and the Rove 'black-baby' soldiers.

He was a soldier in a prisoner camp for a long time; his fight to stay alive gives him hero-status; that was forty years ago; his dad was probably a greater hero than him for all of his years of military service.

General Eisenhower won the presidency in 1952; not 2008.

In his years in the senate, he was involved in a money-scheme with a bunch of lobbyists. He fights his fellow republicans and loves the stage; but, tell me what he has done for the nation as a whole while serving Arizona? Sounds like a Washington insider to me.

To a realist, he is nothing more than a politician who should have been limited to two terms; after that, their power-surging ego takes them all to the national stage. Some just don't belong on that stage.

This, election cycle, he voluntarily traveled to Bob Jones University. That, in and of itself, should disqualify him for any national office.

Don't forget his unbending support of the debacle called Iraq. If you like Cheney, vote for this guy. If you want our policy in Iraq to remain the same, this is your guy.

McCain hugged George Bush four years ago and hasn't let go yet.

What does he offer the moderate, independent voters in between the coasts? Not much. He moved to the right a long time ago and remains a very distant cousin to anything representing the middle class.

This guy has no answer to the economic concerns in this country beyond saying that he has a lot of reading to catch up on.

His time for this office was 8 years ago. He lost to a guy who wanted to be known as the education president.

Grade – only in a pass-fail system would he get a passing grade.

Hillary isn't just Hillary. Bill admitted that electing her would get us two presidents. Just what we need. Are you ready for the Swift-Boat Coalition ads showing Whitewater graphs from 1984?

She gets all the credit in the world for breaking the barriers that remain in place far too long. White, old men have ruled this land for far too long.

If that was the sole test, she would get all the delegates needed.

But, we must look beyond the simple facts. We must examine her policies and her statements.

Hillary was as wrong on Iraq as Vice President Cheney. She never took the time to review the Powell documents prior to voting on the bill to

authorize the war. She said 'yes' more than Kerry; she has never stopped saying 'yes'. She followed the republicans on the war as much as any Democratic Senator.

Hillary has championed all of the traditional Democratic economic bills with absolutely nothing to support their economic well-being. One kind of senator makes proposals to benefit their constituents. Another kind finds the funds to pay for it.

As much as Bush won on the basis of his last name (and well-conceived titles such as "compassionate conservative," etc. thanks to a guy name Rove), tell me where Hillary would be if her last name was Smith. Where would she be if she had married just another hard-working Yale lawyer rather than the Vietnam war-evading governor of the chicken-packing capital of the world?

No one can question her ability to argue, yell, listen, and comprehend. Her interest in all the subjects coming into the oval office is vast. Sounds good.

My grade – if we didn't have to have all of the days from now until January,

2009, and she could be simply anointed as President, she would get my vote. But, the next months will be hell, just like her presidency.

Finally, we get Barak Obabma. The great hope of all who are of one color or the others. Populist, sophomore star in a long-term game of who is smartest. He wins that award. The guy has stood well above his colleagues for many years, in just about every venue he has entered. Is that enough to be president of our United States?

His Iraq line is way too simple: I didn't vote for the war. Of course you didn't; you were a state legislator at the time. Did anyone care how he felt when speaking to his constituents in Illinois? Come on.

Do you really think this man can bring this country around on race relations? Have you ever seen an honest politician? Have you ever seen an honest politician speak to all of the people of this nation in one tongue.

Obama can preach. But, can he lead? Obama can lead some of us. Can he lead us all?

The risks of a negative answer is so damn large. Is it truly worth the risk? Can we all afford to give this incred-

ibly well-meaning man a chance to lead this nation (at this time)?

If he was a white guy, would everyone believe him more? Do you look at him through a color-blind window? I doubt it. No white politician has introductions from Jessie Jackson. No one wants Jessie Jackson to be president any more than we need to see Bill Clinton answering questions in the gardens of 1600 Pennsylvania.

So, can we get Obama alone? Can we get Obama without the baggage of his race, his lack of worldly experience, and his obvious populist and non-specific answers to any questions about how to pay for any of the proposals he wishes to bring forth?

Same question as above – could he win if he was a white man? Would he even be a candidate? The last senator to win the office came from the east and his name was John F. Kennedy. Everything else being equal, Obama is no JFK.

Vote – history will call him the starting pitcher in a 12-inning game. The sports pages will note that he pitched well but could not get the win.

Three soldiers. None good enough for our highest office.

Riots In Xiahe And Chengdu:

A Report From The Field, Part I

by David Kingsbury

China is a magical place filled with over 20 ethnic groups, 11 provinces, 10+ different dialects of the Chinese language, amazing food, and great personality. I have traveled all across this wonderful country and experienced things that some people can never understand without coming to do it themselves.

The most recent news coming out of China, besides the Olympics, is the situation with Tibetan protests. Of the three major Chinese cities where protests were held, Lhasa, Xiahe, and Chengdu, I have been to the latter two.

Being in China, it is a little difficult to find out what is going on around the world. I get the majority of my news updates from logging onto Yahoo!. Wikipedia was unblocked for the first time in China last week, while YouTube was unblocked anew. YouTube had been blocked for a little over a week to prevent Chinese citizens from accessing and uploading videos of the protests, and those videos still remain inaccessible. After hearing about the protests in Xiahe and the lockdown of the city, my mind began to remember what I had seen while there. I heard reports of police blocking off the main street in the once peaceful city.

Last August, while traveling along the Silk Road, we made a stop for two days at the small village of Xiahe in Gansu province. Xiahe is located along a river in the mountains and is located several thousand kilometers above sea level, so some people might experi-

ence altitude sickness while visiting. The population of the city is divided between three groups: the overwhelming majority of Tibetans, the Muslims, and the Han Chinese. The majority of the city is Tibetan and contains one monastery and one nunnery. There is one main street with two hotels, a restaurant or two, and stores selling different types of Tibetan garments. While there, I stayed in the same hotel that was later filled with armed police and I can picture the government trucks driving along the twisting roads through the mountains to reach this remote village.

While I was there, we were able to tour both the town's monastery and its nunnery. Labrang Monastery is much larger than the nunnery, and is 299 years old. The monastery was composed of a main prayer hall, which we were not allowed to enter; a few schools where monks could learn about Tibetan medicine, higher and lower tantra, and philosophy; and homes for the 500 monks who live there. The nunnery was nowhere near as luxurious as the monastery, but such is the case in Tibetan society. Women have always played a subordinate role to both the monks and men, in general.

After visiting the monastery, a few of us went to a monk's home, where we asked him questions about life. Previously on the trip we had seen numerous Buddhist grottos that had been defaced or destroyed by Muslims, so I asked him how he felt about these occurrences. The monk's translator responded, "Muslims are troublemakers. Wherever they go



Police force presence in Tianfu Square

they create problems... Buddhists are supposed to show respect for all people and animals, but Muslims don't." This answer was not what I had expected to hear from a Monk, but it did show that there was some animosity between the two religious groups. If there was animosity from the monks, there could also be animosity amongst others.

Besides hanging out with the monks, we were also able to talk with some lay Tibetans. We sang and danced around a giant bonfire, sharing our culture with one another and indulged in some Tibetan food, of which the main ingredient is Yak.

I'm not quite sure why this town would want to protest. They are located high in the mountains, around four hours from the capital, Lanzhou, and their lives seemed to carry on the same way day after day, so what was there to accomplish from the riots? The majority of the town are Tibetan people, which seemed to peacefully coexist with the Han Chinese and Muslim populations. Rioting in this small town would appear to hurt more than help. Is staging protests in a town where all you have to hurt is your economy, neighbors, and your personal well-being really worth it.

Lakewood Perspective

A Math Problem For Howard Dean

by Bret Callentine

Here's a little math problem: Train A leaves its station in New York heading west for Denver, Colorado. Shortly thereafter, Train B leaves a station in Chicago, also heading for Denver. Train A has 144 cars and travels at 70 miles per hour; Train B has 163 cars but only travels at 65 miles per hour. If both trains are scheduled to arrive in Denver at the exact same time, will either train survive the impending collision, and if so, will either have the ability to continue on the single track that heads toward Washington, D.C.?

Without even knowing exact mass or the resulting momentum, I think it's obvious that there are no winners

here.

But just in case there are, there is a follow up question for extra credit. If Train C leaves Minneapolis-St. Paul headed east, which engineer from the original question can beat Train C to the Washington station, given that they must now pull all 307 cars, yet might lose some of the locomotives that helped pull the original loads?

Seriously, I'm not all that young anymore and for the life of me I can't remember another national election that boasted so many potentially disgruntled voters. There are huge groups of conservatives turned off by the Republican choice of John McCain,

and just as many groups of voting blocks that may become equally disgruntled if either Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama gain the Democratic nomination.

If Las Vegas takes wagers on this election like they do with the Super Bowl, at this point, everyone is probably listed as a long shot, and the only easy money on the board would be to bet the "under" for voter turnout.

I'm not really attached to any of these candidates so far, so maybe it's easy for me to say, but I honestly don't know how any of them plan on winning the hearts and votes of any kind of a majority of the voters.

While McCain certainly has his own problems of credibility, the thing that's turned this election year upside down in my mind is how the race for the Democratic nomination has turned into a reality TV show cross between American Idol and Survivor, with each candidate participating in embarrassing stunts and shameless performances hoping to become some sort of pop culture immunity idol. I hear them spew lots of flowery speech and see them shake every hand and kiss every baby, but I'm no longer sure if they're trying to sell me prosperity or a new Buick. At this rate I expect to see giant inflatable animals on the roofs of polling stations, and hear offers for a free toaster oven with every new voter registration.

Since this process began I've seen many ads and a multitude of speeches that all talk about the importance of electing a president who extols honor, wisdom, honesty, intelligence, perse-

verance, and just about every other noble trait. It's funny that they never mention dignity, because in my opinion that's the first casualty of most of the people who run for public office. According to Dictionary.com, dignity is defined as, "bearing, conduct, or speech indicative of self-respect or appreciation of the formality or gravity of an occasion or situation."

Sure, they all dress nicely, stand up straight, and speak clearly, but almost every chance they get, they do everything they can to prove their similarity to the "common man". They'll go bowling, do shots, hang out in donut shops, and pander to every politically correct stereotype in a thinly veiled effort to get your vote of approval.

But to me, this only hurts their case. I don't want a president that's like me, I want a president that's better than me. Thanks for caring, but I think I'm a little more concerned with your ability to balance the budget than whether or not you'll look like an idiot throwing out the first pitch at a baseball game. If these candidates actually had an "appreciation of the gravity of the situation", this election would seem more like college finals week than spring break.

Yes, some of the blame lies with the media--they beat each other silly trying to get the best footage of this political beauty pageant--but even more of the blame falls on us. The media is only a reflection of the people it serves. They make money based on their ability to show us what we want to see. Unfortunately, what we want to see isn't always what we need to see.

A Response from the Other Other: In Response to Response

by Bret Callentine

Seems like I hit a nerve with my thoughts on healthcare, I guess that means that someone is actually reading this column. First let me say that I do and will read any and all responses sent to me. However, given that this is a bi-weekly paper and that submissions must be submitted more than a week before the print date, carrying on any kind of continuous

discourse on any given subject in this medium would be very difficult.

Therefore, I invite anyone with questions, comments or concerns about any of my opinions to post their thoughts online in the Observation Deck section of www.lakewoodobserver.com. There is a section marked "letters to the editor" specifically set up for such a thing, and this way everyone can join in and expand the dialogue.

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Join the Discussion at: www.lakewoodobserver.com

Pulse Of The City

Death In The Home? Only A Breath Away...

OK, so the house gas bills were high. Everything's going up, right? That's just the way it is...or so I thought. Little did I know that Dad and I could have died just a couple of weeks ago.

It's funny. We get caught up in the hustle and bustle of our daily lives, and we sometimes take our surroundings for granted. The boiler was working fine, right? It was properly vented through the chimney anyway, right? The gas pipes had been checked "not long ago," right? Dad thought he caught a whiff of something down in the basement, but after all, it was the basement, and basements are, after all, basements. As for me, I had no sense of smell anyway. What was there to think about?

Well, fortunately, we were able to think again...and thank God, we had the time to think.

It started out with a written notice on the side door that the gas meter had to be read inside the house at least once a year. So I called the representative of the company inspecting meters for Dominion, and he arrived to read the meter. He also had a sniffer device which detected a gas leak, so Dominion came out.

Turns out there was not only a leak from the street side (with gas going up the wall!) but also inside our home. Fortunately, we had insurance with the gas company to cover the expenses of the extensive repairs that followed. (If you are a Lakewood homeowner, don't let another day go

by before checking with your gas company about obtaining this type of line insurance!) And by the way, thanks to Dominion for coordinating all those contractors for the quick repair of our gas-related troubles!

Our home was built in 1909. These gas lines were ancient, and they utilized water-type valves to open and close the lines. These were replaced and new fittings secured. You can tell if your gas line has these water valves because they look like little steering wheels. New gas valves are red-handled and look like levers.

But the crisis was not over yet. After the lines had been tested, the gas company guy began to relight the appliances. When he lit the boiler, he observed a flickering orange flame that signifies an unhealthy burn of the fuel. His carbon monoxide detector immediately went into the danger zone.

Dick Slife and company were at the house in no time (thanks, Dick, Dave, Bruce and Al!). But even after the boiler was carefully cleaned, the carbon monoxide levels still registered too high, so it had be carried out.

We were fortunate that someone did not have to carry Dad and me out.

In the case of our home, and I would suspect in many Lakewood homes, older furnaces, boilers, stoves, and other appliances using kerosene, propane, or natural gas need to

be checked to see whether they are in good working order and are safely burning their fuels. A new furnace or boiler, by the way, should pay for itself with the money you will save by its efficiency. The new 90%+ efficiency boiler unit that we ordered doesn't even need a chimney, as it vents out the side of our house.

Carbon monoxide is a natural by-product of burning carbon-based fuels, whether in your car, your factory, or your home. In the best-case scenario, the gas is mostly vented out your chimney or exhaust, and away from you and yours. As you are no doubt aware, however, the emissions from all of these carbon-based combustions put together have become a topic of world-wide controversy in an effort to discover a cleaner form of energy.

Carbon monoxide poisoning can be deadly. The gas is colorless and odorless. I would think there are many Lakewood homes having older fur-

naces or boilers giving off too much carbon monoxide. This situation can also combine with your chimney's condition and whether there's a good enough updraft permitting gases to escape. When some old furnaces and boilers start up, there can also be a time period between the start-up and the heat rising where excess carbon monoxide can form in your home.

This poisoning can cause any number of difficulties with your physical well-being, according to the numerous articles I've been reading lately concerning this topic. This poisoning can also cause you to go to sleep forever...

Carbon monoxide detectors are an inexpensive way to detect problems. Be sure to have one or more on hand. They are available at home and drug stores.

Thankfully, I'm older and hopefully wiser than I was a few weeks ago. Dad and I still have our house and our health. Better check your own home out for the life and health of your family. For the pulse of this city to work, your own pulse needs to keep beating!

by Gary Rice



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Lakewood Arts & Entertainment

Cowan Pottery In Lakewood

by *Caleigh Sheehan*

The year was 1912. The sidewalks were crowded with ladies wearing skirts and dresses and gentlemen wearing button-down shirts and dress pants. Back then, women and men would often wear fancy clothes. You would rarely ever see an automobile and if you did, it would most likely be a Model T. Amongst the crowded streets and sidewalks there was one young gentleman with a potential career in art and he decided that he would create a pottery company. This young man's name was R. Guy Cowan. The R stood for Reginald, but for short, his parents would call him R. Guy. He opened his first pottery studio in Lakewood, Ohio.

My teacher at Grant Elementary in Lakewood, Ms. Bluemel, thought that Cowan Pottery would be an interesting subject for our yearly local history research project and documentary. That is why my class, with the help of the Executive Director of the Lakewood Historical Society, Mrs. Mazie Adams, is making a movie about Cowan Pottery.

All year long, my class and I interviewed people who were experts on Cowan Pottery. We interviewed a relative of a Cowan artist, authors of a book on Cowan Pottery, the current owner of the old Cowan buildings, and R. Guy Cowan's grandson.

Mrs. Adams visited our classroom each week to help us research using books, old photos, and primary source

documents that we could only touch while wearing gloves. We got to touch real Cowan Pottery and shards too.

We went on a couple of Cowan related field trips. First we went to the Western Reserve Historical Society to look up Cowan in the city directory and find locations on old maps. We also visited the Cowan Museum in the Rocky River Public Library. The curator of the museum, Mrs. Carol Jacobs, showed us around the Cowan exhibits and also showed us the world famous Jazz Bowl. The Jazz Bowl is a big, blue and black punch bowl that was originally made for Eleanor Roosevelt. Viktor Schreckengost made it while he worked for Cowan Pottery. It was his most famous Cowan Pottery creation and is popular for its design and character.

Cowan's Lakewood studio was open until World War I when R. Guy Cowan helped with the war effort. When Cowan came back to the studio in 1917, the gas wells were dry. Therefore, in 1920, Cowan and his employees moved the company to Rocky River, Ohio. Back in Lakewood where the first Cowan Pottery opened, the potters used red clay, but when Cowan Pottery opened in Rocky River they used White English clay.

We learned that Cowan employed many talented artists including Viktor Schreckengost, Elsa Vick Shaw, Wayland Gregory, Paul Manship, and Edris Eckhardt. They produced beautiful vases, pots, bowls, and figurines.



Above: Cowan Pottery in Lakewood. Right: Second and third graders at Grant Elementary with Bill Cowan, Carol Jacobs, and Nadine Bluemel.



Some of the kids in my class even asked for Cowan Pottery for Christmas and their birthdays and have begun their own collections. When we are done gathering our information, we will write our script, narrate, and work together to edit the movie. With the help of our music teacher Mr. Hazlett we wrote our own music for the movie. It is a jazz song we named "Potters' Piece."

The Cowan Pottery Associates made us honorary junior members and gave us our own membership cards. We will show our movie at the Cowan Symposium on May 10. You can learn

more about Cowan Pottery and the symposium by visiting the Rocky River Public Library web site, www.rrpl.org. Cowan Pottery remained open until 1931 when it closed due to the Depression. My class and I will always remember the story of Cowan Pottery and the fun we had making a local history project about it.

Our class web site is www.lkwdpl.org/schools/elempath/discovery

State Of The City

continued from page 11

our own IS Department, provides a roadmap for sweeping technological changes both within Lakewood City Hall and without. We have already identified productivity improvements and cost savings which we can realize this year. The transformation of our city website into an accessible and truly interactive mode of communication has begun and will continue throughout the year. At a minimum, we need to establish internet wireless corridors on Detroit and Madison Avenues, and we are exploring possibly sharing technical capabilities with the Lakewood School District. Our long range goal is to transform our information technologies into an integrated data management and business process system, which ultimately improves customer service for our residents.

Even under all of the financial pressure we faced this year, we continued to fund wide-ranging economic development efforts, for both large developers, and small entrepreneurs. We must, even in difficult times, continue to foster economic growth, develop parking, and fill retail vacancies. We've established a stronger working relationship with the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce, and we are determined to build a more business friendly environment

to encourage entrepreneurship. I will be presenting legislation to City Council in the coming months which will embody these changes, including the encouragement of environmentally friendly development.

With all of the talk of technical processes and budget line items, we may be at risk of forgetting the human side of who we are working for. Lakewood has an admirable tradition of providing for the most vulnerable in our community. And, despite the recent round of budget cuts, we still have the largest human services department of any suburb in Cuyahoga County. We will still be providing services like parenting programs, juvenile diversion programs, scholarships for child care, Family-to-Family services to keep kids out of the child welfare system, H20, emergency shelter services for those on the verge of homelessness, support for young families at the Family Room, transportation services for seniors, as well as cleaning services and nutrition services, and volunteer programs so that the aged don't languish in isolation.

And we are trying to do more, although in somewhat different ways. We are partnering with the Lakewood Schools and the Cleveland Clinic to

begin a new wellness program based at Harrison School, an effort I would like to expand to the entire city. We'll be spearheading a new effort to insure greater participation of those eligible for the earned income tax credit. And we are taking the lead in bringing all of the providers of human services in Lakewood- whether they be public, private, or non-profit- together at the same table so that we can build a new community network of support for those most in need.

We also have a special responsibility to honor the veterans who have sacrificed for our country. Working with local veterans, we are redesigning and improving our Veteran's Memorial at Lakewood Park. Also, this year we will be "adopting" a military unit serving our country overseas in Iraq or Afghanistan.

And we must continue to do this kind of work, because it is a part of a social justice mission which I believe in, and I think this city shares that belief. And to paraphrase one of my favorite American leaders, we must do these things, not just because the laws of God and man demand it, although they do; not because in the long run, these programs are economically advantageous, although they are; we must do these things because it is the right thing to do.

The common theme in all of these initiatives which you will see in the coming months and years is that they will be neighborhood-based. Your per-

sonal participation is essential to the success of these programs. Beginning in June, we will begin taking government services out of City Hall and bringing them to you directly, one neighborhood at a time. We have divided the city up into approximately 50 separate neighborhoods, and, on a rotating basis, our city departments will focus on those areas, bring resources to bear, talk to residents, and resolve problems. I personally will be walking the streets of those neighborhoods and conducting neighborhood meetings where we can exchange ideas and get things accomplished. By building a closer connection between Lakewood government and residents, we can become real partners in not just complaining about problems, or denying their existence, but by confronting them and overcoming them.

And that is why I am optimistic about our future. The state of the city is that we are being challenged. But I can report to you that we are up to the challenge, and that the residents of Lakewood have a lot of fight in them and they are coming through for this town. I am optimistic because I see the beginning of a true community effort. And that is why, years from now, when people ask me how we did it, I'm going to be happy to give all of you the credit you deserve for believing in Lakewood and all our possibilities.

Thank you very much.

Lakewood Arts & Entertainment

Lets Band2gether

by Ruth Koenigsmark

A hip, youth-oriented rock concert series, Band2gether, will feature the sounds of talented local musicians of middle school and high school age. This free, outdoor youth concert series, which kicks off this Summer in Lakewood, is expected to draw many people downtown and to give Lakewood’s young musicians an opportunity to showcase themselves. This 8-week series debuts Friday, July 11 and runs through August 29. Mary Anne Crampton, Executive Director of Main Street-LCPI said, “Shops and restaurants will be encouraged to stay open later for the concerts, set to take place from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Fridays at Sinagra Park [on Detroit Avenue -- in front of Marc’s Plaza].”

The goal of this year’s BandTo-gether concert series is to showcase the talents of young musicians of middle school and high school age, bringing our community together to celebrate our rich talent and diversity. “It will not be the local garage-band variety. It will be a step up,” Chris Vance of Vance Music Studios said. According to Mr. Vance, “It will be music with energy that you can tap your foot to and know well enough to sing along. You will be surprised at how talented our kids are.”

Mainstreet Lakewood, Vance Music Studios and Lakewood is Art (“LIA”) have joined forces to make this event possible along with support from the City of Lakewood, the Beck Center for the Arts and the Lakewood Observer. To gadge more support for the concert series, LIA requested a small grant from Hamburger Helper. In order to further luminate the importance of the event, the group asked members of our community to offer their support for this project directly to Hamberger Helper. Here is just a few of the many, many comments of support that have been received:

“It’s so important to encourage music diversity in a community so rich in spiritual and ethnic diversity. What a wonderful way to accomplish this.” Mary Bond.

“As a parent of high and middle school kids, I am thrilled to hear the talent coming from that age group. It is vitally important that we showcase this ability, not just to spur on the musicians themselves, but to encourage their peers to achieve as well. The positive feedback these kids give each other is tremendous, and to have the community support it, as well, is awesome.” Carolynne.

“Lakewood is going through a re-birth right now. The youth of Lakewood represent a segment of America that is both talented and poised to inherit the future. Band2gether will allow our youth to share their talents with each other and the community. What a great way to express creativity and

avoid resorting to destructive means for entertainment. I can’t wait for the first concert.” Chris Karel.

“Part of what makes us uniquely American is our music. Young people should indeed be exposed to it in a positive, healthy environment where it can be shared with the community. An all around solid concept...kudos!” Mark Tortorici.

“There are so many wonderful people in Lakewood and it is events like these that bring them all together -- from the very young to the elderly. I

am excited to hear their music and to see all the people that come out to support them.” Jean Luehring.

To date, seven bands have completed applications in hopes of being part of this year’s line-up and range from ages 11 through 18. With only another week before auditions, interested bands are encouraged to contact Chris Vance, owner of Vance Music Studios, immediately to have their chance of being part of this hallmark community event. A copy of the Band2gether application can be found on the Vance

Music Studios website (www.vancemusicstudios.com) or on the back cover of the Lakewood Observer.

Want to be involved with one of the best events of the Summer? Sponsorships are available for the 2008 Band2gether Concert Series. For anyone interested in supporting this event in some way, contact Ruth Koenigsmark, LIA, at rkoenigsmark@yahoo.com. Additional help is needed to make this event the best it can be for our kids, families and the community.

Good Old-fashioned Comedy: My Favorite Year At Beck Center

by Fran Storch

Beck Center for the Arts presents My Favorite Year, a good old-fashioned musical comedy written by Joseph Dougherty with music and lyrics by Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens, on the Mackey Main Stage, May 16 through June 8, 2008. Based on the 1982 hit film starring Peter O’Toole, My Favorite Year is a nostalgic look at the early days of television, capturing all of the comedy and drama of “live” TV.

Look back fondly to 1954 with Benjy Stone, the freshman comedy writer for the hit variety show, King Kaiser’s Comedy Cavalcade, as he proves himself as a writer, falls in love for the first time and meets his childhood idol, movie star Alan Swann – now a washed-up, womanizing alcoholic. Directed by award-winning director, William Roudebush, My Favorite Year stars Matthew Wright* as Alan Swann and features Shawn Galligan as Benjy Stone with Jean Zarzour* as Benjy’s mother – Belle Steinberg Carroca, Theresa Kloos as his love interest – K.C. Downing, John Polk as King Kaiser, and a strong supporting cast of over 30 talented actors.

“My Favorite Year is a completely charming story that will appeal to young audiences as well as the more mature theater-goers,” exclaimed director Roudebush. “The original film starred Peter O’Toole in one of his most comic performances and Matthew Wright, in the same role, will deliver a fresh approach that is sure to touch everyone in a completely unique way.” My Favorite Year is about learning from our mistakes and recovering from a painful past, as the lyrics so aptly relate, “If the world were like the movies, we would never make mistakes. We’d correct our little blunders and select our better takes.”

Show times for My Favorite Year are 8:00 pm Fridays and Saturdays and 3:00 pm Sundays. There is no performance on Sunday, May 25 but a special Thursday evening performance is scheduled for 8:00 pm on June 5. To reserve tickets, contact the Beck Center

box office at (216) 521-2540 or online at www.beckcenter.org. Ticket prices are \$28 for adults, \$25 for seniors and \$17 for students (22 and under with I.D.). Group discounts are available for parties of 13 or more. Rush tickets for students (22 and under with I.D.) are offered for \$10 each on Sundays only, 30 minutes prior to curtain, based on availability.

Beck Center for the Arts is located just 10 minutes west of downtown Cleveland at 17801 Detroit Avenue in Lakewood. Free, convenient on-site parking is available.

The Beck Center’s production of My Favorite Year is sponsored by National City, West Roofing Systems,

WNWV 107.3 The Wave, Cox Communications, WCLV 104.9 and the Ohio Arts Council.

Programming at the Beck Center is made possible through the generous support of The Cleveland Foundation, The George Gund Foundation, The John P. Murphy Foundation, The Kulas Foundation, The Eva L. & Joseph M. Bruening Foundation, The Abington Foundation, and the Thomas H. White Foundation. Beck Center gratefully acknowledges the citizens of Cuyahoga County for their support through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture.

*Actors appear courtesy of the Actors’ Equity Association (AEA), the union of actors and stage managers.

Beck Center For The Arts Rise To The Challenge!

by Fran Storch

A local family foundation has issued a challenge grant to the Beck Center for the Arts: the foundation will match dollar-for-dollar every contribution the Beck Center receives – up to \$35,000 – from individuals in the community. The Beck Center for the Arts is a non-profit, performing arts organization which for over 75 years has been dedicated to enriching the quality of life for the West Shore community, offering professional theatrical productions with curriculum-based education in creative arts therapies, dance, music, theater, and visual arts.

If you have enjoyed Beck Center’s performances or educational offerings, please consider making a contribution for the audiences and artists of tomorrow! Your support will allow the Beck Center to continue to stage innovative and exciting theater and to provide the many educational programs for children, adults, aspiring artists, and under-served communities. Please visit www.beckcenter.org to make a secure online contribution. If you prefer to mail your contribution, please send it to: Sally Weakley, Direc-



tor of Development, 17801 Detroit Avenue, Lakewood, OH 44107 or call 216-521-2540, x18. Whatever your level of contribution, please know that your support truly makes a difference! Thank you, Lucinda B. Einhouse, President and CEO

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Conservation Corner

Greening Your Lawn

Grass lawns have their benefits: the soil provides a home for worms and insects, which then provide delicious meals to birds; they can prevent soil erosion, filter contaminants, and absorb airborne pollutants; they clean the air as they convert carbon dioxide to oxygen. But, before you get out the hose to start watering your lawn for the warmer months, consider the fact that many households use more water outside in the summer than they do for everything else during the rest of the year. Though this includes washing your car, filling pools, and other outdoor activities, maintaining lawns and gardens accounts for the majority of increased summer water use. Typical suburban lawns consume thousands

of gallons of water, in addition to the rainwater that falls on them. Taking good care of your lawn can save you time and money, prevent dangerous chemicals from entering the water, soil and air, and reduce yard waste.

To care for your lawn in an environmentally friendly way, the EPA recommends taking the following steps: developing healthy soil; choosing a grass type that fits your climate; mowing high, often, and with sharp blades (perhaps even using a push mower rather than the pollution-producing gas models); watering deeply, but not too frequently; correcting thatch (dead plant material) buildup;

by Heather Ramsey

utilizing a holistic approach to pest management; and practicing natural lawn care. To learn more about these “greenscaping” tips, see <http://www.epa.gov/GreenScapes>.

Grass lawns prefer soil that is a good mix of silt, clay, and sand. If your soil is too sandy or has too much clay, consider adding compost, manure, or grass clippings, which will help in either case. Letting your grass grow long allows it to absorb more sunlight, which makes it grow thicker and develop a deeper root system. This will help your grass survive through droughts, insect problems, and diseases. This training of the roots to

extend downward is also why watering deeply is beneficial. Meanwhile, the longer grass shades the soil, keeping it cooler and making it less likely that weeds will sprout. The EPA suggests a height of between 2.5” and 3.5” (though this depends on the species) and recommends mowing such that you never cut off more than one third of the grass height when you mow. In this way, you will be able to leave short clippings on the lawn to recycle nitrogen, rather than sending them to the landfill as waste.

When watering the lawn, aim for early morning, so that more of the water will be absorbed by the soil rather than evaporating. Only water when it is really needed - the grass will have a duller color, will begin to wilt, and will not rebound quickly after being stepped on. Consider getting a timer for your sprinkler so it does not run unnecessarily and make sure that it is aimed to cover the lawn only (not the sidewalk!). You can even purchase (or make) a rain barrel to catch precipitation and use it for watering the lawn rather than paying for water from the hose.

Though mowing the lawn is a necessary evil (unless you go all out and convert to more natural plant cover rather than grass), it is important to realize that gas-powered lawnmowers are not the best option. The EPA has estimated that the pollution from using one for an hour is equivalent to driving a car 20 miles. When added up, pollution from gas mowers is responsibly for 5% of the total US air pollution. Electric mowers, however, will significantly reduce this impact, and push mowers only require your own energy.

If you have a pest problem, consider natural remedies first. Pesticides used on lawns pose a threat to wildlife, soil, and water. Many chemicals found in them can cause birth defects or are thought to be carcinogenic. There are a great many suggestions available for dealing with various problems, including setting out trays of beer to attract and kill slugs and spraying your plants with various simple concoctions that will make them less appealing to insects. Remember that the majority of bugs in your garden are beneficial!



Lakewoodites choose from the selection of perennials.

Humus & Plant Sale At The Old Stone House

by Heather Ramsey

Keep Lakewood Beautiful, which has been striving to improve the environment of Lakewood for over 25 years, held its annual Leaf Humus & Perennial Sale Fundraiser last Friday at the Old Stone House. This highly successful event attracted multitudes of vehicles, each waiting in a lengthy line to get some of the coveted humus. Unfortunately for those who like to sleep in on Saturdays, the once huge pile of humus was completely sold out within half an

hour of the event’s start time. Among other things, the money raised from the event will help the volunteers of Keep Lakewood Beautiful to maintain the Adopt A Spot’s across Lakewood and support tree stewardship and student gardening. If you missed out, don’t worry, you should have another chance come October! For more information on Keep Lakewood Beautiful, or its parent organization, Keep America Beautiful, and how you can get involved, email recycling@lakewoodoh.net and check out <http://www.kab.org>.

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Real Estate

Pricing Your Home To Sell In This Market

by Maggie Fraley

You want to get the most profit from an investment and your home, as one of the biggest investments you make, is no exception. In this Buyer's market, recent sales show that homes are selling, but are taking longer to sell and selling at a lower price than comparable homes a few years ago. This is great for those buying homes, but more challenging for home sellers.

It's easy to think your home is worth more than the current market may support, particularly after the steady appreciation in recent years. Home prices have cooled, not only in Lakewood, but in markets around the country. Sellers should prepare to be realistic by considering the need to negotiate on price and to stay flexible on other terms benefiting the Buyer - It's a Buyer's market! This reasonable approach ultimately helps to achieve the goal of a successful sale. Of course that's difficult, after all, you're proud of the improvements, the décor and the many memories attached to your home. Yet to be competitively priced and poised for successful marketing, a Seller has to honestly consider not what they 'need' or hope to get for their home- but what the market is saying the current value actually is.

To determine a realistic listing price, your realtor can prepare reports comparing sales on homes in your

neighborhood including list prices and actual sales prices and information on what homes did not sell. Actually visiting Open Houses to compare the features and appeal can be helpful to understand the market better.

For your home to fetch the highest sale price, it needs to be clean, well-maintained and to have a décor appealing to the pool of Buyers to which your realtor will be marketing. There are so many demands on our time that the vast majority of Buyers want a home that is in near-perfect condition. Investing time and money to paint, repair, de-clutter and stage will bring the most Buyers to view your home and then help to sell it at the best possible price.

Even if your home is a "fixer-upper" it still competes with others for sale so it has to be priced right to sell. That "as is" price will usually be lower than what it would cost to make the improvements and then sell at a higher price.

Comparing recent sales, making a choice about how much you are willing to do to prepare your home for sale, and then pricing it right the first time, will greatly impact your presence in the current real estate market and your eventual sale price.

Remember, although you may not sell at the price you may have thought you would, you will benefit from this Buyer's market when you purchase your next home!

Realty Reality: Questions From Our Readers

by Maggie Fraley

What do the experts say about the housing market in 2008?

It seems everyone has an opinion about the real estate market. We hear about it in the news daily. Though the negative is often highlighted, there's some positive information to share too. The National Association of REALTORS® projects that existing-home sales will go up in 2008, with pending home sales showing a slight rise. However, recovery for new-home sales is unlikely before 2009. Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, said, "The worst part of the credit crunch has already worked its way through the data. The unusual mortgage disruptions that peaked in August were clearly seen in lower home sales that were finalized in September and October, so the market was underperforming. Now that

mortgage conditions have improved, some postponed activity should turn up in existing-home sales over the next couple of months, and I expect sales at fairly stable to slightly higher levels."

Grandfather & Grandson Honored With Street Names

by Val Mechenbier

John West owned 700 acres just south of Rockport. His land ultimately became known as "West's Park" because of his installation of many beautiful plantings, a man-made lake and manicured lawns. John's daughter and son-in-law lived on the site of St. Peter's Church at Detroit and West Clifton. To honor the memory of their deceased infant son, Clifton, they named the new Clifton Boulevard after him, and they named West Clifton after their son and his grandfather, John West.

Lakewood Real Estate Information		
(According to Multiple Listing Service)		
by Andy Tabor,,Realtor, GRI-Prudential Lucien		
March	2007	2008
Multi-Family (2-4 units) Closed	8	6
Multi-Family Pending (Under Contract)	11	
Interesting Real Estate Information		
Lakewood Multi-Family Homes (2-4 units)		
Currently for Sale in Multiple Listing Service:		161
Contingent in Multiple Listing Service:		1

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This concert series is made possible through the collaborative efforts of
MAIN STREET LAKEWOOD pARTy and LAKEWOOD IS ART with
the support of VANCE MUSIC STUDIOS.

LAKEWOOD BAND2GETHER
08'

14 Bands will be
chosen to play
Fridays at Sinagra
Park in July and
August.

AUDITIONS FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS

WHAT: A concert series to celebrate our community's
rich talent and diversity by showcasing the
talents of young musicians of middle school
and high school age.

WHEN: Saturday, May 10, 2008
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

WHERE: Hi-Fi Club: 11729 Detroit Avenue

FEE: Band Entrance Fee*: \$10.00
Public*: \$2.00

*fees will cover costs associated with BAND2GETHER programming.
THIS IS NOT A FUNDRAISER

Bands interested in auditioning must return an application to Vance Music Studios (16420 Madison Ave) no later than Monday, May 5, 2008.
Additional applications available at Vance Music Studios or found online at www.lakewoodisart.com and www.vancemusicstudios.com

2008 BAND2GETHER APPLICATION (see reverse side for OFFICIAL RULES)

LCPI—Main Street Lakewood pARTy announces BAND2GETHER, a Friday night summer concert series. BAND2GETHER will feature
Lakewood based middle- and high school-age bands performing music on Friday evenings during the months of July and August
in Sinagra Park. Youth bands who are interested in participating must submit this signed application to Vance Music Studios
no later than Monday, May 5th. Auditions will be held on Saturday, May 10, 2008 at the Hi-Fi Club. The cost to audition will
be \$10. The judges will select fourteen bands who will perform at least one 45 minute set during one of the Fridays this Summer.

Applicants must read the rules (see reverse) and agree to the terms of the event.

Name of Band:	Band Contact:
Mailing Address:	Contact Number: () -
Band Members:	
Song to be Performed for Audition:	Music Genre:

The BAND2GETHER Concert Series runs every Friday from 6pm – 8pm, from July 4 to August 29, 2008. Please circle the dates
that your band would be available to play during the summer if selected (keep in mind that being flexible might help your chances
of being selected).

JULY: 7/4 - 7/11 - 7/18 - 7/25 AUGUST: 8/1 - 8/8 - 8/15 - 8/22 - 8/29

I certify that all band members have read and agree to abide by the rules of the contest (see reverse). I certify that each of the
band members listed above has parental permission to perform at BAND2GETHER and other related activities including allowing
the broadcast and dissemination of their image, voice, identification, performances (including original music content) and any
other promotional materials.

Parent Sponsor:
(Print name) _____ / /
First Name Last Name Signature (Month/Day/Year)

Address:
(Street) _____ (City) _____ (Zip Code) _____


Phone Number: () -


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A variety of sponsorships are still available for this event – call Ruth Koenigsmark
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Lakewood Community Progress, Inc. (LCPI) is a 501-(c)(3) organization
whose mission is to encourage and support quality planning, economic development,
rehabilitation and restoration by fostering public and private partnerships and
promoting and celebrating the unique assets of downtown Lakewood. Main Street
Lakewood pARTy is an LCPI program dedicated to bringing performing arts to
Lakewood's historic downtown district.

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BAND2GETHER OFFICIAL RULES

- The contest is open to bands in which the majority of members are currently attending middle school or high school. No members
of the band can be older than 21 years of age as of July, 2008, unless approved by the BAND2GETHER committee.
Qualifications will be verified prior to acceptance.
- All applications must be submitted to Vance Music Studios (16420 Madison) by May, 5 2008.
- Finalists will be chosen by the judges and will be notified via phone by June 1, 2008.
- Finalists must be available to perform on the date and time given and to be video taped for broadcast on a public access channel
and in promotional videos.
- Finalist performances will be approximately 45 minutes in length.
- A professional sound system and engineer will be provided. Bands may bring their own sound engineer OR may use the sound
engineer provided. Each finalist band must provide their own instruments for the performance except that a 5 piece drum kit
will be provided and drummers should bring their own throne, snare, cymbals, hi-hat, and kick pedal. The use of a single
house drum kit for all bands will allow for faster set changes and a smoother show.
- All decisions of the judges are FINAL.
- Lyrics must be suitable for all audiences (no obscenities, profanity, violence etc.)
- By participating, each entrant consents to allow the use of his/her name and/or photographs for advertising this or similar
promotions without further compensation.
- Participants release LCPI and affiliated companies and sponsors from any responsibility or liability in connection with any injuries,
losses, or damages of any kind caused by or resulting from the performance at BAND2GETHER or from acceptance or usage of
any prize awarded hereunder. BAND2GETHER is a program of LCPI—Mainstreet, a 501 (c) (3), non-profit organization dedicated
to the revitalization of Lakewood's historic downtown district.

For more info visit: www.mainstreetlakewood.org • www.lakewoodisart.com • www.vancemusicstudios.com

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