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OBSERVER

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Volume 2, Issue 13, June 27, 2006

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To Be, Or Not To Be...

City Hall To Ponder Future Of Beck Center

by Jim O’Bryan

As we go to press there are a flurry of stories breaking about the Beck Center pulling out of Lakewood for a future at Crocker Park or elsewhere.

Rumors have been swirling around the city for over a year regarding many different plans for the property where the facility is sited and all plans concentrated on ways to enhance the property around the Beck Center in an effort to make it the anchor of Lakewood’s hot Entertainment District.

Cecil Yates had a plan to accommodate the Beck Center’s consideration for redevelopment that would add a

new restaurant or two to occupy space in front of the Beck Center, while other plans had the Beck Center becoming an integral part of the various opportunities for entertainment in Lakewood.

What started out as Lakewood Little Theater, a community playhouse 75 years ago, has become a crown jewel of theater and arts education in the region. Now the city and the Beck Board of Directors have to reckon with success. The community that has always been so supportive and the city that has given so much over the years wonders if the Beck Center will stay and help our revitalization as we did theirs

decades ago, or alternatively, whether we should designate our money and resources elsewhere?

Lakewood’s Mayor Thomas George noted, “On my first night as a newly elected Councilmember in 1988 we voted to extend city dollars to the Beck Center. I clearly remember former Councilmember Tom Brown railing on about the constant city support of the Beck Center. That was 18 years ago.”

The Lakewood Observer office was notified of a rumor nearly five months ago about meetings initiated by Crocker Park developer Bob Stark with the Beck and the City of Westlake. We believed at the time it was an offshoot of Yates’s plan. It was more recently that rumors circulated about purposefully building a new facility in or near Crocker Park, paying all debts and a long-term commitment from Stark or Westlake.

oment after citizens were advised that developers would never come here. At the Realtor Conference at Sweetwater Landing in the Emerald Canyon, Assistant Planning Director Dryck Bennett stated emphatically, “We are not having trouble finding developers. We are having trouble finding space.”

Interestingly, one rumor has Bob Stark building a new office building for his home office in the Beck space. As City Hall ponders what they can do in a cash-strapped environment, the Beck Center looks to move away from home. What is it worth to us and to our memories? I believe that everyone in Lakewood would like the Beck to stay but at what price?

City Council To Review Internet, Cable Deal From AT&T

By Bryan Wroten

High-speed Internet. IP-based video and voice. Fiber optic cable nodes that are 63 inches tall, 42 inches wide and 20 inches long. Competition with another cable provider.

The Lakewood City Council will have to consider all of these aspects of AT&T Corp.’s Project Lightspeed.

Denis Dunn, director of external affairs in Ohio for AT&T, presented the potential plan to the City Council during the June 19 meeting. He said it is the next step from the previous one, Project Pronto, which offered DSL to customers in Lakewood. He cited the past relationship between the city and the telecommunications company as a reason to move forward.

“It’s a multimillion dollar investment over the next three years (for Lakewood),” he said. “Lakewood is a great community for AT&T. It has scores of employees, retirees and shareholders.”

Project Lightspeed would offer high-speed Internet, IP-based video, which would offer customers more than 200 channels and a video library and IP-based voice, which would improve phone service, he said.

As another benefit, Dunn said a deal with the city would give residents a choice in their cable options as well as lower cable prices overall through competition with Cox Communications and Adelphia Cable.

“It’s not competition that’s necessarily a problem,” Christy Frederick, Cox Communications director of public relations and government affairs, “but fair competition.”

She said parts of the proposed contract given to the City Council are a concern such as different terms for public access. She also said Cox’s current video service deal with the city took more than five years to negotiate, even after 26 years of partnership. The AT&T negotiations only took six months, she said.

A concern voiced by some residents at the last City Council meeting is the VRADs, the fiber optic cable nodes that would connect the central office to customers. Because of their size and potential locations near residential areas, residents said they worry about children playing near or on them as well as the aesthetics of the units.

Dunn said AT&T would set up the VRADs mainly on existing facilities, so there would not be a lot of new construction. The fiber optic cables are already laid down, he said, so they wouldn’t have to dig up people’s lawns.

The City Council has to do three readings before it can vote on the contract. Kevin Butler, Ward 1 councilman, said he and Edward FitzGerald, councilman At-Large, would review the contract in the Rules and Ordinance Committee. Butler said he has not yet had a chance to look too much into the contract. He said the committee will discuss it Thursday at 6:15 in City Hall.

As we go to press, AT&T instituted a new privacy policy which states “AT&T may disclose records to protect its legitimate business interests, safeguard others or respond to legal process.”

Some argue this is too broad and gives the company latitude to share data with the Federal Government.

“When Frederick B. Unger, chairman of the Beck Center’s Board of Directors, and others called a meeting with Planning Director Thomas Jordan and me a few weeks ago, we heard their tale of Stark’s offer. I told them the citizenry of Lakewood are committed to doing everything they can to retain the Beck Center,” said Mayor George.

He then went on to say, “I also explained that the Beck Center’s organizational infrastructure is Lakewood based, not Westlake...i.e., the personnel who clean the Center, take tickets at events, make sure the programs get printed. A move to Westlake jeopardizes the operational end of the business.”

When I recently spoke with Mr. Unger, he made it clear that nothing was set in stone and that the Beck is looking to Lakewood first. The board has hired consultants to weigh the issues and will not make a decision prematurely.

Nevertheless, he was also quoted in a Plain Dealer article saying, “It will take two to five years for the building to be built.” This makes the plan to leave Lakewood sound a little more concrete. An important question: how much should Lakewood spend on a business that may be committed to leaving Lakewood?

This situation reminds me of the Browns leaving Cleveland. While there is no doubt that Art Modell deserved a new stadium, the city could simply not afford to build one at the time. Presently, the Beck Center is committed to house its programs in new facility.

Lakewood is going through a renaissance with \$200 million in devel-

BECK CENTER UPDATES !

Jay Foran Vice President of LakewoodAlive will speak with Fred Unger and report to those in attendance at LakewoodAlive’s meeting June 28th at Lakewood Hospital.

LakewoodAlive thinks it will be extremely valuable for Beck Center representatives to hear first hand about LCPI’s exciting plans for Main Street, and similarly, it will be most valuable for our members to hear directly about issues under study at the Beck.

FreeTimes Associate Editor (and Lakewood resident) Michael Gill has spent three months researching the story for an upcoming edition. Gill saw the story break on the Lakewood Observer’s on-line discussion area. Observation Deck.

Please - join the discussion online at LakewoodObserver.com!

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Lakewood Fun

Jaycees Wing Cook Off Finger Licking Good!

All photos by: Ivor Karabatkovic



Kenilworth's Dan Kalsovsky mixing up some wings



McCarthy's Chris Tyers and Bryan Patterson



People's Choice "Best Buffalo Style" Wings: Carlucci's



Crazy Rita's Molly Newman, Ted Elesh and Nick Booker



The Lakewood Village cooks: Renee, Brandy and Genine



Harry Buffalo's Ed Zupan and Matt Guerra.

Lakewood Observer

Ready To Tell Your Story or Join The Discussion?

<http://lakewoodobserver.com> • Where Lakewood Hangs Out

Story To Tell? We Want To Hear From You!

We LOVE folks who write for the Lakewood Observer! So, please don't be shy . . . Part of our mission statement is to "help Lakewood residents and neighbors learn as much as possible about the city" but we can't do this without you.

The Lakewood Observer is driven by volunteer participation. None of our writers, editors, photographers, or illustrators are paid for their work. Each contributor has some interest, some passion, or some knowledge about a subject. Sharing our interests is how articles get written and how we come to better know each other and our city. And we know from experience, no one can tell your story as well as you!

Citizen journalism, also known as "participatory journalism," is the act of citizens "playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating

information," according to We Media: How Audiences are Shaping the Future of News and Information, by Shayne Bowman and Chris Willis. If you're a fan of girl's volleyball or rugby, please write about the games. If your church has a celebration, tell us about the event. If you have memories of Lakewood life, please pass them along to our readers. Did your class participate in an interesting project? Tell us about it! If you are interested in something, then someone else is going to be interested, too.

Writing an article isn't as difficult as you may think and we have editors to help you. Articles should contain about 700-750 words. Shorter articles are fine and work well with pictures, which should be the largest and best quality that your digital camera can take. You can find out more about how to

submit an article by visiting lakewoodobserver.com and going to the "Observation Deck."

An opening paragraph should be brief but explain the important points. This paragraph should be anywhere from three to five sentences. It should include the "five Ws," who, what, when, where, and why. The next paragraph should go into more detail . . .subsequent sections may go into further detail.

We have been thrilled and gratified by the number of folks who have stepped forward to write for the Lakewood Observer. And we know there are many more of you out there with a story that our readers would love to hear. So, have some fun; tell us your story and help us to "celebrate with the entire community the vibrant mosaic of culture, nature, history, and personality we call Lakewood!"

Become an Observer!

The Lakewood Observer is looking for people, ages 15–100, to get involved in the paper and the city. We are looking for volunteer writers, photographers, designers and illustrators to help with the production of the paper. It does not matter if you are a professional or amateur, our editorial staff will be glad to help.

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

We need you to get involved! If you have or know of a story, we want it!



THE

LAKWOOD

OBSERVER

Your Independent Source for
Lakewood News & Opinion

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Lakewood City Hall

Video and Communications in the 21st Century

Council 06.19.06

Lakewood City Council President Robert Seelie called the June 19, 2006 meeting to order at 7:40.

At the invitation of council member Ryan Demro (ward two), representatives of the Lakewood Early Childhood PTA addressed council with feedback from the recent “Meet the Trucks” event. Observer readers will recall pictures in the last issue of some of Lakewood’s mightiest and shiniest fire trucks and work trucks that were on display at Lakewood Park for kids to climb on and sit in. The consensus was that this first time event was extraordinarily popular. Comments on the Observation Deck indicate that several 50 plus year old “kids” really liked the trucks, too. There was an award for Best Truck and just as in a dog show where the mutt sometimes gets the attention, here, the homely Zamboni ice finishing machine from Winterhurst won!

Next, Demro introduced a resolution commemorating the first anniversary of the Lakewood Observer. Well over 50 writers and volunteers gathered on the council stage for the customary photograph. Mayor Thomas George, surveying the assemblage of

By Stan Austin
Lakewood Observer City Council Reporter

volunteers that included all members of council and most department heads, shrewdly said, “I’ll sign the resolution.”

Chances are, you’re reading this article in the print version of the newspaper. That method of transmitting information has been around for many centuries. Maybe you’re reading the online version. That technology is barely two decades old. Remember TV antennas on the rooftops of homes? They are about as common as the old transistor radios and black Bakelite telephones. Today the buzzword for information technology is convergence. Many technologies are coming together so the distinct lines between them are blurring or nonexistent. If you read this online you can talk on the phone through the computer and watch video all carried by cable, phone lines, or through the atmosphere.

The companies or enterprises which provide and carry this data are either new to the scene or in some cases close to a century old.

Cox Communications has been familiar to Lakewood cable television

subscribers for 26 years. AT&T has been the primary telephone provider for over 100 years. Cox brings the trifecta of video, Internet, and recently added telephone services into your home. Because AT&T has gone through many business configurations over the years, it has evolved from a telephone carrier to include becoming an internet provider in the last twenty years. It now wants to add the third, video, to its offerings.

Denis Dunn presented the formal, public debut of AT&T’s entry into the home video market to Lakewood Council. Dunn is the Director of External Affairs for AT&T Ohio and was most recently a member of city council as an at-large member.

Project Light Speed is the national AT&T label for what it describes as “next generation communications technologies” which it will deploy in 41 target markets over three years. Dunn said that Lakewood could be the second city in Ohio to be a test market. The homeowner would be able to subscribe to AT&T U-verse TV, which is an internet protocol based video service. The basic product offerings are expected to compete with those now offered by Cox. According to Dunn, “this choice contract will provide competition where there currently is only one provider.” He cited studies indicating that in areas where competition existed that prices either came down

or did not rise at the same rate as in monopoly jurisdictions. The inference was that the AT&T entry could bring prices down for cable and other video services in Lakewood.

Because of the complicated regulations on media transmission at the federal, state, and local level, the only certain need for Lakewood to address is whether to approve the construction of node boxes to handle the reception and transmission of video signals. The visual impact of these boxes has met with some resistance in Rocky River. According to Assistant Law Director Thomas Corrigan, the design and construction of these node boxes can be a matter for council to consider.

Dunn emphasized that the expected investment of several millions of dollars by AT&T, the 14th largest company in the United States, would represent a unique recognition of Lakewood at the national level. In addition, this would be a continuation of the long association of AT&T in Lakewood. “We are the third largest employer in Lakewood and have several hundred current and former employees living in Lakewood.”

Cox now almost exclusively serves the market of consumers that AT&T is trying to target. Any entry by AT&T would therefore threaten the Cox customer base. However, at the moment, the Cox representative, Christy Frederick, has in a letter to council suggested “caution and due diligence when reviewing this new proposal.”

The meeting adjourned at 8:50.

Chair-ity Auction Success!

By Renee Klann, student

Students in the accelerated program at Lincoln Elementary School have what it takes to make a difference – CHAIRS! The project of painting chairs began four years ago as an art project, but two years after that it became Chair-ity Auction, and now Lincoln gives all the proceeds to the Cleveland Foodbank. Students had been studying many different artists, and after pulling an artist’s name from a hat, the painting was on. Mothers with students in the classes gave their time and expertise to the task, too. After studying the artist’s style, picking a picture, and of course – finding a chair discarded on a tree lawn, 47 reproduced masterpieces were created. Mr. Rego and Giant Eagle provided the paints and brushes and students provided the talent. After painting about 1 hour a day, for close to a month, all the chairs were ready for the auction!

On June 3rd, 47 students in grey shirts with green silk-screened chair designs stood waiting to see what would happen. Parents and teachers in light green shirts rushed around preparing as the first bidders came. The teachers were Mrs. Marshall, from the 2/3 split

class, Mr. McGuan, from the fourth-grade class, and Mrs. Pangrace, from the fifth-grade class. Refreshments were provided by Giant Eagle, as well. Fourth and fifth graders were calm, having done the same two years ago. On the other hand, second and third graders were almost jumping with excitement! Visitors strolled around inspecting the numbered chairs and asking the painters questions. A very special numbered chair (27.5), painted by Maureen Marshall in her unique style, was also for sale.

With everything from Chagall to Renoir, Dali to Degas, Vermeer to Van Gogh, there was a style for every taste! But now the bidding began. Mike Snyder and Kevin Keane from WTAM radio station were the auctioneers. Paper plate paddles began to fly as grandparents, parents, friends and anyone else fought over chairs. A couple of highlights of the auction were Mrs. Marshall’s sunflower chair was bought for \$400 and Halle Rose’s Children at the Beach by Mary Cassatt sold in the end for \$820. That was a new record Chair-ity auction. The total amount of money raised was \$12,525! Everyone had a wonderful time!

City Hall Reaches Out To Realtors



Barb Kelley from the Lakewood Planning Department put on a fun day for over 50 area realtors. A lot of positive energy and information was provided. The day ended with Lolly-The-Trolley tour of Lakewood. Thanks for the great job.



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Library Events Calendar

Wednesday, June 28

BASIC COMPUTERS FOR SENIORS

The Lakewood Office on Aging presents an eight-week series of classes that teach computer skills from the ground up. Contact Kathy Cole at (216) 521-1515 to register. Classes begin in March and May.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

THE SPIKE FIDDLE

The sonorous and elegant qualities of the violin arise out of the development over several thousand years of bowed string instruments, called chordophones. In this listening session, Stephen Calhoun, guides participants on a journey of musical discovery featuring the diverse music made around the world on violins, fiddles, rebecs, kemanche, rababs, and proto-violins and proto-chordophones.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Saturday, July 1

SATURDAY NIGHT VARIETY -- SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND

Area songwriters share the stage with Tracy Marie.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Monday, July 3

WOMEN IN TRANSITION: Navigating Your Financial Future

Candace M. Pollock of Hahn & Pollock, LLC will provide an overview of the legal and financial issues involved in six topics of interest to all Lakewoodites. These lectures are intended to give attendees a general idea of what is involved in securing their futures in the most efficient and responsible manner. For more information, visit <http://www.hahnpollock.com>.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Tuesday, July 4

Lakewood Public Library is closed in observance of Independence Day

Friday, July 7

FILMS ON FRIDAY

Buena Vista Social Club (1999) Directed by Wim Wenders RATED G

Follow these legendary but forgotten Cuban musicians on their return to the spotlight.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Saturday, July 8

WORD PROCESSING BASICS

Find out for yourself why everybody is getting rid of their typewriters. For more information, please visit our Computer Instruction Page.

Reservations for computer instruction classes begin the first of each month. To register, please stop in or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 127.

3:00 p.m. in the Main Library Technology Center

Saturday, July 8 (cont'd)

THE TRANSFORMATIVE LIBRARY

This is the last program in a seven-session series about leveraging the library for the purpose of exploration and transformation. Presenter Stephen Calhoun is a theorist, designer, and facilitator of adult experiential learning. His conceptual focus aims to “experientially evoke the critical insights and creativity that are the hallmarks of self-artistry and personal transformation.”

V3:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

SECOND SATURDAY FOLK -- THE EIGHTH OF JULY

Celebrate with patriotic music from some country or another.

7:30 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Sunday, July 9

SUNDAY WITH THE FRIENDS

The History of the Modern Guitar: Angel’s Wing or Devil’s Broom?

Gary Rice demonstrates key advances in guitar technology.

2:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

MANGA CIRCLE

Have dreams of publishing your own manga comic? Want to learn more about visual storytelling? Our goals are to provide art instruction and support to fellow otaku! Sponsored by DELETER of Japan. (<http://www.deleter.jp>)

4:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

TOP TEN MISTAKES OF MEDICAID PLANNING

Candace M. Pollock of Hahn & Pollock, LLC will provide an overview of the legal and financial issues involved in six topics of interest to all Lakewoodites. These lectures are intended to give attendees a general idea of what is involved in securing their futures in the most efficient and responsible manner. For more information, visit <http://www.hahnpollock.com>.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library

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LPL’s Films on Friday Offer a Musical Glimpse into Cuba

By Matthew Charboneau

Lakewood Public Library’s “Films on Friday” series will present Buena Vista Social Club on Friday, July 7th at 7:00 pm. The film is a music documentary by director Wim Wenders chronicling the musicians behind the Grammy Award-winning 1997 album of the same name. Produced by American musician Ry Cooder, the original album was a romanticized attempt to recapture the traditional “lost music” of pre-revolutionary Havana.

The release was a revelation to world music fans outside of Cuba, a nation whose export of cultural commodity suffered during the nearly fifty-year economic embargo by the United States in the wake of the Revolution and Fidel Castro’s subsequent adoption of Communist politics.

The success of the Buena Vista Social Club recording created instant musical celebrities out of its gregarious musicians and spawned several solo albums from the main contributors—one of which, the Cuban folk singer Ibrahim Ferrer, had retired from music altogether and taken to shining shoes on the streets of Havana. The Buena Vista album sold 5 million copies worldwide and enabled the group to perform to crowds throughout the world: most notably a fiery sold-out performance at Carnegie Hall in New York City, replete with Cuban-Americans draping Cuban flags from the balconies and dancing in the aisles.

What transpires in Wenders’ Academy Award-nominated film is actually the 1998 follow-up trip to Havana by Cooder, along with his percussionist son, Joachim, who soaks up the world-wide success of the initial Buena Vista album. The film features scenes from the recording session for Ibrahim Ferrer’s solo album, biographic vignettes with individual interviews and performances from many of the group’s contributors and spirited whole-group live footage from concerts in Amsterdam and New York City.

For many of the long-forgotten Buena Vista performers—some in their 90s at the time of the film—the visit to New York City offered a redemptive taste of their own importance to Cuban cultural identity and musical history.

These scenes in particular are touching and heartfelt glimpses of the Cubans’ reaction to the expanse and metropolitan marvel of New York City. Isolated from North America for forty seven years by the actions of both the American and Cuban governments, these Cuban musicians expressed awe for the City and conveyed a sense of penultimate life-accomplishment.

Come to Lakewood Public Library’s Main Auditorium at 7:00 pm on July 7th to be treated to both this highly personal account of the lives and music of traditional Cuban musicians as well as the fantastic live concert footage included in Wim Wenders’ Buena Vista Social Club.

Lakewood Sports

Lakewood's Top Ranger Rides off into the Sunset

By Mike Deneen

This past school year brought a lot of excitement for the Lakewood High School athletic department. From the first snap of the football season right through to the spring championships, there has been action galore: cheering fans, hard hits, winning shots and lots of sweat and tears. But perhaps the most significant event of the year didn't take place on the field, court or rink. It took place on a June day in the athletic director's office, when Athletic Director Dan Gerome cleaned out his office after a 35 year career at Lakewood High. He is retiring from the post and will move on to serve as Commissioner of the new Northeast Ohio Conference, which will include LHS when it begins play in the 2007-2008 school year.

The mild-mannered Gerome has served the past 15 years as Athletic Director for the school. The high school AD post is one of the most time-consuming and unappreciated posts in all of sports. Unlike at the college level, high school athletic directors do much more than hire coaches. Among the administrative duties are the scheduling of games, acquiring umpires, arranging bus schedules, eligibility checks, ordering supplies, scheduling facilities and rescheduling events after rainouts. In addition there is award ordering and banquet planning, meetings with coaches, athletic code meetings and monthly conference meetings. Most importantly, there is working directly with kids, answering questions and handling issues from them and their parents. The job often entails 12 hour days, requiring a true love of sports and an ability to deal with people.

Gerome's impact on the department was clearly demonstrated at his retirement party, recently held at Brennan's party center. Over 250 people, including family, co-workers, former students and community leaders attended. Much like the final scene from "It's a Wonderful Life", people lined up to thank him for his contributions to the school and to the impact he has made on their lives.

Gerome, however, deflected the praise onto his family, who he credits with making his career possible. His wife Sue, in particular, has played a major role. Among the many tasks she has worked are the press box coordinator for football and district track, the girls' soccer announcer and scoreboard operator, the basketball scoreboard operator, and a ticket seller. All this while serving as a Lakewood Elementary School teacher, wife and mother. Gerome's daughters also played an active role at LHS since they were five years old and big enough to deliver popsicles at cross country practices. Now grown, the three girls – Jody, Becky and Nicki – participated in LHS sports during their father's tenure. The entire family provided a sounding board for Gerome when times were tough, and demonstrated a lot of patience and understanding dealing with his very long work days.

Gerome also offered praise for the numerous coaches he has worked with over the years. He calls them "a great example of hard working tireless role models for our kids and often not recognized for their efforts."

Since Gerome became Athletic Director in 1991, LHS has seen a lot of success on and off the field. Among the highlights of his tenure is the



Dan Gerome and his hawk eyes!

1995 football team, which went undefeated in regular season play. There is also the 1995 girls' basketball team, which made a run all the way to the state championship game. In addition, there have been numerous LEL conference championships in a range of sports. Facility improvements have also been noticeable. He worked a deal with Pepsi to provide \$500,000 for the re-turf of Lakewood Stadium in 1999. New scoreboards have been added for football, baseball, basketball and wrestling. In 2005, the baseball complex, widely considered one of the finest in the entire state, was opened.

In addition to accomplishments, there have also been challenges. The landscape of high school sports has been changing, especially as it relates to parents. Since he started coaching at LHS in 1971, he has noticed a change in the way parents relate to their kids' athletic participation. "Parents need to understand that their turn is over and now it is

the kids turn to play and have fun", says Gerome. "Parents often want to step in to fix their kids problems and the kid never learns how to deal with things on their own." High school sports are also becoming increasingly commercialized, a trend that concerns Gerome. When he became athletic director in 1991, high school events had little or no TV coverage. However, it is now common to find high school sporting events televised nationally on the ESPN networks.

Although leaving LHS, Gerome will still be heavily involved in high school sports as commissioner of the Northeast Ohio Conference. Although the new league does not begin play until fall 2007, there is a lot of work already put into the planning. Schedules are being developed and policies being put into place for the new league. As it has been for the past 15 years in Lakewood, it will be Dan Gerome working behind the scenes to make the onfield excitement happen.

Atlanta Braves Bring Tryouts Back to Lakewood

By Mike Deneen

On the morning of Thursday, June 15th, the Lakewood High Baseball Complex became the proverbial "Field of Dreams". For the second consecutive year, the Atlanta Braves held an open tryout at the newly refurbished facility. Over 250 young men showed up carrying their bats, gloves and major league dreams. Players came from as far away as Cincinnati, Rochester, New York and Muskegon, Michigan.

The event was arranged by Lakewood resident Reggie Sanders, who has worked as an Atlanta Braves scout for the past five years. Sanders, a Cleveland Heights native, played professionally in the Los Angeles Dodgers organization, reaching as high as the AA level. (However, he is often confused with current Kansas City Royals player of the same name.) Although he never achieved his goal of playing in the majors, he wanted to remain in the game after his playing career ended. Therefore, he decided to become a scout, helping other young players

launch their careers.

Sanders landed a job with the Atlanta Braves, considered by most baseball insiders to be the sport's model organization. Since 1991, The team has won 14 consecutive division championships, five National League titles and a World Series in 1995 (unfortunately at Cleveland's expense). The Braves have achieved success by effectively scouting and developing talent through their minor league system. This differentiates Atlanta from more glamorous teams such as the Yankees and Red Sox, who acquire most of their talent by luring expensive free agent players that were developed by other teams.

Sanders' scouting territory includes much of the midwest, including the entire state of Ohio. Baseball scouting in Ohio can be difficult, since the state's poor weather hampers the development of young players. In addition, most young athletes here prefer other sports. Ohio has long been known for its high-quality high school football

programs, which annually produce dozens of Division I college and future NFL players. The emergence of LeBron James has further fueled enthusiasm in the area for basketball. Soccer, which has emerged as a major sport at Lakewood High, is also draining off top athletes. Despite these factors, the state has produced many great baseball players. Hall of Famers Pete Rose and Mike Schmidt, as well as current stars like Ken Griffey Jr. and Roger Clemens, hail from Ohio.

Sanders' job is to identify the next Griffey or Clemens. "We mainly use [the tryout] to gauge up-and-coming kids" says Sanders. Many of the attendees were high school aged players, ineligible to be immediately signed but potential candidates for future amateur drafts. Out of the over 250 in attendance, Sanders decided that fewer than five were worth tracking. "Our scale is just a little bit higher" says Sanders, when comparing the Braves to other Major League teams.

What advice does Sanders offer to potential players? Practice. He especially

recommends that players work on the basics, such as throwing and catching. "Playing catch is one thing I would do every day" says Sanders, "build your arm strength". He also encouraged future hopefuls to continue pursuing their dreams by attending future tryouts.



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Lakewood Schools

Lakewood to Create Youth Master Plan

By Amy Kloss

On June 13, Lakewood reaffirmed its commitment to citizen involvement by inviting residents to participate in the formation of a Youth Master Plan (YMP). Approximately 90 people showed up for a community meeting at Lakewood High School that evening to offer opinions on current services and institutions that serve families and youth ages 0-20.

Those attending were informed of the work that has already been done toward creating the plan and were asked to volunteer for one of four committees now being formed.

Through involvement in the National League of Cities, Lakewood officials realized several years ago

that some cities actively market themselves as family-friendly places. After attending a Leadership Academy on Youth Master Planning, Lakewood representatives seized the opportunity to apply for a grant that would allow Lakewood to study youth-related issues. Lakewood was one of only six cities in the country selected by the National League of Cities to receive this technical assistance, which includes YMP training, support and a site visit to Lakewood by League representatives.

In January of this year, a Blue Ribbon Task Force was formed consisting of representatives from Lakewood schools, library, hospital and city government. The task force identified four focus areas: health and safety, fami-

lies, education, and recreation.

Over the next nine months, the Blue Ribbon Task Force and the four committees will study the Lakewood community, gather information about residents, provide a focus for community discussion, and construct a framework for future decisions. The culmination of this process will be the Youth Master Plan, a document that will serve as a guide for making decisions and allocating resources.

“This is going to be a dynamic, living, breathing document,” said Dottie Buckon, Director of Lakewood’s Department of Human Services. Lakewood’s plan will target youth ages 0 to 20 years old and their families. It will recommend a set of very specific action steps to improve the lives of youth and families in the

community.

Both Buckon and Lakewood Mayor Tom George stressed the importance of community involvement. “Youth Master Planning is about partnerships,” said George. “It’s about hearing from you.” Buckon also emphasized the importance of youth involvement in the planning process. Four Lakewood High School students spoke at the meeting of the recognition they received as vital, contributing members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force.

If any Lakewood citizen is interested in becoming involved in the YMP process, call the Department of Human Services at 216/529-6685 or e-mail at humanservices@lakewoodoh.net.

Lakewood High Students Travel to Europe

By Wendy Brickman

Members of Herr Sent’s German and Madam Braquet’s French classes departed for Europe on June 20th for a fourteen day tour. The Observer met with Herr Sent for a little pre-trip Q&A.

Q. What areas of Europe will stu-

dents see on the trip?

A. We will be traveling through Germany, Austria and France.

Q. What specific events from the itinerary are the students looking forward to most?

A. I think students are excited to see the palaces and castles of Europe. It is so foreign to our lives in America to see structures that are one thousand

years old. The history that is found in most European cities and villages is simply so much older than most of us see here.

Q. What events from the itinerary do you expect will impress the students the most?

A. Students last trip noticed many simply cultural differences. They noticed how clean the German cities were. Students noticed that even the garbage trucks in Germany were made by Mercedes.

For me as a teacher, it was great in past trips to see how students used their language skills. They were now the foreigners. All around them was the German language. They will probably see the world in a new light.

Q. How many students are going on the trip?

A. There will be a total of 21 students along with some adults. The total head count for this trip will be 36.

Q. Chaperones?

A. We will have two teachers, (one German teacher and one French/Spanish teacher) and two nurses as chaperones.

Q. How have you prepared for the trip?

A. Before our trip, Madame Braquet and I lead group meetings after school. We wanted students to review some of the sights they will be seeing and the languages they will need abroad. Some cultural aspects of Europe were covered to help students blend in with their surroundings. We discussed etiquette for ordering in a restaurant, tips (which are much smaller in Europe), appropriate attire in cathedrals, using the metro systems, exchanging money, and of course the actual flight to and from Cleveland.

My hope is that students feel comfortable to reach out and experience as much as possible in the target culture. As I told students at a meeting “You can save money by eating McDonalds here in Lakewood instead of flying to Europe. Try the food at a variety of restaurants, cafes or marketplaces

while we are there.”

Q. How many suitcases/how much stuff are you allowed to bring?

A. Students are encouraged to bring one suitcase and one carry-on. They must be prepared to carry all of their belongings themselves. It is a challenge to know what to bring and have enough for two weeks without bringing too much. Many hotels do not have elevators and the cobblestone streets in Europe are not always suitable for rolling.

Q. What item from the packing list do you most expect will be forgotten?

A. It is sometimes amazing to me the things that are forgotten. Sometimes

Students will take such time to bring half of their wardrobe and then forget socks, toothpaste or their contacts—basic everyday needs. I really expect that this group will be well-prepared. They are great kids and I am sure their families will help them pack.

For now we say “Bon Voyage” to this wonderful group of ambassadors for Lakewood as they begin what will surely be one of the most interesting and exciting times of their lives. We will be back with a full report when they return.

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The Lakewood Observer’s Advisory Board would like to thank all that have taken part in this project during this first year. You are the founding members in this ground breaking, award winning, nationally recognized and respected project into Civic Journalism. Thank you for your support and trust. This list was compiled by D.L. Meckes and is based on when people signed on to the Observation Deck. Thanks to DL and everyone for taking an active part in Lakewood’s Future. Isn’t it time you joined this open civic discussion?

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Reporters - This Resolution Is For You!

Resolution

A RESOLUTION to recognize the first anniversary of the Lakewood Observer, and to acknowledge its significant impact on the City as an open-source driven community asset.

WHEREAS approximately one year ago the Lakewood Observer was organized by a cadre of innovative thinkers and community volunteers who could be described as some of the most dedicated boosters of our city, and

WHEREAS this journalistic venture has raised the level of discourse and civic participation within the community with the ultimate goals of promoting, preserving, and proliferating the positive resources within Lakewood, and

WHEREAS this newspaper has also served as a means to appropriately and sensitively confront some of Lakewood's challenges unknown to other local media, and

WHEREAS that ethic of care has led to the exposure and apprehension of dangerous criminals, raised an awareness and educated citizens about the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities facing city government, highlighted the efforts of longtime dedicated community groups and volunteers, the activities organized for the benefit of the community, and the sometimes little known secrets of the place that we call home, and

WHEREAS the Lakewood Observer will continue to be an engine of innovation for Lakewood through its Wireless Corridors, its E-Commerce activities, its walking and biking clubs, its LO Rally, and its car show, and

WHEREAS the publisher, board of directors, and multitudes of contributing volunteers should be proud of the venue that they have created because it has served to more thoroughly inform the public about the happenings and the potential of Lakewood as "A Great Place to Call Home."

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD, STATE OF OHIO

Section 1. That this body would like to hereby extend its deepest gratitude and acknowledge the important contribution that the Lakewood Observer has made to the community over the past year.

Section 2. That this body welcomes and anticipates the future growth of the Lakewood Observer as both a newspaper, online forum, and any other type of entity that promotes public dialogue and the well-being of the City.

Section 3. It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating to the passage of this resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Council, and that all such deliberations of this Council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action were in meetings open to the public in compliance with all legal requirements.

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Adopted: June 19, 2006

Lakewood's Family Room

The Lakewood Family Room: Community Families

You're a thirty-five-year-old lawyer. You gave birth to your first child one month ago. You are breast feeding, but your baby is having choking episodes. You're frustrated. Litigation was easier.

You're a first-time dad. You're a musician. Two weeks ago, the doctor diagnosed your three-year-old son with autism. Now, you're afraid to play with your son, not sure what will frighten him. Your mind is filled with questions.

You're a sixteen-year-old high school student, living with your parents. You want your one-year-old to play with other children. You have questions about your new boyfriend and don't want to ask your mom.

You're a forty-five-year-old grandmother taking care of your grandson Monday through Friday, so his parents can work. You have a few toys, but not enough. You want to talk—to anybody.

Everyone wants to be a good caretaker. Every family has dreams for their children. The City of Lakewood shares your dreams. The City of Lakewood knows that every resident, at some point in the parenting process, will encounter a situation where they could use some help. In response, the City of Lakewood, with some support from county funding, has developed programs that will help each family to reach its highest potential and to become a part of the community family.

The Lakewood Family Room, a program administered by the City of Lakewood, Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood, is dedicated to supporting and strengthening all care-giving families. The Family Room is located at 17400 Northwood Avenue, behind Saint James Catholic Church. Toni Gelsomino, a Lakewood resident, serves as the program manager. "Toni has a consistently gentle approach. She's all about empowering us to make good decisions," said Emmie Hutchinson, a program participant.

The Lakewood Family Room is for every child, newborn to eight-years-old. The Lakewood Family Room is

also for every caregiver. The program is free; there is no registration, you just drop-in. In this age of cutbacks and program slashing, people expect to pay top dollar for everything. Some people think if a program is free that it's only for people in need, people who can't afford a fee-based program. Not true. Some people think if a program is free, the quality might not be there. Not true. This program is an effort to create a sense of community, to reduce the isolation that caregivers often feel and to provide the best early opportunities for children.

Take the first example given above—a thirty-five-year-old nursing mom having difficulty feeding her newborn. The Family Room offers a Wednesday morning session, Nursing Moms Chat. In this one and a half hour program, nursing moms get to meet with Suzanne Forsgren, R.N., BSN, Perinatal Home Visit Coordinator and Lactation Consultant from Lakewood Hospital. Suzanne has a scale on the table to weigh infants. She reinforces feeding techniques, suggests dietary intake for moms whose infant may be lactose-intolerant, and places phone calls to physicians. "There are questions you don't want to call your doctor about," said one mother. "I call Suzanne."

A new mother may experience sadness, mood swings, bouts of crying, and depression. Suzanne creates a safe environment for moms to discuss their feelings and makes referrals to additional community resources as needed. "There's such a need for new moms to connect with other new moms," said Suzanne. "The concerns mothers have are universal."

Or you might start your week off with the Alternative Parenting Drop-In. What's that, you say, some program left over from the seventies? No. This is a group of caregivers who are self-directed. They know they can go to Toni Gelsomino if they have questions about a community resource. On Monday morning, they bring their children to the Family Room to discuss top-

By Rita Ryland

ics such as recycling, nutrition, cloth vs. disposal diapers, home schooling and community schools. In fact, Lynn Rodemann, a mom who attends this program, said, "We spend a lot of time talking about schools." Most of these caregivers work outside the home in part-time jobs.

The Family Room also offers a Parents Raising Children with Special Needs Drop-In program on Friday mornings. Funded by the county and staffed by Kayann Zentarski and Alice Podgorski, Family Support Specialists for Early Intervention with Help Me Grow, this program is designed to provide a supportive environment for the child and caregiver. The Family Room is large enough, divided into three spaces: a kitchen with a supervised play tub; a large conference room with table and chairs, wooden building blocks, and a puppet theatre; and a large playroom with couches, chairs, a table and over a half-dozen play stations. On Fridays, this large space allows the children to play in a structured, cozy setting. As Jim Kusinski said, "This is ideal." His four-year-old son, Michael, has apraxia and wasn't sounding words at eighteen months. He and his son have been attending the Friday program for two years. "When families feel there's no hope or anybody out there, and feel they want to talk to other families, they can come to the Family Room," said Kayann.

In your home, behind closed doors, it's easy to think that nobody will understand your situation. But once you walk into the Family Room, you know you're not alone. Caregivers play with their children; children play with each other. At nine-thirty, one recent Thursday Morning Drop-In, the Family Room held about a dozen children and as many adults. The air was filled with the hum of tender voices. By ten-thirty, more families had arrived. Moms and dads drank coffee, sat in clusters talking, played with the kids in the puppet theatre or sat at the learning table.

"Parenting is isolating and difficult," said Ginger, a mom and Lakewood resident. "No matter what your socioeconomic status, everybody needs a friend and support." You will meet caregivers in the Family Room who have completed eight grades, or are high school graduates, Ph.D. candidates, chefs, writers, stay-at-home moms, stay-at-home dads, grandparents, or caregivers who work outside the home at part-time or full-time jobs. You will meet longtime Lakewood residents and newcomers. You'll meet people for whom English is their second and, in some cases, third language. "It's the greatest asset Lakewood has to offer," Ginger said. There's also a toy lending program.

On Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and on Wednesday evenings, the Lakewood Family Room offers the Learn Through Play Early Literacy

Program. This program prepares children up to age five for a more formal classroom setting. It helps a child feel comfortable with other children. And for parents, it helps to strengthen the bond with their child. In this setting, play is instructive. Angela Skourlis and Sharon Gaspar, both moms with education backgrounds and over a year employment in the program, are the staff members.

Each play station has a card, play pointers, that tells the adult how to use the activity and suggests open-ended questions to ask the child. The learning table theme changes monthly. "Don't just come once," said Angela Skourlis. "The first time you may not feel comfortable." Angela encourages caregivers to come often. Friendships will form. Your children will learn.

The Mommy and Me Teen Parent Drop-In is held on Thursday evenings at Lakewood Hospital. One participant has been attending the group for over six years. Children accompanied by seven moms, one grandmother and two dads attended the program one recent evening. The children played. Three moms, who have known each other since kindergarten, sat around a table and chatted. After pizza and general discussion, Barbara O'Patry, a licensed counselor, led a group discussion on relationships. The teens talked, some openly, about the choices they have made.

"What we're trying to create is an atmosphere where we all grow and become stronger," said Toni Gelsomino. Assisting Toni and the staff with this goal is Cindy Walsh, a Licensed Independent Social Worker and family support specialist. Cindy is an employee of Lakewood Hospital contracted with the city with funds provided by the Children's Trust Fund. Cindy works ten hours a week at the Family Room and is available for families who request assistance. She makes home visits, makes referrals to other agencies, helps families to connect with resources within the community, and helps each family to develop a plan that works for them. "This is a very innovative relationship," said Toni, referring to the relationship between Lakewood Hospital and the Family Room.

Another innovative aspect of the program is that the City of Lakewood utilizes space, once Saint James Convent, that is now Saint James Childcare Center. The nuns who lived in the convent were Sisters of the Holy Humility of Mary. As teachers, they would be pleased to hear the laughter and learning of the children. There's plenty of free parking either in the building's small private lot or on the street.

"It's all about breaking down isolation, building friendships and establishing relationships," said Toni Gelsomino. The City of Lakewood invites you, all of you, to come to The Family Room. Please contact Toni at 216/529-5018 for program details.

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Lakewood's Family Room

The following was written by Angela Potts Skourlis, resident of Lakewood since 1969.

Justine Cooper is an eight-year resident of Lakewood. Until recently, she owned a business on Madison Avenue. She and her husband have three children: Aidan, three, Corinna, four, and Nicholas, fifteen. Of the Lakewood Family Room, Justine said, "I think it's one of the best assets in Lakewood."

Justine and her husband have no immediate family in the area. Her preschoolers are twelve months apart. She found that her husband was working long hours. And, as she said, we have long winters. "If I didn't have The Family Room, I honestly would feel lonely." And when you're home you are on the phone, doing laundry, cleaning. "I wanted to give the kids a different environment and get out of the house."

Presently, Corinna is in pre-school.

Aidan attends the Family Room Learn Through Play Early Literacy Program. The Family Room teaches Aidan to share, to be more social and also to be comfortable with independent play. Aidan finds the rice table calming. Now that summer is here, Corinna and Aidan will make more trips to the Family Room.

Justine plans to go back to school and finish her counseling degree. She wants to counsel children. She loves the fact that the Family Room staff is warm and welcoming and that the group is diverse. There are people from all backgrounds, all cultures, some born in other countries. "You have a common bond when you're at the Family Room."



Justine Cooper with Corinna, 4, and Aidan, 3.



Jessica Drayer and Robert Gross, Jr. with Alyssa 5, Aidan 3, Alek 22 months, and Aryanna 10 months.

Jessica wrote: "The Family Room is a place where parents can find support, encouragement, and a connection to local resources without judgment. It is accepted that even great parents need help occasionally."

Twenty-two-year-old Jessica Drayer, mother of three children, ranging in ages from twenty-one months to five and a half years, moved to Lakewood eight and a half years ago. In Lakewood time, she's a newcomer. Jessica graduated from Lakewood High School and was a member of the Flag Corps.

Jessica attended a GRADS Program at Lakewood High School for young moms as well as attending the Mommy and Me Teen Parent Drop-In on Thursday evenings at Lakewood Hospital Childcare Center. With the help of the GRADS Program, Jessica was linked to the CDBG scholarship program to assist with the cost of child care for her daughter, Alyssa. "I got my best grade in my senior year," said Jessica, proudly.

When Jessica's son, Aidan, was born, she went to the Nursing Moms Chat program at the Lakewood Family Room. Jessica felt pressured by some of her peers and some older moms not to breast feed. Of the nursing moms group, Jessica said, "It was a place to get help and reinforcement."

Jessica and her children attend the

Family Room Tuesday and Thursday programs. Jessica gets to interact with other moms, socialize and see how other moms do things. "It helps me keep my sanity, get out of the house and be happier and balanced." It gives her children an opportunity to know other children. "My kids love coming to the Family Room. Alyssa gets upset if for some reason the family can't get to the center."

Over the years, Jessica has sought and received assistance from Cindy Walsh, Licensed Independent Social Worker, and from Toni Gelsomino, the Family Room Program Manager. Of the services, she said, "I get the support I need. What's important for me is the help that comes without judgment."

Jessica and her fiancé, the father of ten-month-old Aryanna, are attending a Parenting Education Series on Thursday evenings at the Family Room. Over the years, Jessica has been told that she has problems because she's young. Now that she's in the parenting class where she listens to parents of all ages, she said, "Raising children is difficult no matter what age you are. Period."

As for Jessica's dreams for the future, she plans to attend nursing school: "A lot of my focus is my children being able to look up to me. I want to give my children stability—financially and emotionally."



Angela Skourlis with Elizabeth 6, Katherine 4, Mary 3.

The year is almost half over. The holidays are a faint memory and I still have a feeling of gratitude in my heart. It is a little unsettling because I cannot put my finger on why I am so thankful. I pause and run through the list of family and friends. I marvel as I start to categorize my thankfulness to them. As the list takes form, I can see my topic sentence. I have gratitude in my heart because I am thankful for my community in good ole Lakewood, Ohio.

Yes, Lakewood, the city where I was raised; the city that I tried many times to shake. I went to college and said, "I never will go back to Lakewood!" I went to the Rocky Mountains to find myself and shake a bad relationship and I proclaimed, "I will never set foot in Lakewood!" I married and followed my husband and his job down South, and I laughed, "We will never come back to snow or Lakewood!" Yet, I always came back.

Sometimes, I drive in my car and wonder what I am still doing in Lakewood and I make plans to escape as soon as I can. Other days, I can never see myself anywhere else. Here is my confession—I have three young daughters and we need this community. We have built it and we will stay.

What is the community that I speak of? It is my family, my silver and my gold friends, my neighbors, groups such as JWCL, and the LECPTA, but, mostly, it

is the Lakewood Family Room. It is my safe haven.

For those of you who are a part of my life at The Lakewood Family Room, I am thankful for you. You have eased me into life's chapter called parenthood. You have held my hand, dried my tears, sung songs, laughed, encouraged, talked, and drunk endless cups of coffee with me. When I look at you and see how wonderful you are, I hope you can look at me and see those same things.

I have traveled the world at the Family Room. I have friends from Germany, Russia, Thailand and Poland. I have friends from little cow towns and friends from major cities. Some friendships have been fleeting, but some have developed into an extended family. We have shared births, deaths, birthdays and everything in between. Life breathes here.

At first glance, The Lakewood Family Room can be overwhelming chaos. Children run amuck and you may wonder if they have a caretaker near. The beauty is that we, the adults, are caretakers to every child in the room. If you give us a chance, let down your guard, we will welcome you. We will fold you in our arms and care for you and your children. This strong community will mold you and let you remold us.

The Family Room was awaiting my family. I found the diamond. I will stay in Lakewood because of this precious gem.

Minding The Issues

Right Song, Wrong Stanza For Celebrating Our Nation

By Gordon Brumm

Recently we've seen a controversy about whether the Star-Spangled Banner should be sung in Spanish or only in English. But if it's important to think about the language in which the song is rendered, isn't it even more important to think about the song itself, about what it means?

If we thought about the words that come out of our mouths when we sing the national anthem -- specifically its first stanza -- we'd realize that its only point is to celebrate and glorify victory in battle -- it's a song of war, exulting in victory over our foes, with only a one-line afterthought to show tentatively why we might deserve to be victorious. If I didn't know better, I might think it's the war song of some neo-Fascist group.

The Fourth of July, dedicated to commemoration of our nation's ideals, might be a good occasion to ask whether the Star-Spangled Banner really expresses those ideals.

This holiday is meant to celebrate our nation's virtues, its nobility of purpose, and its grand history wherein that nobility and that virtue are displayed. Why, then, do we mark it by singing a song that only commemorates one particular battle -- a battle that was part of a stupid and futile war, a battle whose sole distinction is that it was one of the few that saved the War of 1812 from being remembered as an utter catastrophe. As a patriotic emblem, the first stanza of "The Star Spangled Banner" is a bust.

As we habitually sing the words, do we really mean to imply that the most important fact in our country's history was that a banner flew over an embattled fort after a long night of fighting? Is mere victory in battle, regardless of our cause, what we wish to celebrate? Has "Our country right or wrong" become our rationale -- a rationale that validates our acting with impunity in the

world? Are we celebrating "might" with no consideration of "right?" If these are our convictions, they are better left unexpressed.

There is a better alternative, and it is close at hand:

Oh, thus be it ever, when free men shall stand

Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!

Blessed with vict'ry and peace, may our heav'n-rescued land

Has "Our country right or wrong" become our rationale -- a rationale that validates our acting with impunity in the world?

Praise the Pow'r that hath made and preserved us a nation!

Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,

And this be our motto: "In God is our trust!"

And the Star Spangled Banner in triumph shall wave

O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

This of course is the splendid last stanza of "The Star Spangled Banner," as different from the first stanza as day from night. This last stanza celebrates a nation dedicated to ideals derived from a higher source, and it exhorts us to measure our accomplishments against those ideals. It honors the tragic but noble sacrifices necessary to achieve those ideals in a world where ideals are always in peril.

In saying "...conquer we must, when our cause it is just" (not "for our cause it is just") the final stanza rejects the "Our country, right or wrong" mentality.

More than poetic taste is involved. After all, the purpose of singing a national anthem is to reinforce cer-

tain ways of thinking in the minds of those who sing it. The first stanza of "The Star-Spangled Banner" reinforces an unthinking tribal loyalty to our country, based only on the fact that it is OUR country. This narrow chauvinism puts us on the same plane as any other nation, good, bad or indifferent. Any thought of a virtuous purpose is strictly an afterthought, added on to justify the aggressiveness of the rest. Surely we can do better than that.

By contrast, the final stanza expresses dedication to values greater than mere national existence, values that constitute our greatness and help justify our claim to nobility. We profess to be a nation grateful for its freedom and intent on using that freedom to achieve the best that humans are capable of. That is the best and truest patriotism, and that is what the last stanza of "The Star-Spangled Banner" stands for. It is our proper anthem, and deserves to be recognized as such.

A Note on My Religious Dilemma

Recently a nice man in Westlake sent me a copy, for my spiritual enlightenment, of The Book of Mormon. This was in response to my column "On the Teaching of Religion." In the accompanying note my benefactor said, essentially, that the Book or Mormon is true because he knows it is true.

I appreciate the gesture of this man from Westlake. I appreciate his generosity, and I appreciate his simply presenting me with his thoughts instead of trying to

impose his dogma on me (though to be brutally honest, I can't tell what his attitude would be if Mormons controlled the government). I'd like to respond appropriately.

However, I'm left wondering. He says that I should believe in The Book of Mormon. But what if a Catholic sent me a statement of Catholic doctrine? What if a mainstream Protestant sent me a statement of his or her church's doctrine? What if a Muslim sent me the Koran? Or if a Hindu sent me the sacred writings of Hinduism? What should I say to them? They believe in their own doctrines just as strongly as the gentleman from Westlake believes in Mormonism. If I accepted The Book of Mormon as truth, I would be showing a regrettable lack of respect for these others. How can I respect all these persons and their doctrines equally -- and I believe they deserve equal respect -- if I accept any one of the doctrines as true? You can see my dilemma.

The only way out is to recognize that no religious doctrines are true in the straightforward sense of that term. Some would say that my religious doctrine is "true for me," but "true for me" is an oxymoron. If I say there is a tree on the lawn outside, my statement is either true or false. To say that it is true for one person and false for another is to ratify hallucination.

Which is to say that religion is a special part of our lives, and religious language is not like the language we use in science or in our ordinary life. We may say our religious doctrines are true, and indeed we may act as if they are true, but we must realize that in doing so we mean "true" in a special figurative sense. And whereas scientific truth sometimes entitles the government to regulate our lives in certain ways, the attribution of religious "truth" never does.

Lakewood Hospital Names Bill Baddour Chief Operating Officer

By Joe Grimberg

Westlake resident Bill Baddour has been appointed chief operating officer at Lakewood Hospital.

Lakewood Hospital's Chief Administrative Officer Jack Gustin made the announcement on June 5. "Bill's extensive background in health care administration, commitment to quality and vision for the future will be a great asset to Lakewood Hospital," says Gustin. "His dedication to working and partnering with community organizations also makes him a perfect fit for our hospital."

Baddour most recently served as regional vice president of Operations/Operational Improvement for Fairview, Lakewood and Lutheran hospitals. Previously, he has served as division administrator of the Operations Division at Cleveland Clinic. Baddour is involved in numerous community organizations and most



recently was the co-chair of the successful Westlake City School's May levy campaign. On a larger scale, he served as co-chair for the Cleveland Clinic's United Way campaign and Red Cross initiatives

"Bill has proven himself to be an effective leader in the hospital and in

the community," says Fred DeGrandis, chief executive officer and president of Lakewood, Fairview and Lutheran hospitals. "He is a tremendous addition to Lakewood's administrative team. He will help ensure Lakewood Hospital follows our vision of being the best place to receive care, the best place to practice medicine and the best place to work."

"Lakewood Hospital is a leader in northeastern Ohio's health care community," says Baddour. "I'm looking forward to this wonderful opportu-

nity to help the hospital continue to provide high quality and innovative patient care to thousands of area residents."

Baddour earned an executive MBA from Baldwin-Wallace College and received his undergraduate degree from Cleveland State University. He grew up in the West Park area and graduated from St. Edward High School in Lakewood.

Bill resides in Westlake with his wife and three children.

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Lakewood Culture

Literary Luchador

An Interview With Lakewood Writer Fred Wright

By Bob Ignizio

Born in Philadelphia in 1970, writer/musician Fred Wright eventually settled down in NE Ohio after completing college at Bowling Green and grad school at Kent State. He’s moved around the area a bit, but currently he’s settled down in Lakewood. Fred says, “Lakewood has a good vibe. The folks tend to be a bit individualistic, which I like, and it’s favorable to walking, which is nice. There’s lots of cool art, literature, and music in town, and lots of cool artists, musicians, and writers that live here, making it an even cooler place.”

Fred’s doing his part to keep Lakewood cool, too. He’s put together the three-day **F Independent Literary Festival**, a showcase for independent, underground, and zine literature. Lakewood’s belated coffee house (13321 Madison Avenue) will be part of the event. Writers from NE Ohio and across the country will be giving readings there on Friday July 7th. The event gets underway at 8pm. The line-up of performers for the evening is Jack McGuane (Lakewood Poet Laureate), Willoughby, OH cartoonist Paul Foresta, Frank Walsh (Philadelphia), Pat King (Alabama), Crazy Carl Robinson (Virginia), King Wenclas (Detroit), Edna Million (Wisconsin), Mark Sonnenfeld (New Jersey), Adam Hardin (Illinois), and Fred himself.

If you want more, the other two days of the fest are Thursday, July 6, at Mac’s Backs in Cleveland Heights (start time 7pm), and Saturday, July 8th, at Pat’s in the Flats in Tremont (start time 9pm). Each night will feature about 10 different writers giving 15 minute readings, and the final night at Pat’s in the Flats will feature writers backed up by local rock musicians like Derek Deprator, Kong Sauce, and Kill the Hippies. For a complete line-up for all three nights, visit <http://www.wredfright.com/filf.html>.

The idea for the festival came about through Fred’s membership in the Underground Literary Alliance, or ULA. “They’re a group of zinesters who had become interested in the intersections between zine publishing and book publishing in the larger literary world,” says Fred (“zines” are, you guessed it, small magazine-style publications, usually self-published by the writer and reflecting their interests). “They wanted to attract attention to the many talented writers toiling in the print underground, whom they contrasted with the writers of what they considered to be a very corrupt corporate literary publishing world. To that end, they’ve started publishing books on their own.” In the past the ULA has held events in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Detroit. This year, Fred thought it was time the ULA came to Cleveland and offered to organize it.

So what can you expect from this Lollapalooza of literature? “I have no idea what to expect beyond that it probably won’t be a typical literary reading,” says Fred. “I actually like just hearing a story or some poems, and I expect there’ll be some of that, but the ULA tends to enjoy more theatrical performances. I guess a good description would be pro wrestling mixed with a Beat Generation poetry reading mixed with an updated version of the Dadaists’ Cabaret Voltaire mixed with a religious revival mixed with a party.” Since the ULA believes that literature should be a lively and democratic activity, audience participation (including heckling) is encouraged. In addition to the live readings, the participants will have books, zines and cds to trade and sell.

But why spend the money to publish an actual print zine in the age of the internet and blogging? Fred says, “There are benefits and drawbacks to whatever medium one uses, but there’s something still delightful about reading a scruffy photocopied zine that you can hold in your hand and stick in your pocket.” Although Fred sees fewer newcomers going the print route, he says many longtime zinesters are

still at it and improving the quality of their product. Fred says, “Zines are still viable as a medium, but the zine world is mostly left to the hardcore. From a mainstream media perspective they’ve been covered already, so they tend to get ignored. Thus one gets the impression that no one does zines anymore, but that’s not true.”

Although Fred has published zines himself in the past, these days he mostly writes for other people’s zines. Fred says, “I still love zines, but I think if I self-published again it’d probably be a book. For all the work one does on a zine, once it reaches a certain level of readership you might as well publish a whole book instead and have something that’s less ephemeral.” In fact, one of Fred’s last zines, a serialized novel about a garage rock band called The Pornographic Flabbergasted Emus, is scheduled for publication in book form through the ULA later this year. For more information about Fred, visit <http://www.wredfright.com>. For more information on the ULA visit www.literaryrevolution.com.

The F Independent Literary Festival makes a stop at belated on July 7th.

Indulge Your Sweet Tooth with Some Candye

By Ruthie Koenigsmark

On Saturday, June 17, the Winchester gave the stage to the infamous Candye Kane. Haven’t heard of her? Well, if you hadn’t and you attended the show you aren’t soon to forget this velvet-voiced seductress of the blues with a witty sense of humor and a message.

As Candye’s bio will tell you, she was born in East L.A. to a hippie musician father and a mother who taught her to shoplift at a very young age. She was an unwed mother involved in the gang culture, who then indulged in “modeling,” to help provide for her son appearing on the covers of over 150 magazines, including Hustler. Candye also wrote a monthly advice series for Gent Magazine.

She also began to pursue her dream of music finding her place in the country-punk music scene (in the 80’s). During this time, she shared the stage with musicians as diverse as Black Flag, Social Distortion, Los Lobos, The Blasters, Dwight Yoakum and Buck Owens.

Candye married Paladins bassist Thomas Yearsley, settled down a bit, had another son and became a Women’s Studies major at the local community college. She continued to create music and discovered the musical stylings of blues greats Big Maybelle, Big Mama Thornton, and Etta James. Candye found her home singing the blues.

Candye’s show on Saturday highlighted songs from all seven of her CDs. Her most recent release, “White Trash Girl,” is Candye’s guided tour through her eventful life. One of her singles from this CD—“Estrogen Bomb”—provided the audience with a sense of her wit and songwriting prowess.

One of the “moments” in the show surely was Candye’s rendition of Buck Owens’ “Crying Time,” a tribute to a dear friend and beautifully executed in spite of her failing vocal chords after an intensive three week tour, which included Cleveland’s Gay Pride Festival.

When you listen to Candye, you learn a lot. For example, you learn it takes a whole lot of living to belt out a genuinely soulful tune. You also learn that she is a strong woman—confident and comfortable in her skin, which these days is something worth writing about.

To this show I brought one of those friends who goes anywhere new with a bit of hesitation. He said, “This is one amazing show” and “when is she coming back?” Candye promised the audience that she would start her next tour in our area—so we could have the very best she has to offer.

And in case any of you were wondering, the message she has is love yourself and each other! Thanks, Candye!

Lakewood Music Events Calendar

The Winchester

Thursday, June 29th it’s the Troubadours of Divine Bliss. This female guitar and accordion duo has been spreading their brand of folk music around the country and around the world since 1995 - “anywhere the spirit leads” they proclaim on their website. Tonight the spirit had led them to the Winchester, where they’ll be doing a free show starting at 7pm.

Friday July 7th it’s Gnappy. This Ausitin, Texas-based band describe themselves as “the bastard son of Tower of Power and Average White Band, with a healthy dose of Wired-era Jeff Beck thrown in for good measure.” They also incorporate elements of jazz, hip hop, and electronica for good measure. The band released their third album, ‘Unloaded’, this year. Admission is \$7 and the show starts at 9:30pm.

The Hi Fi Concert Club

Friday, June 30th it’s ZO2 with Blue Fire and Quickening. ZO2 features David Z, bassist for the Trans Siberian Orchestra. Drummer Joey Cassata has played with Las Vegas-based version of The Blue Man Group, and guitarist Paulie Z has fronted several NYC-based bands. But this group is making a name for itself, having recently done a stint opening for KISS and Poison. Opening the show are New York-based hard rockers Blue Fire and local indie rock band Quickening. Contact the club for show time at (216) 521-8878.

The Phantasy Nite Club

Friday, June 30th Starloft presents a local rock showcase with Fuzion, Adrenaline, Slither Monkey, The Disaster March, and The Carsons. The show starts at 9pm. If you get a flyer (you can print one out at www.starloft.com) admission is free for 21 and over, \$5 for 16-20. If you don’t have a flier, it’s \$5 for 21 and over, and \$8 for 16-20. Admission also gets you into the Symposium downstairs where you can catch Hot Ham and Cheese and Every Second.

To get your event listed, contact Bob at bobignizio@sbcglobal.net.

The Pulse Of The City

The Storm of Change

By Gary Rice

July 4th, 1969, started out like many other Fourth of July holidays on our stretch of the North Coast. Parents, children, and volunteer groups prepared to march in parades, made last-minute picnic preparations and coordinated with their friends as to where to meet that evening: down at Lakewood Park -- for the lakeside fireworks display.

As well, protesters across the country were preparing to express their displeasure at America's involvement in Vietnam. What had begun as a fairly non-violent exercise in peaceful protest in the mid-sixties had degenerated into an ugly, no-holds-barred confrontational situation all over the nation. Lakewood had avoided much of the ugliness that had marred these protests in other cities, but officials were understandably wary of potential civil disobedience or violence, particularly on public patriotic holidays.

Unfortunately, the entire city was certainly not expecting the type of violence that would arrive at 7:00 pm that evening. Ask anyone who lived in Lakewood on that day and you will hear tales of utter terror, mixed with many tales of sorrow and heroism.

I was with my band on Virginia Avenue. Ordinarily, my band might have been at the Lakewood Park bandshell, but we were playing the Virginia Avenue block party instead. Another band was going to play at the Lakewood Park bandshell that day. I forget why we weren't down at the bandshell; perhaps we had booked the Virginia engagement first. I do remember our playing on a front porch and stopping for a break.

It was then that the soft July breeze, cutting through the Lakewood sunshine, stopped being a breeze. In fact, it stopped altogether. In all of my life, I have never experienced such a quiet moment.

Then it started. First, a roar began that sounded like a horrible freight train coming. From my vantage point, it looked as if a solid gigantic, gray wall of water was rapidly approaching from the northwest. The band quickly started to put their equipment into the house.

And then, the "derecho" hit like a sledgehammer. The word "derecho" was coined by Dr. Gustav Heinrichs, a physics professor at the University of Iowa, in 1888. "Derecho" is a Spanish word which can be defined as "direct" or "straight ahead" while the word "tornado" is thought by some to have been derived from the Spanish word "tornar" which means "to turn". The National Weather Service said that this North Coast disaster was the result of a line of severe thunderstorms with storm winds clocked in at 80 mph. Some said 100 mph. It was bad enough either way.

Whatever it was, Lakewood (and most of the Ohio-Erie coastline) went into an abyss of destruction that

evening. Forty-two fatalities were registered in Ohio, with seven in the greater Cleveland area and several in Lakewood, including a friend of mine from high school.

In the days after the storm, trees were cut up, electricity was restored, and debris was swept away. Those of us devastated by the loss of our friends had no counselors to turn to back then. School was, after all, out for the summer. For those of us recently graduated in the class of '69, we had to grow up fast. In a few weeks, we would experience the moon landing and new stories from Vietnam would again dominate the headlines. Many of our classmates would soon be in the "Nam" in person. Others, like yours truly, would move on to college. Still others would go on to jobs or building families.

In those weeks following the storm, I spent a lot of time with my guitar, in the basement; wondering about the meaning of life -- how could friends our age possibly be cut down? -- at the very point that their lives were beginning to blossom?

I was into Bob Dylan songs back then. One of these was "A Hard Rain's A Gonna Fall", as sung by Joan Baez. While the song does mention tough times ahead, the last part of it is a call for action...the blue-eyed son who goes out before the rain comes, to help a

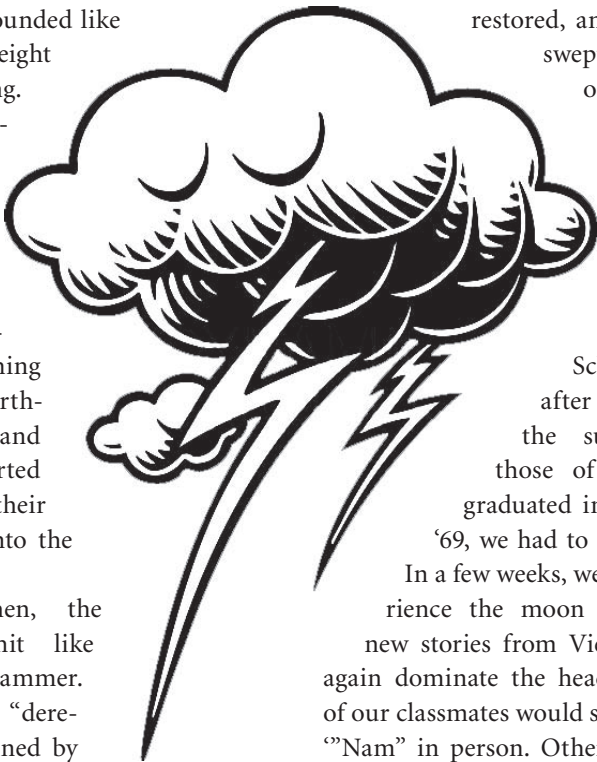
weary world at the brink of the abyss. Who was supposed to be giving this help to others? In the case of my friend who had died, it was felt that she might one day have become a teacher. She was always helping others. Who was left to do the helping work in this world that needed to be done?

Well... I was a blue-eyed son... wasn't I?

That's one of the big reasons I went into teaching. Over the years, hundreds of children with special needs received help from a blue-eyed son; inspired partly by Bob, partly by Joan, and yeah, partly by my friend, and the terrible circumstances surrounding the events of July 4th, 1969.

I had the opportunity to thank Joan Baez personally (many years later) for her part in my personal spiritual epiphany. It was too late to thank my Lakewood friend. Besides, there are some things that need to be done privately -- in the depth of one's heart. I elected not to publish her name today because I did not want to intrude upon her family, wherever they may be. The old-timers here in Lakewood know who died . . . we lost several of the best and the brightest of our youth that day. We survivors had a lot to measure up to. Hopefully, most of us at least tried to do so.

So many people never know how much they have inspired others to action. Perhaps it is enough that the action takes place. That day, July 4th, 1969, changed many lives forever, here in Lakewood. The change is not only etched into the minds of those who experienced it, but also in the lives of those who were influenced by the infinite spirit of Goodness . . . the positive inspiration that grew out of a tragic event.



Gallery Watch

By Ruth A. Koenigsmark and Christine A. Kazimer

Gallery Events for June 27th through July 10th:

Beck Center For The Arts

17801 Detroit Avenue
216.521.2540

"Bold Intentions" is an exhibit by local Cleveland Photographer Greg Terepka from June 21 - July 23. Bold Intentions displays an intimate viewpoint of ten relatively common flowers to highlight their intense depth of color, fine texture and remarkable lines from an uncommon perspective.

bela dubby

13221 Madison Avenue
216.221.4479

Opening July 15, Noon-Midnight, entitled "No Surf in Cleveland" A Visual history of skateboarding in Northeast Ohio. . . Subculture on Display. . . Celebrating 35+ years of skateboarding subculture in Northeast Ohio. 1968-1996.
Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10 am – 10 pm, Friday and Saturday 10am-midnight.

Local Girl Gallery

16106 Detroit Avenue
216.228.1802

Saturday July 15th 7-9pm is the opening reception of Akron artist Samara Peddle. Her show is titled "STRIPPED SIMPLE". Samara's works are based on the nude female figure and it includes the basic mediums of oils, printmaking, watercolors, charcoal drawings, photography and collage. Her work will be featured throughout July. Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 12-5pm, Friday and Saturday, 12-6pm.

Pop Shop Gallery and Studio

17020 Madison Avenue
216.227.8440

Pop-O-Matic show is to run through July 15th. Please note new gallery hours.
Hours: Monday-Friday 4pm-8pm, Saturday 2pm-6pm.

Wobblefoot Gallery and Frame Studio

1662 Mars Avenue
216.226.2971

Showcasing the master watercolorist and book illustrator, Tim O'Connor. He has worked for Walt Disney, Walter Lantz, and Dr. Suess, illustrated for the Moody Bible Institute and many others worldwide.
Hours: Tuesday – Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 10am-4pm.

Art gallery news and event information should be forwarded to gallerywatchgals@yahoo.com.
Every effort will be made to include it in our next column.

Chef Goeff

Walking the Plank

The grill is the cooking appliance of choice during the summer. Whether you use a Weber kettle, gas or even electric, most homes have the requisite tools for outdoor cooking. Turn on the gas, or light the charcoal, and in short order, those burgers are sizzling over an open flame and mouths are beginning to water. There is probably nothing that conjures up the image of Americana so much as a backyard barbeque. However, after a few months of simple grilled meats and veggies, we become somewhat jaded with our outdoor cooking experience. “Not burgers again!” “Let’s have spaghetti....please?”

So those of us who love our outdoors cooking experience add some variety, upping the culinary ante. We throw in some hardwood chips and let the aromatic smoke add a new dimension to the flavors. We marinate the meat allowing the flavors of wine and herbs permeate the chicken or chops, and mix a variety of dry herbs and spices and massage this rub into the ribs. The variants are bounded only by your imagination and add a level of depth to the grilling experience that palates tired of simple grilled burgers will appreciate.

Grilling food is, of course, the oldest method of cooking, and as should be expected, there exist techniques that are just as ancient. Sometimes those methods, while still employed in certain areas, go largely unused or undiscovered by the mainstream. One such “new” cooking method which is somewhat of a fad is “plank cooking”. Hardly a new technique, plank cooking has been used for centuries, particularly by the Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest who discovered the benefits of planking their fresh caught salmon on alder boards, and cooking the fillets over hot coals. The technique has continued among the locals for centuries, and has been “discovered” by a number of chefs who have brought this innovation into the mainstream. Once you have tried plank cooking on your grill, you will understand why the technique is

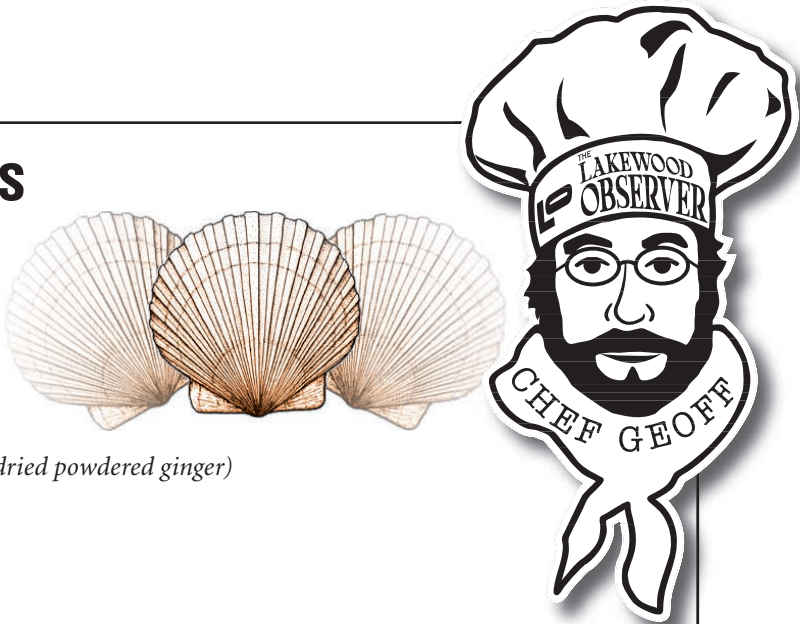
By Jeff Endress

Ginger Planked Scallops (serves six)

- Large Diver scallops--approximately 2 Lbs.
(allow 4-6 per person, depending on size)
rinsed, drained and patted dry
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1/4 cup freshly grated ginger root *(DO NOT substitute dried powdered ginger)*
- 1/4 cup soy
- 1 finely minced clove garlic
- 2 tbsp honey

Combine marinade ingredients, stirring to combine well. In a shallow, non-reactive dish (glass), place scallops in a single layer and pour marinade over. Allow to marinate 2 hours, turning once half way through.

Place Cedar or Alder planks (soaked overnight) on grill over a medium fire. Arrange scallops in a single layer, allowing space between. Close grill cover, and allow to cook 15-20 minutes. If smoke production indicates the planks are burning, douse any flames with a spray bottle. Scallops are done when they are no longer translucent, and are firm to the touch. Serve with risotto or couscous, grilled zucchini halves (cooked while scallops are cooking), a fresh romaine lettuce salad and a crisp Chardonnay.



gaining such popularity, with dozens of cook books dedicated to “planking”, many suppliers of the necessary lumber, and a significant array of websites devoted to discussion and recipes.

The beauty of plank cooking is twofold. Not only is there the addition of a gentle smoke to the flavor, but as the soaked board gives up its moisture, the food is actually more steamed than grilled. And despite the unique addition to your repertoire as a grill master, there is no further addition of time or effort; it is truly a win-win situation. Typically, thin, 1/2 inch planks of cedar or alder are used. Due to the new-found popularity, those planks are readily available, both locally and through the internet. Heinen’s Rocky River carries cedar planks (at the seafood dept.) and cedar, as well as alder are also available through a number of web sites, including Tasty Timbers (www.tastytimbers.com) and the heritage workshop (www.theheritageworkshop.com/cedar_cooking_plank.htm).

Once the planks are in hand, the only preparation they require is a good thorough soaking, preferably

overnight. This can be as simple as water, or for more complex results, other liquids, including beer or wine. Then, it’s simply a matter of preparing the grill as usual, putting a little olive oil on the food side of the plank, and placing the plank over the coals and the food on the plank. Because you will develop some smoke and steam, it is best to keep the grill covered. The water logged wood will smolder, but check occasionally to assure that it hasn’t become a conflagration. There is no turning required, although plank cooking time will take a bit longer than direct heat, but the additional few minutes are well worth it. The planks are generally not consumed by a single use, and may be reused until the char on the wood, or a burn through, renders the plank unusable. If you are reusing a plank, make sure that the food side has been well scrubbed with warm water to remove any remains of the prior use. This is best accomplished immediately after use.

Traditionally, the meat of choice for plank cooking was salmon. This still remains true, given the influence of the Pacific Northwest, but I have found that any fish (or even chicken)

will benefit from planking. A simple rub of some fresh herbs, a littler salt and pepper, and your meat is ready to be planked. Some in my household have an aversion to the smell of scallops being cooked in the kitchen, and since they are my favorite seafood, I have taken those tasty morsels outside and found that a little ginger marinade and a water logged cedar plank can add significantly to their flavor and my enjoyment.

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