

THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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

Volume 3, Issue 7, April 3, 2007

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Councilman Demro to Run For Mayor

by Julie Mosher

The race for mayor became more interesting with Councilman Ryan Patrick Demro unexpectedly announcing his candidacy for mayor on Saturday, March 31.

At age 23, Demro became the youngest elected official in the county. If elected mayor, Demro would be the youngest in Ohio at age 28, a title currently held by the 32 year old mayor of Seven Hills. Demro cited his youth as a strength because his short time in politics left him owing favors to none and he could provide the city with a leader who could work honestly and openly with all parties.

“Those who use my age as a liability are simply creating a distraction from discussing the real issues that voters care about, but Lakewood is too smart to fall for that.”

If elected, Demro would not be the youngest mayor in the country. Luke Ravenstahl, Mayor of Pittsburgh, is 26 and the cities of Tallahassee, FL and Hillsdale, MI have both recently elected young mayors.

Raised in Lakewood, Demro holds a B.A. from Capital University and an M.A. from Ursuline College. Dem-

ro’s experience includes interning for Lakewood’s Division of Health, the Ohio House of Representatives, the National Federation of Independent Business/Ohio, and prior to graduation he worked in the Washington office of U. S. Senator George Voinovich. Upon returning to Lakewood, Demro worked as an intern for Cleveland’s Office of Community Development before his career turned to education. Upon completion of his master’s degree in 2005, Demro was hired to teach full-time at Life Skills Center, a special charter school for at-risk youth in Cleveland.

Demro’s record includes authoring the city’s Chronic Nuisance Law designed to tackle issues caused by absentee landlords and problem tenants. He also sponsored the city’s ordinance protecting children from sex offenders and championed the construction of Lakewood’s skateboard park. These initiatives won unanimous support from city council.

Demro’s remarks echoed these achievements and expressed a strong desire on his part to continue his service to the city on a much larger level. You can listen to Demro’s address on his website www.ryandemro.com.



photo by David Lay

Councilman Ryan Demro at Community Rally for Lakewood’s Future.

A Tribute to Jim Mecredy



Mr Mecredy on left about 2 years ago with one of his Eagle Scouts.

by Steve Ott

Jim Mecredy understood. He got it. His Scouting leadership not only touched the lives of hundreds of youth in Lakewood over several generations, his leadership changed the youth. He fulfilled the proud mission of the Boy Scouts of America. He took youth and prepared them to make ethical choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them scouting values that many of us know well. In the foundation of the scouts’ lives he inserted a trustworthy

brick, a loyal brick, and a helpful brick. His scouts learned what “on my honor” truly means. He did this not by telling the scouts what they couldn’t do, but by allowing the scouts to experience what they could do. The painting “The Scoutmaster” by Norman Rockwell could easily have been Mr. Mecredy at a typical Troop 115 camp out - except that it was not raining.

Jim related to me that he started with Cub Pack 115 as Cub Master in 1954. He soon became the Scoutmaster and served the Scouts of Troop and

Pack 115 until he passed away March 26, 2007. We are witness to over 53 years of active influence with Scouts.

As a Scoutmaster and then as our ex-official Scoutmaster, he was an enormous figure to the Scouts in more ways than one. He was a big man, who filled a room with his voice and personality. His size was imposing to the generations of youth that knew him. Scouts tell you that when he shook their hand, they remember how large his hands were; how he held their hand until he was finished with his thought. They knew he truly cared about them. He pushed and encouraged the Scouts to do the best they were able. He would expect to see nothing but “hip pockets and elbows” at service projects. And if he was not satisfied, he let you know in that booming voice he enjoyed exercising.

Jim always made sure that Scouts were aware of the religious awards available to them and encouraged the Scouts to obtain their religious awards. It did not matter to him which religion a Scout practiced. He put together an exhibit of all the medals for the religious awards that he used when discussing the their importance. If a Scout did not have a minister, Jim arranged with the current minister at Lakewood Presbyterian Church to work with the Scout.

The pride of the Scouts of Troop

115 was to have Jim carve their names in the Eagle Board and the Religious Awards Board after attaining these accomplishments.

There is not enough space even in today’s cyber world to fully explain the importance of Jim’s legacy to today’s society. But he did have an impact and he will not be forgotten.

In This Issue

Events Calendar.....	2
City Council	3
Lakewood Library	5
Lakewood Healthcare.....	6
Secret Shopper.....	8
Chef Geoff	9
Lakewood Perspective	10
Sports	11
Buck Stops Here	15
Minding the Issues.....	16
Pulse of the City	17
Pets	18
Classifieds	20

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

Annual ‘Hair of the Dog’ Animal Shelter Happy Hour Announced

Silent Auction Donations Now Being Accepted

The Citizens Committee for a Lakewood Animal Shelter, better known as CCLAS, will hold its annual Hair of the Dog Happy Hour and Silent Auction Fundraiser on May 24. This year’s event will be held at Swingo’s on the Lake from 5:30-8:30 p.m.

CCLAS is seeking donations of items or services for the silent auction. All donations are tax-deductible and donors will be recognized at the event. If you have any items you would like to donate, please contact CCLAS President Catherine Butler at 216-221-7953.

This event is the primary fundraiser for CCLAS, which plays a vital role in helping to find homes for homeless pets, fostering abandoned and orphaned litters and spaying and neutering Lakewood’s dogs and cats to prevent the overpopulation of homeless animals.

During the past five years, CCLAS has spent nearly \$35,000 on spaying and neutering—the single most important and responsible act we can do to keep pets housebound, safe and happy. For more information on CCLAS or the Lakewood Animal Shelter, go to www.cclas.org.

Summer Day Camp at ‘Coming Home’

Trinity Lutheran Church’s Coming Home program is now accepting applications for its summer day camp program and for fall enrollment in its before and after school program for school-age children.

Coming Home is in its second year of operation, offering quality before and after school care during the school year and a full day program in the summer. Trinity Lutheran Church started the program in response to a growing need for childcare for elementary school children. It provides a warm, loving, home-like environment.

Program activities include arts and crafts, story telling, board games and music, along with the opportunity to sing in the Coming Home Choir under

the direction of the church’s Music Director, Kathleen Bosl. Transportation is provided between the center and Lakewood schools. Children from other area school systems are welcome, provided that parents make arrangements for transportation during the

school year. Coming Home also accepts county vouchers.

The summer program provides opportunities for the mental, physical and emotional growth of children through a variety of creative experiences. The program includes many of

the things that kids like to do during summer vacation, such as swim, play in the park and spend time at the library.

Coming Home is located at 16400 Detroit Ave. in Lakewood. For more information or a tour, please contact Director Cathy Aldrich at 216-226-8087.

Friends of Lakewood Dog Park Hosting Annual Garage Sale on April 14

It’s springtime in Lakewood, and that means it’s officially garage sale season! Friends of the Lakewood Dog Park will host their annual Garage Sale on Saturday, April 14 to raise funds for maintenance and supplies for the park. In the event of

bad weather, the event will be postponed until April 21.

The Garage Sale will be held from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at 2225 Olive Ave. in Lakewood. The sale features hundreds of interesting items, including some great Disney collectibles. If

you would like to donate any items to the sale, contact Mike Deneen at 216-226-5536.

For more information about the Lakewood Dog Park or Friends of the Lakewood Dog Park, visit www.lakewooddogpark.com.

6th Annual Lakewood Hospital Ambulance Chase

Save the date - Sunday, May 6, 2007 is Lakewood Hospital’s Sixth Annual Ambulance Chase. A special community event for the whole family, presented by Donald Martens & Sons, the 6th Annual Ambulance Chase- 5K Race/Walk and 1.5 Mile Walk, will take place at Lakewood Park. Registration opens at 7:30 AM with the 1.5 Mile Walk at 8:30 followed by the 5K

Race/Walk at 9:00 AM.

Only \$17 if registered by April 27th; \$20 thereafter and on Race Day. Teams of 10 or more are just \$14 per person. All pre-registered participants will receive a long sleeved t-shirt and goody bag. To register online see www.hermescleveland.com or www.lakewoodhospital.org/foundation , or call Hermes Sports & Events at 216.623.9933

or Lakewood Hospital Foundation at 216.529.7009.

Proceeds will benefit a variety of programs and services provided at Lakewood Hospital.

All runners, walkers and spectators welcome.

Join us as we celebrate Lakewood Hospital’s centennial and “A Century of Touching Lives”!

Annual Good Friday Community Service

The Lakewood Community Three Hour Good Friday Service will be held this year at Faith Lutheran Church, 16511 Hilliard Road at Woodward Avenue, on Friday April 6 beginning at 12 Noon and lasting until 3:00 pm.

This three hour devotional service, featuring Lakewood clergy from many of the churches, has been offered by the church for more than fifty years. Begun as a Lutheran cooperative service in the 1950s, it featured the “Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross” with sermons presented by seven Lakewood Lutheran Pastors. Pastor Marvin Wilt, who served Faith church for forty-six

years, organized the participating ministers until his retirement in 1990.

The tradition has continued and is now a more ecumenical venture with ties to the Lakewood community. The format was revised in 2006 to include ten speakers and is now entitled “The Way of the Cross.” Scripture readings, hymns, meditations by the speakers, prayers, and vocal solos are all part pf the service.

Members of the community are invited to come at any time from 12 noon to 3:00 pm and to stay as long as they are able or stay for the entire three hours. The offerings received during


the three hours are all allocated for the work of the Lakewood Christian Service Center.

Scheduled to participate at the 2007 service are Lakewood Mayor Tom George, guest reader; Rev. John Opsata, Lakewood Disciples of Christ Church; Rev. David Connor, Lutheran Interim Pastor; Rev. Paula Maeder-Connor, Trinity Lutheran Church; Rev. Mark Thomas, Lakewood Congregational Church; Mr. Mike Scherer, Director of the Lakewood Christian Service Center; Rev. Jonathan Glass Riley, Lakewood Baptist Church; Rev. Richard Parks, Lakewood United Methodist Church; Rev. Father Keith Owen, Saint Peter’s Episcopal Church; Rev. James Kulma, Director of Spiritual Care, Cleveland Clinic Western Region; Rev. Father Lee Domenick, Church of the Ascension; and the Host Pastor, Rev. Steve Patrick, Faith Lutheran Church. The service is co-sponsored by Faith Lutheran Church and the Lakewood Ministerial Association.

Second Meeting for the Detroit Avenue Streetscape Study
Thursday, April 19, 2007 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Grant Elementary School located at 1470 Victoria Avenue.

the streetscape design consultant City Architecture will present preliminary recommendations concerning potential improvements to the Detroit Avenue Streetscape looking for the greater community's feedback.

Main Street Lakewood at (216) 521-0655 or Dryck Bennett at (216) 529-6635.
<http://mainstreetlakewood.com> http://www.ci.lakewood.oh.us/citynews_detroit_streetscape.html



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

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City Council

The Budget--- Really Put To Bed?

The 2007 budget has been put to bed but the budgeting process is just taking a nap.

This year's budget which was passed in a special meeting of council calls for expenditures in the amount of \$38,534,502.

How is that money being spent? Lakewoodites generally see their city government on a daily basis in two broad categories--public safety and public works. And, those two areas represent the largest expenditures of the General Fund. The police and fire departments along with school guards and housing and building inspection will spend over \$18 million this year.

The public works department will spend about \$10 million this year with the biggest portions going to parks and public property (\$1.6 million) and refuse and recycling (\$4.7 million).

Human services can have an important impact on lives in Lakewood. Many of that department's funds are

pass-through in nature: funds which are transferred from other levels of government. But the general fund supplies over \$1million.

Operating the municipal court, mayor's office, and council will cost about \$2 million.

Overall expenditures for the city are much greater because they are comprised of enterprise funds, capital project funds, debt service funds, and internal service funds. These activities on the part of the city could be accurately viewed as stand alone business enterprises with carefully controlled rules of income and expenditure. Perhaps the most familiar to us is the water and wastewater system. This is largely a self contained operation with income and expenditures remaining within that department. It's called an enterprise fund because its operation closely resembles a private business.

Where does all that money come from? The impertinent response would be "from your pocket, of course!" Property taxes provide \$7.5 million and income taxes \$18 million. Ohio chips in \$6.3 million. Licenses, permits and inspections contribute \$1.3 million.

That's a quick overview, the "executive summary" if you will of the budget document. However, it is the budgeting process which will be continual during the remainder of the year. A primary reason for this is that with current trends a structural imbalance will occur. This is agreed on by the administration, council, and the citizens financial advisory committee. To deal with this predicted trend all parties have realized that the budgeting process has to be ongoing. It can't be done in just one month of hearings. By compressing the process into a short time, tensions between council and the administration increase and discus-

sions can turn toward the political and personal instead of the financial.

It was not only the compressed hearing schedule that has led to pressured decisions but the complexity of financial data reporting.

With that in mind and as a result of requests from council and in cooperation with the citizens committee, Finance Director Jennifer Pae has changed the way the city's finances are presented and explained. Essentially, the data and documents are much more user friendly. This saves a lot of time which was used in the past for explanations and led to frustration. Mike Summers of the committee has pledged that his group will assist council and the administration as they come to grips with the changes that will inevitably come. This was formalized in a resolution to proceed on budgeting through November.

This way budget making might less resemble sausage making and more approach craftsmanship.

Tom Bullock Announces Candidacy for Lakewood City Council Ward 2 Pledges "Strong Leadership, Smart Choices and Change"

Lakewood resident and community activist Tom Bullock became the first candidate for Lakewood City Council by announcing that he is running to represent Ward 2. Bullock pledged to run an "energetic, open and neighborly campaign" and said he will start door-knocking in March to get to know voters and not stop until November 6. Bullock has already formed a campaign committee, is raising money and is organizing a "large, diverse team" of volunteers.

"This will be a year for change in Lakewood, and I'm stepping forward to represent Ward 2 on City Council," said Bullock. "Tough decisions, smart choices and a new spirit of cooperation will make Lakewood as strong as we can be."

Bullock said he will bring energetic, creative and consensus-building leadership to the city.



solutions, even without official intervention from city hall. The change starts with us, in our neighborhoods," said Bullock.

Bullock, a veteran community organizer and public policy advocate, actively participates in Lakewood's rich civic life: he writes about eco-

nomic development for the Lakewood Observer; is a founding member of LEAF, which brings Lakewood fresh, affordable food from local farmers; was elected neighborhood representative for Precinct 2I; serves as a board member for BikeLakewood; and is an active participant in LakewoodAlive. Bullock is a member of St. Luke's parish, has a B.A. in Political Science from American University in Washington, D.C. and an M.A. in Classics from the University of London.

This November, Lakewood voters will elect a mayor and four members of City Council representing Wards 1 through 4. Ward 2 runs from Belle Ave. in the east to Woodward Ave. in the west and from Lake Erie to the southern boundary of the city.

Jeffrey M. Baka: Running for Mayor on a Supersensible Strategy to Manage the City's Decline

by Ken Warren

Jeffrey M. Baka is a man with a mission from on high. He needs fifty to one hundred and fifty more signatures on his petition in order to run for the Mayor of Lakewood.

"I'm not a politician. I'm independent. "I don't take orders from Republicans or Democrats," declares Baka, a jazz piano player who lives on Clarence Avenue.

With his background in music, Baka likes the idea of an art district. He would like to see the Giant Eagle property on Detroit and Bunts developed as a subdivi-

sion of the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Baka began his political engagement as a volunteer for Congressman Dennis Kucinich.

"He inspired me and made me want to run for public office," Baka explains.

While some mayoral candidates proclaim "Lakewood is at a crossroads," Baka adamantly envisions Lakewood under the sign of the cross. His platform reads like a prayer: "One Team. One Goal. One Ideal. + + + Under the One True God! God the Father, God the Son & God the Holy Spirit. In the name of Jesus Christ – Amen – For the

Unity of One Community."

With such an explicit endorsement of Roman Catholic Christianity, Baka's run for the Mayor's office evokes thoughts of Emperor Constantine, who embraced of the faith, after seeing a chi-rho in the sky, with the inscription "By this sign shalt thou conquer."

Emperor Constantine's embrace of the faith, suggest some historians, served to delay the decline of the Empire. Although Baka does not possess a degree from the Levin College of Urban Affairs, he clearly believes he has found the supersensible strategy to manage decline.

Lakewood City News

“Never Confuse Motion with Action”

by Suzanne Metelko,

Last spring the Lakewood City Council, in response to a community call for city-wide strategic planning, put together an Ad Hoc Committee for Strategic Planning. Their mission was to get the process started. Their goal was to hire a facilitator who could pull together the multiple reports and studies from the past ten years, engage the community, and help focus those resources on the long range vision of Lakewood. They hoped for the development of action steps to get the process going. I covered that effort for the Lakewood Observer (currently archived at LakewoodObserver.com). That was March of 2006.

Fast forward to March of 2007. I would like to report that in the past year the administration has made good progress responding to the community’s concerns about planning and that the Ad Hoc Committee for Strategic Planning is wrapping up their work on this portion of what will be an ongoing process of financial planning and community vision execution. Unfortunately I can’t - because it never happened. Instead, the administration hired a consultant to implement a Request For Proposal to develop a city mission statement and Council President Bob Seelie disbanded the Ad Hoc committee for Strategic Planning. One year later, as Benja-

min Franklin would observe, we’ve had lots of motion, but no action.

Jennifer Alexander, a Cleveland State University consultant, publicly told the administration and Lakewood City Council on March 5, 2007, that her study confirms Lakewood citizens want action, not the illusion thereof. Not from the schools or the library or the hospital or the Y, they want action from Lakewood City Hall. It was a pretty clear message. I’m not sure, however,

The first thing Lakewood City Council needs to decide is just how serious they are about doing their job. It’s time for new leadership; it’s time to demand the tools they need to do their job and then, most importantly, it’s time to do their job.

that our leadership gets it. Or it may be that our leadership is un-equipped to manage and therefore can’t deliver action. Whichever one it is, Lakewood is not in the position to continue to make decisions based on how much we like someone or their political party. It’s no secret our budget is challenged. Even more disturbing is the lack of accountability and transparency associated with our city’s administration and council. For the past three years the community of Lakewood has been told our surplus is shrinking and a tax increase is the cure. Each time our leadership has been told the community is looking for a strategic plan to

give perspective to the shortages and develop strategies for the future. Each time there has been some motion, but it no action. The administration has no long-range plan, which means no long-range financial plan. Council has done nothing to mitigate this.

We have, then, a failure of management and a failure of oversight. A minority of council members understands this problem and has tried to repair it. These members have called

also a chance to implement new strategies in a thoughtful manner. Instead, Lakewood City Council is now facing some very tough decisions, and time is a luxury we don’t have.

The first thing Lakewood City Council needs to decide is just how serious they are about doing their job. It’s time for new leadership; it’s time to demand the tools they need to do their job and then, most importantly, it’s time to do their job. Lakewood City Council needs to clean their house and then they need to help the administration clean theirs’. You may be asking yourself what comments or questions the Mayor made or asked in response to the advisory committee’s important report. The answer is – none. Mayor George was not in attendance. Lakewood is a wonderful place to live, to do business, and to raise a family. But like any other valuable asset, it cannot take long-term abuse and neglect.

This is a call to ACTION. I challenge everyone to get to a city council meeting. Even if you can only attend a portion of it, our leadership needs to know that we’re interested, committed and engaged. It’s easy to complain, it’s easy to criticize, and if we don’t show up, it’s easy to be ignored. Lakewood’s citizens need to step up. Take the time to look at the city’s website. Find your council-person. Get their contact information. Get the Mayor’s contact information. Get involved. Lakewood needs you. Take ACTION!

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Lakewood Public Library Events

Wednesday, April 4

A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE PROGRAMS

A book discussion program for students in fourth through eighth grade.

Though I'd rather not, I'm obliged to inform you of these most unhappy programs about Lemony Snicket's very sad books concerning the dreadful lives of the Baudelaire orphans. Please read at least the first two books before the first program. You would probably have a happier time watching leaves grow on trees, but if you must register you should stop in or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 140. 7:30 p.m. – 8:30 P.M. in the Main Library Auditorium

Thursday, April 5

SCIENCE VS. MAGIC

A book discussion program for students in fourth through eighth grade.

Explore new worlds in six amazing fantasy and science-fiction series. We'll read the first installment of each saga to determine whether aliens are smarter than fairies, or whether genies are more powerful than Greek gods. Each title must be read by its discussion date. To register, please stop in or call (216) 228-7428.

Midnight for Charlie Bone by Jenny Nimmo

7:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M. in the Madison Branch

Sunday, April 8

The library is closed.

Wednesday, April 11

A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE PROGRAMS

A book discussion program for students in fourth through eighth grade.

Though I'd rather not, I'm obliged to inform you of these most unhappy programs about Lemony Snicket's very sad books concerning the dreadful lives of the Baudelaire orphans. Please read at least the first two books before the first program. You would probably have a happier time watching leaves grow on trees, but if you must register you should stop in or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 140. 7:30 p.m. – 8:30 P.M. in the Main Library Auditorium

Saturday, April 14

Writer's Workshop - New Location - New Time

Renew your creative energy and get positive feedback from fellow writers. Whether you're a seasoned pro or just have a hankering to write, everyone is welcome to join this workshop. 3:00 P.M. in the Madison Branch Meeting Room



photo by David Lay

First Signs of Spring Pool & Picnic Party

Lakewood Public Cinema - Lord Love a Duck (1966)

Directed by George Axelrod. Not Rated (13+). This brooding, dark comedy starring Roddy McDowall and Tuesday Weld is so beautiful, funny and strange that you're just going to have to see it for yourself. It's possibly an endangered species! 7:00 P.M. in the Main Library Auditorium

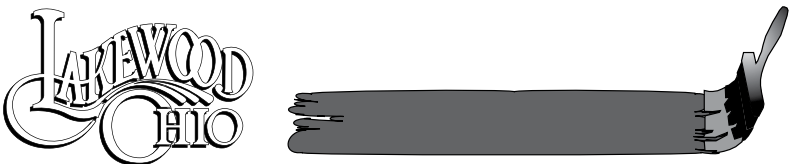
Sunday, April 15

Sunday With the Friends - Old-Time Banjo, Guitar and Musical Saw Sing-Along Teach-In One-man roots band, Gary Rice, hunkers down for a homemade hootenanny! You're invited to sing along and stomp your feet. 2:00 P.M. in the Main Library Auditorium

Monday, April 16

In Other Worlds

Join Ben Burdick and discuss Clans of the Alphane Moon by Philip K. Dick. On a distant moon cut off by interstellar war, where the former inmates of an insane asylum have formed a new kind of civilization, a comedy writer for the CIA may have found the perfect place to kill his ex-wife. But what exactly is Lord Running Clam getting out of all this? 7:00 P.M in the Main Library Auditorium



2007 OPERATION PAINTBRUSH PROGRAM

The City of Lakewood offers a **free exterior paint and labor program** to Lakewood homeowners who qualify based on **federal income guidelines**.

You may qualify based on the following criteria.

No. of Household Members	Maximum Household Income
1	\$21,500
2	\$24,550
3	\$27,650
4	\$30,700
5	\$33,150
6	\$35,600

• All applicants listed on title must reside on the property. Total household income determines eligibility.

• If you own and reside in a single or two-family house in Lakewood, we invite you to apply.

APPLICATIONS CURRENTLY BEING ACCEPTED.

OTHER RESTRICTIONS APPLY

PHONE 529-5906 FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Division of Community Development, City of Lakewood
12650 Detroit Avenue

www.ci.lakewood.oh.us – Applications are also available online.



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Lakewood Healthcare

Local Facilities, Physicians Recognized for Contributions to Long-Term Care Community

Eight local nursing homes, one senior living community and three physicians received recognition from Fairview, Lakewood and Lutheran Hospitals at a Community Appreciation Luncheon hosted by the Cleveland Clinic’s west-side hospitals March 22. More than 400 representatives of area nursing

homes, assisted living and independent living facilities, hospice organizations and the hospitals attended the event.

“This luncheon enables us to provide our community partners with information on activities and new services that may be important to the people they serve,” said Brian Tilow,

vice president of Behavioral and Senior Services for Fairview, Lakewood and Lutheran Hospitals. “In addition, with the naming of the Service Excellence, Community Development and Distinguished Medical Director awards, we now have a unique opportunity to recognize area facilities and physicians for their significant contributions in

providing our community with long-term care services.”

Bridget McGraw, long-term outreach coordinator for Fairview, Lakewood and Lutheran Hospitals, presented the 12 awards. Three Distinguished Service Awards went to local internal medicine physicians, including Amelia Llerena, M.D., of Fairview Park, who was recognized as “having the utmost compassion for her residents,” for being “extremely responsive to the staff and residents’ families,” and always going “above and beyond in her role as a medical director.” (Where is she a medical director?)

The second award went to Kishor Patel, M.D., of Westlake, described as a reliable and empathetic medical director with significant nursing home experience who will do whatever he can for residents and their families. (Where is he a medical director?)

The third award was presented to Emile Sabbagh, M.D., of Westlake, who is trained in geriatrics with extensive knowledge in nursing home care. He is known for being responsive, for developing new resident assessment tools, and for working well with nursing home staff. (Where is he a medical director?)

In addition, eight organizations were presented with the Service Award for having achieved the status of zero deficiencies among 150 regulatory standards on their most recent state health survey. Service Award winners were: Berea Center for Specialized Care (Kelly Schlereth, administrator), Berea; Crestmont North (John McNea, administrator), Lakewood; Ennis Court (Patrice Campbell, administrator/owner), Lakewood; Manor Care North Olmsted (Dan Zawadzki, administrator), North Olmsted; Olmsted Manor (Dottie Welch, administrator), North Olmsted; Rae Ann Center (Ken DiPippo, administrator), Cleveland ; Rae Ann Suburban (John Griffiths, administrator), Westlake; and The Welsh Home (Marilyn Davis, administrator), Rocky River.

A Community Development Award also was presented to Towne Center Community Campus (Mary Beth Bouhall, administrator) in Avon Lake for outstanding achievement in the design and construction of a senior living community. Towne Center has developed a distinctive, leading-edge community that includes independent living apartments, assisted living, and a care center with a unique Main Street setting.

The Community Appreciation Luncheon also included updates from Jan Murphy, interim president of Fairview Hospital; Jack Gustin, president of Lakewood Hospital; and Rob Capretto, chief operating officer of Lutheran Hospital; and Tilow. Dr. Karla Kay Potetz, of Baldwin Wallace College, delivered the keynote presentation.

Autism Awareness

by Danielle Masters

Four years ago we heard words that all too many parents hear today: “We suspect your son has autism”. We are the not the first parents to hear those words, and we won’t be the last. April is Autism Awareness Month, and there is a crying need for such a month. The Centers for Disease Control recently released updated numbers that 1 in every 150 children suffers from Autism Spectrum Disorders. Those numbers are staggering, but unfortunately they are very real - two of our children have Autism Spectrum Disorders. Although there is some disagreement as to why these numbers are so high – some experts say are just getting better at diagnosing Autism, others say the increases are due to vaccines – very little is really known about the true causes of Autism. What is known is that Autism affects children from all races, religions, incomes and lifestyles. It can affect any child, but is four times more common in boys than girls. Unfortunately many areas lack qualified health professionals to treat and diagnose Autism, which means many parents wait several months just to schedule appointments. This can be a disastrous setback, for although there is no cure for Autism, it can be treated. Early detection and treatment of autism can greatly improve the chances that children will lead happy, productive lives.

It was only a few months after our son was born that I started to worry he didn’t seem to be developing as he should. Our pediatrician reassured me that everything was fine, but I still had doubts. The months turned into years and still he didn’t seem to be like other children. He was almost four before he began to speak and he wanted nothing to do with other children. He was prone to throwing tantrums and was very picky about everything. He entered preschool and within weeks his teacher called me with her concerns. Finally someone agreed that all was not well. We promptly took him to a new pediatrician armed with observations from his teacher. That is when our lives changed forever. All I really heard was the word “Autism”. The doctor sent us to a specialist. I really knew nothing about Autism, did not even know of any autistic children, but I began to learn all I could. I cried, feel-

ing I had lost my child. I didn’t want to believe it but in a way the diagnosis was a relief. A relief to know it wasn’t all in my mind, to know I wasn’t alone and we would get help. We lived in Lakewood and as soon as they suspected a disability our son was able to access special education services. He was moved in to a wonderful preschool program and began to receive the therapies he needed to succeed. We also made use of the Family Room. I had always known about the mothers groups that met there but was unaware they had a Special Needs Group. That Friday morning group became my lifeline. It was a place where my son was free to be who he was. No one judged him, or even me for that matter. I met other mothers in similar situations; it’s so nice to know you are not alone. I was able to find out about specialists and what I might expect. It was also a place to vent and receive the moral support that I so desperately needed. Because of the parents I met through The Family Room and the information I received there I knew I could handle my son’s disability. Thus I was prepared for the next blow.

In 2002 our fifth child was born and within a few months I knew he, too, was different. This time I would not be mollified by a simple “every child is different” or “he’ll grow out of it”. When my pediatrician told me that 18 months old was too young to diagnose anything I spoke to my older son’s specialist. She had me bring him in and began the process of diagnosis. Within a few months he was diagnosed with Autism. I still cried at his loss and my loss. I learned from our older child that you do lose. We lost the ability to be spontaneous, since most children with autism need routines and schedules. They don’t do well with chaos. We often felt uncomfortable going to anyplace that might be loud or crowded. Our son would scream or cry, he just couldn’t handle all the noise and action. Little things like going to the grocery store could be a nightmare. I honestly thought I was a pro, that by this time raising him would be easy.

I’ve found though that no one is a pro at raising autistic children. Autism is a spectrum disorder and as such every child can be different. Autism Spectrum Disorders, including Autism, PDD-NOS and Asperger’s Syndrome, can have many varying symptoms. The

general symptoms are difficulties with social interactions, problems with verbal and non-verbal communication, and repetitive behaviors and/or obsessive interests. Autism is an invisible disorder that frustrates the best parents. My children may look “normal” but often don’t act that way. Public meltdowns are excruciatingly difficult. I see people stare and want to scream, “He’s not a spoiled child, I’m not a bad parent, he is autistic and something has set him off.” I’ve never screamed out in public but I do find that I am ultra-sensitive to looks from people. I am now very non-judgmental when I see children misbehaving in public; I never assume anything.

Having children with autism has taught me to be grateful for the little things. I take nothing for granted. I try and enjoy my children for who they are. In a way, we have been lucky. The health care in this community is extraordinary. While many areas lack the specialists needed to treat autism, both of the major hospital systems here have outstanding programs for autism treatment. The Lakewood School system has also had a tremendous affect on both of my children. Our older child has been in regular classes with minimal assistance. The school knows what types of help he needs and they make sure he receives it. Our younger child is currently assisted by the special needs preschool program. He is so different than when he entered the class almost two years ago. When he began preschool he would only play with trains; now loves his trains but is willing to play with other toys. Speech was almost non-existent; now he talks quite a bit. He was uninterested in other children before but now he plays with his classmates. Many of my friends say he seems just like any other preschooler. The reason for this is the early detection and treatment he received. When caught and treated early signs of autism can improve. I know my children will always suffer the effects of autism but I am confident they will live full lives. Perhaps not the lives many parents expect their children to have, but they will grow and we will provide all they need for their happiness. For now that is all I can offer. I do have hope that through more research and early diagnosis and treatment autism will affect less children. I believe that is a worthy dream.

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Lakewood Business News

Beer Engine Revs on Madison

by BJ Bennett

The southeast corner of Madison and Arthur Avenues has seen the coming and going of Lenards, Martinis and Titanic. Now it is home to Buckeye Brewing Beer Engine. Offering 30 beers on tap, a full bar and moderately priced menu, this newcomer to Lakewood is destined to succeed.

Opening as a non-smoking facility, rather than wait for the June enforcement date, it is apparent that the three owners of Beer Engine are keen on pleasing customers to assure repeat business. Beer-related paraphernalia adorns the walls, and the serpentine-shaped bar, comfortable booths, dining tables and high-boy tables can seat 88 people. Flat-panel televisions, with the sound off, allow sports fans to keep tabs on contests without being intrusive to non-sports enthusiasts.

My companion and I wandered in on a late afternoon three days after the Beer Engine opened and received a friendly greeting with the offer to sit wherever we chose. Upon settling into a booth, our server Lisa immediately arrived with three menus. Handing us the wine list, she explained that they



offer a small but varied selection for the non-beer drinkers. However, since they are all about beer, as are we, she placed the beer menu before us and watched our reaction as we scanned the list. We were instantly pleased to see that 4 oz. samples of all beers are available, as well as the usual pint. Selections of higher alcohol content come in 10 oz. snifters. Three selections are their own Buckeye Brewing microbrews, which are brewed off-premises.

I prefer dark beers and am continuously dismayed by the token, identical brews offered at most establishments. The people at Beer Engine, however, understand that we are many who prefer the rich, flavorful, healthy

attributes of a well-brewed stout and porter, and that we want a selection to choose from.

Starting with samples of Buckeye Mammouth Stout, N.H. Poet Oatmeal Stout and Flying Dog Imperial Stout, I felt like a kid in a candy store; my partner, who leans to the light, ordered a pint of Anchor Steam Ale. In time, Beer Engine plans on expanding their selection by offering numerous bottled brews, perhaps looking to fill the void left by the Warren Tavern.

The food menu offers soups, salads, appetizers, sandwiches, several varieties of burgers, sides and four entrees including Meat Loaf with a chipotle bourbon gravy, vegetables and

rosemary mashed potatoes (\$9.50) and a 3 pc. Lake Perch dinner with Buckeye Chips, vegetables and blue cheese slaw (\$10.75)

I immediately zoned in on the Spicy Tomato Soup with blue cheese (\$3) and decided that the BLT with applewood smoked bacon on white toast (\$5) would be the perfect accompaniment. My companion ordered the Samich Burger topped with chili and cheddar cheese (\$9) Both sandwiches come with homemade Buckeye Chips (shoestring fries, which cost extra, are available) and a pickle.

The soup arrived in a ceramic coffee cup, which made it easy to scrape every wonderful drop. Chunks of blue cheese were suspended throughout and softened to a yummy consistency. Nestled in paper-lined plastic baskets, our sandwiches looked appetizing and tasted scrumptious. My BLT was perfect with savory, crisp bacon and garlic mayo on the side; along with crunchy chips and a pickle spear, and I couldn't have been happier. Well, perhaps with another sample of Mammouth Stout! Meanwhile, my hungry cohort was happily munching through his burger, making approving noises over the chips and offering me a bite of the deep-fried pickle spear that accompanied the meal. He requested a snifter of Dogfish Head 90 Minute IPA to wash down any remaining morsels.

Secret Shopper Lion and Blue Justine Cooper



One of the draws to Lakewood, whether to live or to visit, is the fact that the city has unique boutiques and mom and pop eateries. Imagine some of the true Lakewood boutiques. I'm venturing to bet one of those staple shops that comes to mind is the **Lion and Blue on 15106 Detroit Rd. (529-2328) owned by Tina and Michael Dolawski, Lakewood residents for 11 years.**

Lion and Blue is one of those really fun and funky shops that help define Lakewood. When you walk in the scent

alone takes you to an island somewhere far from here. Then the eclectic mix of imported items makes you feel as if you are on a little shopping trip in a village on that island. The shopping experience brings you a range of unique items, from sterling silver jewelry, to cotton clothing and colorful sarongs, to artistic pieces for the home, and much more.

Lion and Blue is on my list of boutiques to hit when I need a birthday gift for the girl who has everything, but loves something new. You can choose

from hanging hand-made clay pots for the rustic look or little glass "vases" made from old looking medicine bottles. Do you have a little hippie child? Grab a tied dyed skirt or onesie. Are you a true walker in need of the best walking shoes? Then pick up a pair of Birkenstocks here. Taking a belly dancing class through the Board of Recreation? Yes, you can get your cymbals and scarf at Lion and Blue!

You will have fun perusing the walls and shelves of this Lakewood gem regardless of what you're looking for. The energy in the room is light and warm. The youthful air filters over from the Phoenix Coffee Shop next door. I have yet to venture into the doors of Lion and Blue without seeing others there. They have a solid following, but if we don't continue to support them and what they bring to Lakewood; well, I would hate to think of the consequences.

So when you are ready to leave the "island" of Lakewood, for the island shopping village of Lion and Blue, be prepared to leave the world behind and soak your senses in the rich atmosphere of treasures at very affordable rates. Bon Voyage!

On a subsequent visit, I tried samples of S.T. Stout and Kulmbacher Schwarzbier (dark ale) and paired them with a Schnitzel Sandwich (\$8) Imagine a slice of pork loin, breaded and pan fried, topped with Swiss cheese and spicy mustard mayo, served on grilled marble rye bread. Lisa said I could substitute the Buckeye Chips, so I chose the blue cheese slaw. Divine! Meanwhile, my forever-famished companion matched a pint of Buckeye Fuggle with a Double Sasquatch Burger, consisting of two 8 oz. patties topped with BBQ sauce, hot pepper-jack cheese and a huge fried onion ring. No substitutions for him. He stayed with the Buckeye Chips and deep-fried pickle (\$10.) Lisa was attentive and knew her business and menu. For every question I had, she had the answer. No blank looks or questioning stares. Brian, one of the owners, checked to see if we were satisfied, and we assured him we were.

Beer Engine wins high points with us. If it can maintain this quality of service during busy periods, then Lakewood has a winner. Located at 15315 Madison Ave, Beer Engine is opened daily from 11 AM - 2:30 AM; the kitchen closes at midnight.

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Chef Geoff

Fire-Roasted Vegetables: A “New” Gourmet Food

There are times that we experience a “new” food or “new” technique for the first time, but, in reality, we have probably already eaten it without recognizing it as a “new” or gourmet food product. One such trend is “fire-roasted” vegetables and we see it everywhere from gourmet restaurants to the specialty aisle of the grocery store. Roasted garlic, tomatoes, and peppers are now found virtually everywhere. When roasted, garlic becomes sweeter with nut-like overtones. Peppers mellow and, in the process of roasting, lose the skin that can sometimes cause bitterness. Tomatoes lose some of their acidity, but gain a slight element of smokiness. But, while fire-roasted vegetables may seem as if they are on the cutting edge of culinary developments, that is far from reality. It’s likely that you’ve been enjoying those fire-roasted vegetables with no thought, perhaps for many years. What seems “new” is really something your palate already knew.

If you think that gourmet “fire-roasted” tomato soup is an innovation, you’ve probably overlooked the tomatoes that were strung on your shish kebabs. And, those fire-roasted peppers that now appear on sandwiches and in salads, while not a bell pepper, are prepared in the exact same fashion as the pimientos that are stuffed in to green olives. So, what is it that raises these “new” items to the level of gourmet specialty? Price alone may explain the difference between pedestrian and gourmet, as certainly a small jar of roasted peppers or roasted garlic can be rather expensive. Perhaps it is the mystique, something far more basic that “fire-roasting” awakens in our primordial senses. But, whatever the reason, the reality is simply that fire roasting is

Jeff Endress



A yellow bell pepper begins to blacken as it is roasted



Roasted red and yellow peppers



Cleaned of the charred skin, the finished product is ready for a gourmet recipe

the most basic, hence easiest, cooking technique, which allows you to produce these “gourmet” ingredients for your cutting-edge recipes at a fraction of market cost.

As part of my recent experiment with vegetarianism, I recognized the need to have some gourmet ingredients available for different recipes. Roasting the necessary peppers was far easier and more cost-effective than you might imagine. It was also much less time-consuming than removing all those pimientos from the olives.

As a base for a roasted red pepper sauce that would accompany some gnocchi with a julienne of roasted yellow peppers, I needed to only invest a few minutes in the process of fire-roasting the aforementioned peppers. As I said, the technique is simple.

Place a pepper directly on a gas burner turned to high. Turn occasionally until the skin has been evenly charred black. Then, place the pepper in a paper bag, close the top, and allow it to “steep” until cool. In following this procedure, all that you’ve really charred is the outer “skin” of the pepper. The flesh, although it softens as the

pepper cools, is unburned, although a certain flavor enhancement - a little smokiness - is imparted as it steeps in the bag.

But, now you need to get rid of all that blackened char. If you think that the skin of a bell pepper can be a bit bitter, being burned certainly does not subdue it. Fortunately, the steeping process loosens the skin and allows it to be easily rubbed away. The classic technique is to do so WITHOUT rinsing, primarily because you don’t want to wash away the vital oils and adding water is not conducive to the traditional storage of the roasted peppers in olive oil. Once the char is removed, simply core the pepper, remove the seedpod, and slice into thick wedges.

The roasted peppers can be stored, refrigerated, coated in olive oil. And, if you’ve decided to rinse off the char, despite my warning to the contrary, all is not lost. Just make sure that you thoroughly dry your roasted peppers by blotting completely between several layers of paper towels. Repeat until the flesh is no longer damp. Add the roasted peppers to a salad, use them as a sandwich topper, or make a roasted red pepper sauce by pureeing with several cloves of garlic, a little salt and pepper, and then slowly add olive oil to the running food processor until the mixture thickens. Then, as I will do, serve it with some fresh gnocchi, a crusty baguette, a mixed salad, and a glass of Merlot.

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Lakewood Perspective

Wanted: Pride in Our Neighborhood

Spring is in the air. The birds are chirping, the flowers are springing to life, and the paint on my front porch is really starting to peel. As the cold recedes, my wife will spend countless hours spreading grass seed that the birds will eat, planting bulbs that the squirrels will dig up, and generally touching up the “curb appeal” of our old Victorian home.

But, there is a much bigger issue to confront than just the effect of weather, time, or the occasional rodent. No matter what my wife does to our property, the individual value of our house will never rise above that of the neighborhood.

I’m not bringing this up to be critical. The forced unity of any given housing market is neither good nor bad, it just “is.” Rather, my pet peeve is with the people that either fail to

recognize the union or hold it up for unfair criticism.

I make no apologies for the state of the neighborhood. When my wife and I moved to Lakewood, it was because of the neighborhood, not despite it. Yet, I’ve always been amazed at how much our choice was, and still is, scrutinized. I often hear things such as: “I like Lakewood, but the property taxes are way too high.” My response to this is: “Find me a hundred-year-old Victorian house in Rocky River and we’ll compare costs.”

Yes, the tax rate in Lakewood (2.48% as a percentage of the market) is numerically greater than that of Rocky River (2.05%). But, make sure you’re comparing apples to apples. If you’re

Bret Callentine

looking for a big house, what might cost you \$150,000 in Lakewood could easily cost you over \$175,000 one more suburb west. The difference in price more than nullifies the difference in tax rate when you realize that the same monthly payment essentially buys you either a \$150,000 house in Lakewood or a \$157,000 house in Rocky River. For that price range, the difference in purchasing power is only \$7,000. Think about what you get for that money and, to me, the difference in the house definitely trumps the difference in price.

Furthermore, when people evaluate property in Lakewood, they rarely talk about the property itself. They talk resale value, schools, and shopping - everything but the houses themselves

and the neighborhoods in which they are located. In my mind, this is where Lakewood really excels.

I’ve often been asked, “You could afford a nice house in Westlake, why did you buy in Lakewood?” What they don’t understand is this: I don’t live in Lakewood because I “have to.” I live in Lakewood because I “want to.” I wanted that big old Victorian. I wanted a lawn that doesn’t take me all weekend to mow (okay, okay, I admit it, my wife does the lawn, too). I wanted to live in a house with a front porch AND a front door. And I wanted to use them both!

Lakewood, to me, is one of the last true “neighborhoods” of Cleveland.

I’m not suggesting that we’re perfect. Do I wish more people would take better care of their homes? Sure. But, to criticize anyone for not taking action would assume that we all have the same financial means and a similar list of priorities.

And, this brings me to the second part of my pet peeve. In opposition to the people who unfairly criticize Lakewood for what it isn’t, there are far too many people out there who don’t fully understand their own role in making Lakewood what it is.

Property values are tied together. It’s hard to have a million-dollar house without having a million-dollar neighborhood. The first thing any realtor will do to estimate the value of your home is compare it to other similar homes in your neighborhood. And, the only real information they have to use is the most recent sale price. Therefore, every time one of your neighbors sells their house, the value of your house is directly affected.

Home ownership is the biggest investment many of us will ever make, yet most of us do very little to help insure a good rate of return. Every time a house goes on sale in your neighborhood, you have the opportunity to make money or lose money in the long run.

Fixing up your own house is only the tip of the iceberg. If you want your property value to really go up, it’ll take a team effort. In this sense, being a good neighbor will pay off literally. If your block looks messy, clean it up. If you’ve got junk in the street, have it removed. If you know of a neighbor who needs help with the garden, or can’t prune their bushes, make an effort to lend a hand. Looks count. Appearance matters. And, finding ways to help is infinitely more rewarding than finding fault and doing nothing.

Likewise, if you need help, don’t be afraid to ask. There are far too many caring and generous people out there. Take advantage of the resources around you and trade skills if you can. I can’t grow flowers to save my life, but I can fix a broken railing. Building value is easier when it’s done as a team. And, it’s a game where just agreeing to play means that everybody wins.

When neighbors help neighbors, the value of all Lakewood homes goes up. But, even better, when neighbors help neighbors, the value of Lakewood as a community becomes truly priceless.

Get Involved

by William George

Recently, I have had several friends that grew up in Lakewood decide to move to another suburb, or are currently looking to move. Along with their stated intentions came claims of degradation of our wonderful city. In the famous words of Howard Beale “I’m mad as hell and I’m not going to take it anymore”. It seems as though the media, uninformed individuals and forgetfulness have inappropriately clouded the thought process of some individuals with respect to real life.

Let me first state that I was born at Lakewood Hospital and have lived 40 of my 42 years in Lakewood, living briefly in another city due to my employment. I enjoy living in Lakewood, and so does my wife, spending all of her 38 years in this city. Recent comments I’ve heard, recent publications and the forgetfulness of what life was like growing up have all prompted me to write this letter, and on a more positive note, decide to become more active in our community.

“I felt like I was entering a third world country” was one quote by an acquaintance of mine when stating his reasons for leaving Lakewood. He was referring to entering a retail store located in the middle of the city. It

wasn’t that he was treated poorly; it was the appearance of some young adults in the store. All I have to say is, don’t judge a book by its cover. You will find all kinds of outfits on today’s younger generation, and not just in Lakewood. “I pulled up to a traffic light and some girls on the corner used swear words”. Ok, so you never used swear words when you were a kid growing up? I can think of much worse things that I did as a kid because I was young, immature and naive. If everyone that swore as a teenager turned out bad, we would need a jail the size of the state of California.

“The school system was rated 33rd in Cleveland Magazine”. A closer examination of this publication reveals some flaws. First, the Lakewood school system takes in more special needs children from other cities than almost any other suburb in Cuyahoga County. Of course those students may not be “college” material, and may not choose to take ACT/SAT tests, but they are getting an education, and not in their home town. Second, rich suburbs like Pepper Pike, rated #1 in the Cleveland Magazine publication, have much more “voluntary” funding dollars available to pour into their educational systems. “I know a school guard who has been crossing children for 30 years

and she said the kids are much worse today”. Well, I know a teacher who taught in the Lakewood school system for over 30 years that claims not much has changed in respect to kids behavior—kids will be kids! It’s all a matter of opinion and perception. I don’t care what school your kids go to, if you don’t work with them and pay attention to their grades and behavior, your kid will not get the best education available to help them succeed in life!

I don’t wish to go on and on defending my city and disproving uneducated statements. Many of the comments made by these acquaintances and articles I’ve read have good points. And some things in this city have changed for the worse, in my opinion. Some have changed for the better. But overall, our city has experienced the same issues every city has. In addition, each city has their set of unique issues. There is only one way you can effect positive change in your community: GET INVOLVED! Join the PTA, go to city council meetings, read your local newspaper, be active in your kids’ education, attend ad-hoc meetings about community issues, talk to your councilmen/councilwomen and vote. Don’t pack up your bags and run away from your concerns. You may be happy in the short run, but in the long run those issues won’t disappear, they’ll just change.

And finally, I would like to end my letter by talking about this experience. In some ways, I’m glad these individuals have spoken about their concerns. It made me realize that I have not been involved as much as I could be. In 2006, I joined “Lakewood Alive”. I have attended several ad-hoc meetings on community issues. I continue to go to City Council meetings. I have attended most of the ad hoc meetings on the new schools. My wife is now a member of LECTPA and participates in the Lakewood Family Room program and events. I now read the Lakewood Observer, along with my long standing subscription to the Sun Post. I have ALWAYS voted. And hopefully I can help make a difference.



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Lakewood Sports

Back in the Dugout with Her Girls

by Todd Shapiro

Back in 1991 Lakewood High School softball coach Colleen Moran stepped down due to the birth of her twin daughters, Bridget and Carrie. Fast forward to 2007 and the Moran twins are playing shortstop and first base for the Rangers and Mom, otherwise known as Coach Moran will make her return to the Rangers dugout to resume her coaching career.

Colleen, who is also a sixth-grade teacher at Lakewood's Emerson Middle School, never really left the softball scene even while raising her four children. For the past six season she has been a volunteer assistant on the Lakewood coaching staff and the head coach of Bridget and Carrie's summer Emerald Necklace League team, the Little Rangers.

Softball has played a major role in Colleen's life since her playing days at Lakewood and later at Cleveland State University. When asked, Moran admits that through the years she has envisioned the day when she could again wear the Rangers uniform with her daughters.

After a lifetime of being on the ball diamond and nine summers of coaching her youngest daughters, Moran said it has been a smooth transition back to her old coaching duties. "Softball comes natural; sometimes the toughest part is being a housewife and a mom."

The Rangers softball team is like a second family to Colleen who, in addition to coaching her daughters, has also coached second basemen Lindsay Maxfield and catcher Nicole Niemi since the beginning of their softball careers.

Pitcher Jamie Wright, outfielder Lauren Rosul, third baseman Emily Patsouras, pitcher Robin Elder and third baseman Nicole Niemi also played for Coach Moran on the Little Rangers.

One word sums up what Moran expects from her girls on and off the field. Discipline.

"I demand a lot from my players," coach Moran said.

Besides bunting, hitting the cut-off man and playing sound defense Moran also stresses that her players excel in the classroom and learn what she calls "life-long skills." Among those "life-long skills" Moran preaches are organization, punctuality, and the importance of working together as a team.

With a team that returns just three juniors and two seniors Moran's coaching skills will be put to the test this year as the Rangers play a schedule that includes perennial softball powers Magnificat, Westlake, Lorain Admiral

King and defending Division II state champions Lagrange Keystone.

Moran said it is imperative that her upperclassman accept their roles on a team that started six sophomores and a freshman in the opening day lineup.

In her first five seasons at helm of Rangers 1987-91, Moran recorded an impressive 70-44 record. However, with this young unit she is looking for slow but steady progress in 2007.

While a .500 record and a trip to districts would make this a successful season for a young Lakewood team, Coach Moran has higher goals for the future. "In the next two years this team should be competing for the league title in our new league, the Northern Ohio League."

The past sixteen seasons have seen a huge transition in softball in the Cleveland area. Slow-pitch softball has

disappeared from the high school scene and the advent of summer leagues and year-round coaching has greatly improved the level of play across the region. But Moran knows you still win softball games with fundamentals.

"Our pitching and infield defense are where I would like them to be at this point in the season," Moran said. "But we still need to work on our outfield defense."

Jazzercise Honors 100 Club Members

For many people, sticking to a regular exercise program is really tough. That's why local Jazzercise instructor Karen Kilbane is honoring her latest inductees into the Jazzercise 100 Club, a special recognition for those participants who have attended 100 or more classes. Karen is honoring a record number of participants this year

In 2006, 43 participants attended 100+ classes, 10 participants attended 200+ classes and 2 attended over 300 classes.

Special 100 club celebrations were held at Karen's Jazzercise classes on March 21 and 22.

All participants were awarded special 100 club T-shirts.

The 60-minute Jazzercise class includes a warm-up, high-energy aerobic routines, muscle-toning and cool-down stretch segment. Jazzercise combines elements of dance, resistance training, Pilates, yoga, kick-boxing and more to create programs for people of every age and fitness level. Alternative formats include Jazzercise Lite, Jazzercise Body Sculpting, Jazzercise Step, Jazzercise Plus, Jazzercise Circuit Training, Jazzercise Personal Touch, and Junior Jazzercise.

Now celebrating its 37th year, Jazzercise, created by Judi Sheppard Missett, is the world's leading dance-fitness program. With more than 6,300 instructors teaching 20,000 classes weekly worldwide, the comprehensive program, designed to enhance cardiovascular endurance, strength, and flexibility has helped millions of people of all ages and fitness levels reap the benefits of exercise and improve well-being. Karen has been an instructor in the Lakewood area for 21 years. In addition to teaching classes through the Lakewood Adult Education Department, Karen also has classes at the Wellness Center of Fairview Hospital In Rocky River. For more information on Jazzercise contact Karen Kilbane at 440-356-0337 or kkjazzercise@yahoo.com.



Karen's Lakewood Jazzercise class poses for a photo in the gazebo at Lincoln School wearing their new 100 club T-shirts.



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	4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.	Skills Practice/All Ages
Thursday	8:30 P.M. - 11:00 P.M.	Adults Only <i>(Live Organ Music)</i>
Friday	8:30 P.M. - 10:30 P.M.	All Ages
Saturday	10:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.	All Ages
	2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.	All Ages
	8:30 P.M. - 10:30 P.M.	All Ages
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	8:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.	All Ages

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Lakewood Observer

Hospital Supports Right to Read



In honor of national “Right to Read” week, Jack Gustin, president of Lakewood Hospital, and Dr. David Estrop, Superintendent, Lakewood City School District, handed out books to students after reading to them at Harrison Elementary School.

Beck Offers Passion



Cleveland professional premiere of Stephen Sondheim’s Award-winning musical *PASSION* at the Beck Center for the Arts Studio Theater April 6 – May 6

Based on the Italian film, *Passione D’Amore*, *Passion* is another award-winning collaboration by the creative team of James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim.

To reserve tickets, call the Beck Center Box Office at (216) 521-2540.



Sam Phillips meets with world renowned UFO Expert Aaron Clark at Phoenix Coffee.

Local UFO Draws National Attention

by Aaron Clark

I met with Sam Phillips on Monday interviewing him about the object he videotaped which was witnessed by several others. This object is a definite UFO since it remains unidentified. We can rule out airplanes, helicopters, stars and meteors. It was suggested by some witnesses that the object could be a kite or a balloon. Both of these explanations are unlikely however. The object was much higher than the Key Tower which is about 950 feet tall at the top of the spire. You would need quite a bit of string to get something up that high. The wind direction was from the South putting the buildings in the way of the alleged string. Key Tower management assured me that nothing has been attached to their building.

The object moves in a direction that is across the wind. It leaves the area and then reappears. It seems to be self illuminated and under some kind of intelligent control. Assuming the object was not too far past the tower I calculated a few of it’s maneuvers at a speed of over 50 mph. The object is probably farther away which would make it’s movements much faster. Aside from a remotely controlled high speed illuminated balloon I don’t know what this could be. Could it be extraterrestrial? I can’t say for sure, but it’s possible. www.clevelandufo.com

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Lakewood Around Town

Saleets Get Honored - City Gets New Lane



Mayor Thomas J. George (left) stopped by the Saleet House last Saturday to honor Jim and Joanne Saleet and their family for their years of helping Lakewood. While some know the Saleet name from the Westend Project. Most knew the family as the house were friends were always welcomed. The Mayor had a Resolution from City Council, and a special surprise with the Saleet Lane street sign.



Above, the Rockport Kiwanis Easter Egg Hunt.

BelowJWCL's Annual Breakfast with the Bunny drew the usual sold out crowds. Josh, Jared and Hannah Masters enjoyed a pancake breakfast and even got to see the Easter Bunny

L.E.A.F. Community Growing For You



Members of LEAF's Urban Farmers take a break from their hard work on the Plover Community Gardens as a train passes in the background. LEAF is one of the most exciting groups to form in Lakewood. A thanks and a tip of the hat to L.E.A.F.



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Lakewood Observer

Get Ready for Severe Weather Season

by David Lay

**Help save lives—
become a Storm Spotter!**

With severe weather season nearly upon us, the call is going out from the National Weather Service for trained Storm Spotters—lookouts for tornadoes, flooding and other severe weather. SKYWARN, the nationwide Storm Spotter program sponsored by the National Weather Service, holds trainings every spring.

Gary Garnet, Warning Coordination Meteorologist for the NWS Cleveland office, leads the trainings. “Our Spotters provide us with real-time information as to what’s going on,” he says. “They are really our eyes and ears.”

Most, if not all, of the 88 counties in Ohio have an active SKYWARN program. Cuyahoga County SKYWARN supports Spotters in six counties:

Cuyahoga on a primary basis and Lake, Geauga, Summit, Medina and Lorain counties on a secondary basis. Considering these counties are populated by more than 2.8 million people, this is no small undertaking.

The Storm Spotter is the most important person in SKYWARN. Spotters normally communicate via Amateur (HAM) Radio, although this is not required. Many Spotters submit reports via telephone and eSpotter, the National Weather Service’s online reporting system. Via Directed Severe Weather Nets, Spotters communicate weather events as they are happening to the Net Control Operator. The NCO collects the reports, organizes them and relays the reports to the County Liaison. The County Liaison passes the reports to the District Net Control, which then go on to the National Weather Service office at Hopkins Airport. Watches, Warnings and Advisories are also relayed

to adjacent counties and Spotters in the field.

Spotter training is critical and required by the National Weather Service to participate in SKYWARN, and to be able to recognize severe weather as it is happening. Various Amateur Radio groups (notably the Lake Erie Amateur Radio Association), public service organizations and emergency management offices host the training sessions. The next training sessions are April 4 at Lorain County JVS in

Oberlin, and May 3 at Moreland Hills Elementary in Moreland Hills. All training sessions are open to the public. You do not need to be an Amateur Radio operator to volunteer as a Spotter, but it is encouraged.

For more information, or if you are interested in becoming a Spotter, visit Cuyahoga County SKYWARN on the web at www.ccsww.us or email info@ccsw.us. For information on becoming a licensed Amateur Radio operator, visit www.arrl.org.

1st Wednesday Night Bike Ride Report

by Morty Agreen

Weekly Wednesday night Lakewood Phoenix bike rides began with the start of warmer weather. Unfortunately, there were no media present. Being the first ride, the turnout was rather low. A sizeable contingent split off to make music before the ride was underway, further damaging the flanks.

But despite the low numbers, our faithful and daring riders took to the night’s streets anyway! With hazard under their breath, they took the corners like demons, letting out rumbles, howls and whistles.

Heading to Tremont, the resting hole of one of ours, we jaunted up to Franklin, and then across town to W 117. The banter reached a peak as the pack passed Lakewood High School, where local no-gooders and young scallywags have been known to hide in dark corners, doing uptowards things to their lungs. Perhaps our motivated biking will have inspired them to do something brighter another night!

Approaching W 117, a quick decision was made to take Detroit instead of Madison. I think the decision was reached by consensus - it was the easiest way to go.

A fairly straightforward tour it was, and to combat the boredom of such a straight-line, we developed a code to deal with traffic. “There’s a bun in the oven!”, Jesse Gonzalez of Gladys Ave. would yell, as every set of headlights approached from behind. “We’ve got

a loaf to the right, it may be toasting” was relayed by one rider to the group as we passed a side street with a parked cop-car, lights ablaze, perhaps arresting someone needlessly.

Corin calls out a quick right on 58th, a little unexpected. But quick turns come naturally for those who have ridden this ride before, and the entire group rolls up to Franklin without a hitch. She also points out St Paul’s church at 4427, which will be holding a Books to Prisoners fundraiser where she will be reciting an Emma Goldman speech.

Up onto W 25th and we were hit with some severe wind in from the South. Some wax philosophical about the actual size of wind, but others just try to keep pedaling. One name for this section of C-Town is “the wind tunnel” and for a good reason. But the ride doesn’t have much further.

It’s into the flats and out again and the ride’s over. Many have reason to rest their legs, but know that jelly feeling means stronger muscles next time. No one complains about relaxing on couches for an indeterminate amount of time. The conversation after the ride proves its success - one of the riders, Jesse G., “I was never really able to get outside of Lakewood. Thanks for the ride.” Thank you Jesse, for coming on the ride.

Next week’s ride will meet at 8:00 PM and leave at 8:30, returning to the Phoenix by 10:00 to drink coffee, relax, and possibly discuss. The Phoenix Coffee Shop is located at 15108 Detroit.

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The Buck Stops Here

We Assuage It

“The American voice can only be heard in the collective stories of those who are for some time, no matter how brief, pushed outside the definition of ‘American’...The American voice is how one responds when silenced because of who he or she is.” -- Tanya Kalivas.

Neither John O’Brien (Lakewood High School) nor Dare Wright (Laurel School) fit, but were able to use what set them apart; to come in from the cold, without leaving behind what put them outside. O’Brien’s first novel, *Leaving Las Vegas*, was made into a movie starring Nicholas Cage and Elizabeth Shue. Wright’s children’s book, *The Lonely Doll*, was a best-seller that stayed with women who read it as girls.

Like the protagonists of his novels, O’Brien was a white, middle-class male who could neither manage nor accept middle-class life. At one point, he may have thought he might have made a difference in that life, but he came to realize that a life on the margins was the only life he could lead. In *Leaving Las Vegas*, O’Brien’s protagonist, Ben (played by Cage in the movie), talks about the moment he realizes his difference, which is also O’Brien’s own recognition of it:

“I was reminded of myself as a very young boy being forced outside to play in the hot sun by my mother. Even though our house was cool, shady and comfortable, my mother felt it unhealthy for me to remain inside on a summer day. I’d stay inside as long as I could, keeping a low profile, until she would finally hear the other kids shouting and playing. That would be the last straw, and I found myself banished to the backyard, where I look back in longing at the latched screen door.”

Wright was a child of a split family, dangerously attached to her mother (they slept in the same bed until her mother died), who desperately wanted her father and brother to be part of her life. She went to New York to become an actress, became a model instead (she was beautiful, stunning) and through modeling learned how to use a camera to become a photographer. Her success in photography led her to children’s books. She never married (she was a virgin until she was raped at 80) and increasingly lived life around the dolls she had collected since she was a child.

“Dare led a busy private life with her characters,” her biographer, Jean Nathan, writes of what she calls Wright’s warehouse of the forgotten. “She bought them tiny toys, dolls, and stuffed animals and sat them down to write thank-you letters when they received gifts, photographing them in this pose. Or she wrote the thank-you letters on their behalf. And when they were ‘working,’ Dare talked to them as if they were real children. As she walked to the tripod after positioning them, she would call out, over her shoulder, ‘Now, hold still; don’t move; just stand there like that.’”

Robert Buckeye

“Who is the third who walks always beside you?” T. S. Eliot asks in his long poem, *The Waste Land*. “When I count, there are only you and I together/But when I look ahead up the white road/ There is always another one walking beside you.” We know who it is, but can’t acknowledge the stranger who is us for fear of the mob which can come at any moment (Greil Marcus writes) “as soon as it is revealed that he or she

is not one of them, that you are not who you appear to be.”

Wright and O’Brien needed to walk besides the third the other side of them, and it was their writing that permits them to walk with us. In *Leaving Las Vegas*, O’Brien speaks of “the basic loneliness of her humanity” of Sera (played by Elizabeth Shue in the movie), the hooker who falls in love with Ben, “and the knowing and

accepting the conditions of that which has been shown to assuage it.” The means by which we come to terms with our existential loneliness is rarely our choice. We assuage it however we can with whatever is available. Those who read John O’Brien and Dare Wright know they have spoken for them in a way they cannot themselves, even though O’Brien and Wright might question whether they had, knowing at the same time it was the only thing they could do.

Limo Driver

by David Skolyak

Wearing white shirt, black tie, black suit and overcoat I enter the stretch limo prepared for the first run of the day. I am fortunate to be working for a good management team.

The first run is a funeral. My job is to follow the hearse; I will be driving the immediate members of the family to the church, the cemetery and back to the funeral home. I think that I should be numb to the sorrow felt by family and friends of the deceased by now. I also imagine that the rituals I have to aid in such as placing flags on the cars, assisting with the invalids, helping gather the flowers to place in the hearse, etc., would just be motions. But, in actuality, I feel like it is an honor. I feel empathy for the families.

My heart is warmed at the remembrances from the family of past deeds and life experiences of the deceased. Most often they sit in the back of the limo relating wonderful and beautiful tales of the deceased. On these trips my job is to be quiet unless asked questions, but occasionally a family member will sit in the front with me, usually the widow or widower. The ride can be long and tedious and sad for them so they talk to me. Sometimes they express the hurt they are suffering, sometimes they relate joys.

One example was a widower, eighty-nine years young. His body was frail yet his mind sharp. He was a man

who remembered dates and events; a man who painted pictures with his words. He spoke of his Navy days something we had in common, both being Navy men. He told of his experiences on several different ships during World War II and of meeting his wife of over 50 years. I thought to myself how amazing, to be married for over 50 years when so many couples can’t seem to stay together just a few years in this day and age. He told me of his work until he retired. He told me of his post retirement years. He spoke in such a way that I had to pay attention. He made me feel as if I were there with him in those bygone years. He also expressed his sadness at his wife’s passing. All of this was related to me in only a couple hours driving time.

Then there was the widow in her delicate 90’s, feeble but equally as sharp minded as the gentleman above. She pointed out her house as we drove by it. She told how she and her husband built it and expanded it as her family grew. In a weak and quivering voice she talked of how they loved to dance; how fond she was of the big band era, Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, early Frank Sinatra through Xavier Cugat and beyond. She told me of the Aragon Ballroom, Euclid Beach, the speakeasies, the flappers, the Charleston. When she spoke there was silence from the back of the limo. Her children, though they must have heard these stories before, were equally engrossed. She told me of the

void in her soul at having lost her husband. At the church I witnessed the family members sobbing in remorse. As staunch and manly as I try to be, I admit to having shed a tear with them. Never having known the man, yet feeling as if he were related to me.

Ok, so I am a softie, though I taught martial arts for quite a few years, served in the Navy, was never afraid to get my hands dirty. I still admit to being touched by beauty. Yes, beauty, the beauty that lies in appreciation of others lives, joys and sorrows. How I wish that all of us could experience those feelings, from the punk on the street to the blowhard stuffy elite. How much better this world could be if muggers took into consideration other people’s feelings and fears, maybe they wouldn’t mug. Maybe if the stuffy elite who think that they own the world and everyone in it were more in touch with human emotions, the people that work for them might be better treated and respected

Nothing I can say can change anyone, nor would I want that ability. We are all different. We are sensitive or insensitive, greedy or generous, confident or insecure, boisterous or timid. People should be who they are; but it would be nice if in being who they are, they could put themselves in other people’s shoes. If only everyone could drive a limo and see and experience the things I do, then maybe this whole world would be a better place to live.

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Minding The Issues

A Campaign Speech for Barak Obama (or anyone who is interested)

My fellow citizens!

How often have you heard those words, and how often have they been empty window dressing? With your help – both before the election and after – I will make them mean something again.

For we are turning a corner. In less than two years we will be able to jettison, like bilge water from our ship of state, the failed policies and mean-spirited outlook of the present administration. We must make the most of our opportunity.

We must respect and acknowledge the worth and dignity of all our fellow citizens. We must strive together to achieve the greatest good for all and unrestricted justice for each.

Under my administration, we will pay more attention to the ways we work with one another, and less attention to the way we live our private lives. We will not set one group against another; we will not allow one group to bully another into living their private lives according to someone's dogmatic dictates.

I promise intelligence instead of the simplistic and ham-handed approach of the present administration. I promise unity and inclusiveness, instead of the divisive policies of the past six years.

Gordon Brumm

The first way to respect the worth and dignity of all citizens is to insure that every citizen pulls his or her own weight and in return receives a fair share of the rewards.

Our capitalist system is a great producer of wealth, and we should all be grateful for it, but by itself it does nothing to distribute wealth fairly. We see individuals working equally hard, though some receive substantially greater rewards; this is largely because of luck – the luck of their birth and upbringing, or the luck of finding themselves in the right circumstances or the right market, or the luck of simply getting a break.

But luck is not moral entitlement.

Life is not fair, as we are often told; that does not mean that we should be content to let unfairness be the rule; rather, our obligation is to make life as nearly fair as we possibly can.

The proper role of government is to reduce the inequities of the economic system, and the primary means for doing so is progressive taxation. My administration will restore this principle, by rescinding the unnecessary and unfair tax cuts for the wealthy and by increasing the Earned Income Tax Credit.

And we will also work to insure

that all citizens – and their children in particular – have adequate health care. For playing Russian Roulette with our health is the greatest threat to opportunity and well being.

At the same time, we will stand up for fiscal responsibility. As a first step we will separate Social Security and Medicare accounts from the general budget, because these are two different problems with two different kinds of solutions, and lumping them together only allows us to evade the solution to each.

I will resist all efforts to privatize Social Security, not only because of the risk but also because – this is the dirty little secret of the privatization approach – such plans destroy the progressivity that is now a feature of Social Security.

Another important common concern – becoming more important every day – is our environment. Global warming is a reality, and whatever disputes there may be about particular issues, we must take it seriously. Also, we must reduce our dependence on Mid-East governments, as well as face the fact that the world's supply of oil will run out some day. Therefore I will not only make strenuous efforts to develop alternative energy sources but will also reduce gasoline consumption by re-instituting mileage standards – the so-called CAFE standards -- that auto makers must meet.

I will also move to re-establish nuclear power as a clean energy source that can do more than any other to reduce our need for fossil fuels. In developing nuclear energy we will learn from past mistakes and we will make safety our first concern.

The second way of respecting the worth and dignity of all citizens is to keep the government's hands off our relationships. We will reverse the previous administration's assault on our private lives.

But what about abortion rights? This is a contentious issue, as we all know. So let me assure you: My administration will never – repeat, never – force or induce any individual to have an abortion! Let us be thankful that we do not follow the example of Communist China, where abortions are sometimes forced on women who are having too many children. Unlike Communist China, we do not believe that the government should interfere in personal matters such as the bearing of children, and my administration will do its best to see that those decisions, including the decision whether or not to have an abortion, are left to the individual.

To those who protest that abortion is murder, who claim that the embryo is a person, I point out that their view is based neither on science nor on common sense. It is a religious viewpoint, and as such must never be allowed to influence public policy.

In foreign policy above all we need to wipe away the stains of the previous administration. We need to recognize first of all that we are part of the family of nations. We may not like some of the members of our family, but they are not going away, so the question is how to deal with them. And here we need a more intelligent approach than we have seen during these past six years. We must not base our estimates on ideological preconceptions, and we must not base our evaluations on Sunday-School moralism.

We must cooperate with the international community, and that basically means the United Nations. We recognize that the United Nations has deep flaws, but the proper course is to remedy those flaws, not to use them as an excuse to run away.

We need to recognize the complexity that inheres in almost every nation and almost every situation. We need to use diplomacy to the greatest degree possible; we need to form alliances to further our aims; we need to apply pressure where it will have an effect. Let us remain committed to our ideals, but let us also scrutinize our adherence to these ideals. Let us sincerely recognize the interests, the commitments, and the traditions of other nations.

In such ways we can modestly and carefully sculpt the world in accordance with our vision of what the world ought to be.

As for our biggest current problem – the Iraq War – I have no good answer, because good answers don't exist; we can thank our current president for that.

What, then, can we do about this horrid quagmire? Well, just blunder along. Make sure that the "surge" doesn't become an indefinite escalation, as it promises to do. And diplomatically, there are two things: first, work with Iraq's neighbors to bring stability to the country, and second, serve as an honest broker upholding peaceful relations between Turkey and Iraqi Kurdistan, which has become to all intents and purposes an independent nation.

In the past decades, our nation has seen the New Deal, the Fair Deal, and a number of raw deals. What I propose to you is the YOU deal. I propose that you deal your own hand on behalf of yourselves, your community and your nation. I want to see a country in which all individuals better themselves through education and hard work, better their communities through civic involvement, and better their nation through awareness and political action.

The government's role is to insure that everyone has an equal opportunity to make a difference --- to see that those in the Inner Cities and those in the Inner Circles have equal opportunities to realize their potentialities to the fullest.

Together, we fellow citizens, acting in public and in private, can bring our republic to the greatness it was meant to achieve. I thank you.

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Pulse Of The City

Bring Back (Some of) the Classics

Gary Rice

After living fifty-five years, I've had the opportunity to see quite a few strange things come and go. Many of the fads that we grew up with now reside only in our memories. With the annual holiday onslaught of new fads, computers, and electronic gadgetry now behind us, I thought it might be fun to think about the "classics." That is, stuff that never goes out of style.

Actually, many people seem to love the "classics" (whatever that means). In fact, there's a whole "retro" industry, cranking away new versions of items from the dim, distant past.

What would some of these "classics" be then? Let's start with men's toiletries and fashions. The splash-on substances that grace my medicine chest are the same as my grandfather used. In fact, as many of these have no expiration date, some of these may have even been my grandfather's!

What is more classic than a t-shirt? As we all know, men have three types: round neck, v-neck, and tank. Some guys want that round-neck to show a splash of white between those collar tabs, while others would rather display their hairy chests and armpits. Still, these types have changed little, if at all, over the years. Classics all.

As for men's shoes? The ubiquitous wing tip brogues and penny loafers seem to plod on forever in the boardrooms of our nation. Otherwise, "sneakers" lead the way. Although there are very cool ultra-modern shoes in the stores' front windows, classic sneakers still seem to rule the roost, at least with those who know about what's REALLY cool!

Trousers made from old sail cloth material in the late 1800's became very popular with the sailors and cowboys. In 1873, two businessmen, Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis, collaborated to introduce the concept of the denim "waist overall" with riveted pockets so that miners could better carry their gold ore without losing their trousers! As the sailing ships and canvas-covered wagons were quickly becoming things of the past, the demand for high quality canvas denim was kept at a respectable level with the need for work jackets and pants made in this fashion. These days, as in the Old West, denim jeans are everywhere!

As an interesting sidelight, one thing changed from the original plans for those jeans. It seems that there was a rivet at the crotch of the trousers. Apparently, at least as the story goes, there were some cowboys sitting by their evening campfires who seemed to object to that rivet heating up at the wrong time! There's another story that copper rivets were discontinued during WWII due to war material restrictions. I like the first tale myself.

As for the ladies? They too have perennially popular designer classic perfumes and fragrances, as well as distinctive articles of clothing that endure from year to year. Smocks and jumpers, silk blouses, business suits and classic shoe designs all endure from year to

year with minor variations.

In the world of Rock music, you might think that new guitar and amplifier ideas would rule. The truth is that classic instrument designs from the '50's continue to dominate the stages. Some of the original vintage instruments bring astronomical sums on the rare occasions they come into the market. Interesting as well are the number of teens encountered by your columnist who want to learn and perform "Classic Rock."

Automobile designers, too, are recognizing the appeal of older cars. More and more models from yesteryear (with some stylistic or safety-related updates) are once again showing up in dealer

showrooms to the absolute delight of retro-hungry consumers.

In our supermarkets, a number of products have also returned to classic packaging, while other products have remained the same for years. Can you think of any examples? Remember a few years back when a well-known soft drink company decided to re-formulate? I seem to remember that they changed their minds rather quickly!

All of this causes me to wonder exactly how much the kids of today will relate to the classics in years to come. When a two-year old computer, or last year's cell phone, is hopelessly outdated, how can today's youths even imagine a



Gary's classic shoes- Peter Max shoes and Reebok Rads

product that will stand the test of time?

As far as Lakewood is concerned, I'd like to think that we are as classic as it gets! Only here in Lakewood, we love to combine the best of the old with the best of the new. I think, for example, of the new Garfield School retaining its original facade while combining with the attraction of a state-of-the-art facility.

And what could be more classic than the many beautiful neighborhoods that grace this city? While many folks for years have prematurely prophesied Lakewood's demise, our streets, storefronts, and residences have continued to combine classic elegance with a forward-facing attitude. While other communities construct pseudo-neighborhoods that superficially resemble Lakewood's, we have the real thing! As retro goes, I suppose we have the state-of-the-art!

If we can continue to retain and attract many other fine retailers, keep and beautify our housing stock, and maintain our schools and city services, perhaps we can continue to draw upon these "classic" strengths--to enrich the pulse of this city. Now, where did I put those sneakers?

Local Filmmaker Finishes Second Film

A Lakewood-area filmmaker isn't waiting for Hollywood to come calling. She's making movies here and now in Cuyahoga County.

Lisa Seelinger's latest film, "Kings and Queens," is about a chess game played between two people, with each strategic move igniting or stifling possibilities between them.

"This is a film about a young man and woman who are simply playing a game of chess," Seelinger says. "But there are other complicated issues intertwined in the story. It indirectly deals with race, relationships, love, hurt and imagination. It's funny how relationships can seem like a game sometimes," she says. "So what would happen if a game manipulated our relationship?"

Seelinger studied filmmaking at Farleigh-Dickinson University, then took a job at WSEE-TV. She cur-

rently directs newscasts at Cleveland's WEWS-TV. In her spare time she enjoys playing chess, which inspired "Kings and Queens."

Volunteer actors Lee Grigsby of Cleveland and Ruby McCormick of Erie, Pennsylvania make their acting debuts in the lead roles. Another Cleveland native, January Keaton, appears in the film as well as James Xavier and M. Peter Cudicio of Erie.

"The most rewarding part of filmmaking is meeting and working with everyone while doing something we all love to do," Seelinger explains. "It's not very often that you get to be truly creative."

Of course, the dynamics of shooting a movie are different in Erie than Hollywood. Without studio financing, area filmmakers have to raise their own funds and be resourceful to control costs. Seelinger, who shot her work

on Mini DV, bought her camera and other equipment online.

Seelinger's previous feature film, "Missed Cues," was an official selection in the Great Lakes Film Festival in Erie and the Newfilmmakers Series in New York City.

Seelinger's advice for future filmmakers is simple, "Don't give up."

"I used to think it was impossible to achieve," she says. "I just threw myself into any film projects I could and the opportunity presented itself, so I jumped on it."

Seelinger's next film will be a feature shooting this summer in and around Lakewood. She is searching for volunteer actors willing to participate. In addition, Seelinger is currently looking for musicians or bands willing to contribute music for future movie soundtracks. For more information contact Lisa at SeelingerProductions@hotmail.com.

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Lakewood Pets

Time for You and the Dog to Shape Up:

Tips for Lakewood Dog Walking

by Mike Deneen

As springtime arrives, many people become motivated to get into better shape. Most people do better with an exercise routine if they have a partner to keep them company. However, human partners can be unreliable. They have work schedules, appointments and families to disrupt their routines. Dogs, however, make great exercise partners since they are always ready to go, they never have appointment conflicts and they often nag you to get going.

Many folks have turned to dog walking as a means to become more fit. Not only does walking burn calories, but it provides other health benefits like reducing blood pressure. In addition to helping the owner, dog walking provides great health benefits for the dog. With a rising percentage of American dogs now considered overweight, dog

walking is a “win-win” proposition. Here are tips to remember to become a better dog walker:

***ALWAYS PICK UP AFTER YOUR PET** –You are responsible for cleaning your dog’s mess, so make sure to bring along a pooper scooper or some plastic bags. When the bag is placed over the hand you can pick up what you have to, turn the bag inside out, and tie the end closed. Be sure to bring multiple bags, as nature sometimes calls more than once, especially on longer walks

***USE COMMON SENSE** -- Make sure your pet is properly trained. If your dog jumps on people (even if it’s just being friendly), it should be kept away from pedestrians, especially kids and seniors. Also, if your pet is aggressive or overexcited toward other dogs, it should get training. There are many obedience schools in and around Lakewood.

***ALWAYS KEEP YOUR DOG**

ON A LEASH –No matter how well you think your dog is trained, it is far too dangerous to let a dog walk off-leash. Our busy Lakewood streets offer numerous temptations for your dog to dart off – these include other dogs, cats, squirrels, cars, etc.

***VARY YOUR ROUTINE** – With a town as walkable as Lakewood, you should consider varying your walking routine. Instead of walking the same route each day, try walking in some different routes. Lakewood has numerous fine quiet side streets for you and your pet to enjoy. Dogs enjoy visiting new streets because they can explore all the new sights and smells of each street. If your dog is very social, take him down one of Lakewood’s busy streets like Detroit or Madison. If he’s lucky, some human pedestrians may ask to pet him. Also, don’t forget that the nearby Metroparks offers fantastic scenery for a pleasant stroll (plus, the Lakewood Dog Park is nearby).

However, Lakewood City Parks are off limits to dogs.

***GRADUALLY EXTEND YOUR WALKS** – Just like humans, each dog has its own fitness level. If your dog is accustomed to 20 minute walks, it may not be a good idea to take him on a two hour walk across Lakewood. If your dog is older or overweight, you should ease the pet into gradually longer walks. Also, if you are going on a longer walk, take breaks. Lakewood’s commercial streets (Detroit and Madison) have numerous public benches which offer an ideal rest stop.

***BRING WATER**–Unlike humans, dogs cannot sweat, and are susceptible to overheating. Although hot summer days are the most dangerous, dogs can overheat in mild temperatures, too. So make sure that you bring along plenty of water for both you and your pet. Have a bowl or cup for the dog to drink from. Easy-to-carry collapsible dog bowls are available at most pet stores.



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by David Skolyak

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My name is Morris

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Lakewood Real Estate

Noting our Neighborhood Home Buyers Choose Agent Representation To Facilitate The Buying Process

by Kathy Lewis

Now is the time to buy a house in Lakewood! As of March 24, 2007, the local Multiple Listing Service advertises 274 single-family homes, 159 multi-family properties, and 116 condominiums listed with real estate brokers. Choices are excellent!

The benefits of home ownership are many—opportunity to build equity, potential for tax advantages, a hedge against inflation, and pride of ownership. Because real estate transactions can be complicated, the Ohio Division of Real Estate in its publication, “Home Buyer’s Guide,” suggests buyers may want to use the services of professionals such as licensed real estate agents, real estate appraisers, real estate attorneys, and qualified inspectors to advise on the details of a home purchase.

Licensed real estate agents who work with home buyers are required by law in the state of Ohio to present the Consumer Guide to Agency Relationship prior to providing any real

estate services on the buyer’s behalf. The Consumer Guide is not a contract between agent and buyer, but provides information to help buyers understand the role of real estate agents and brokers with whom they work.

When representing buyers, real estate agents have a fiduciary responsibility to act on the buyer’s behalf, in the buyer’s best interest. The agent must follow the buyer’s lawful instructions, be loyal to the buyer, disclose material facts, and maintain confidential information. The Consumer Guide provides detailed information on all of the agent’s responsibilities. It also defines other agency relationships that may result from working with the agent.

The complicated nature of the home-buying process makes it important to understand who can help and what their responsibilities are. If you decide to work with a real estate agent, read the Consumer Guide to Agency Relationship and ask questions so you have a better understanding of how representation can benefit you.

A Village “Takes Flight”

by Val Mechenbier

In 1894, lacking a streetcar line to bring their workers from Cleveland to the factory in a timely and reliable way, the National Carbon Company at the corner of W. 117th and Madison (now GrafTech International Ltd.) created the Pleasant Hill Land Company subsidiary which built homes for

workers on 424 small lots in the southeast corner of ‘Rockport’. The street names Lark, Plover, Quail, Robin, and Thrush, chosen for indigenous birds in the area, are what give this unique neighborhood the name “Birdtown”. In 2006, the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board recommended that Birdtown be listed on the National Register of Historic Places!

Realty Reality: Questions from our Observer Readers

by Maggie Fraley

Observer Online question from DM of Lakewood: “Does a home that has good wiring, but is still on a fuse-box diminish the sale value?”

When Buyers look at several homes in the same price range they naturally compare, especially updates, including kitchens, baths,

furnaces, roofs, windows, plumbing and electrical systems. So a home that has a fuse box could be of less value when compared to a similar, but updated home. But, is it the only improvement needed or are there many? What determines value is multi-layered. Market research and analysis is needed plus a thorough evaluation of your individual home.

Lakewood Real Estate Information (According to Multiple Listing Service) by Andy Tabor		
FEBRUARY	2006	2007
Condominium Closed	7	4
Condominium Pending (Under Contract)	3	5
Commercial Closed	2	0
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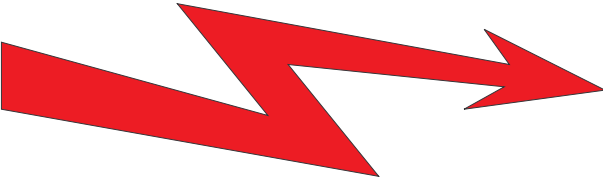
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