

THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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

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Rocky River Pit Bull Politics Barks Up Wrong Tree

Rocky River Starts A Dog Fight With Lakewood

by Tim Kanak

Rocky River has no tolerance for ‘man’s best friend.’ The city filed a lawsuit against the city of Lakewood over the Lakewood Dog Park on July 20th. Several residents of High Parkway, which is above The Rocky River Reservation of the Cleveland Metro Parks, have continuously complained to their city council to stifle the dog park.

Nothing has been said about the fact that these same residents live more than 500 feet from the dog park and are actually closer to Interstate-90. The suit alleges that the dog park is solely responsible for the noise levels from the dogs’ barking, and the smell of the park. There is no mention of the wastewater-treatment plant and its foul odor, or the noise coming from constant traffic on I-90 or the planes repeatedly taking off from the Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.

Rocky River resident Bill Welsh had much to say of this impending legal action. “I go to the city council meetings on a regular basis and these individuals that are involved in the lawsuit are constantly complaining about one thing or another. If they aren’t complaining about the dog park, they’re talking about the noise coming from the trains and planes. They have come to the point that they want to initiate a ‘Quiet Zone’ in the city.”

Welsh described how these few residents have taken it upon themselves to wage a battle with the city of Lakewood in order to shut the park down. They have

at least one person on their side, Ward 3 City Councilman Frank Gollinger, who just happens to be running for mayor. Gollinger has been pushing for the park to be closed for ‘quite a while now,’ says Welsh. “These people have actually told the council that they sit in their backyards and count the number of times the dogs bark and the planes fly overhead. As far as I am concerned they need to get a life,” stated Welsh.

Rocky River and Lakewood residents alike seem to agree. “There are more important things to worry about than dogs barking. Get over it already. What’s the difference between the dog noise levels and that of the children screaming and playing at the city parks? The kids are actually louder I think,” said RR resident Leanne Galla, whose Beagle/ Pug mix, Lilly, regularly attends the park. “What’s next, do they want to shut the city parks down and ban the children?” she continued.

Rocky River’s own website has an area title ‘Pet Owner’s Guide.’ In it they say there are two key words in being a pet owner; Registration & Responsibility. Do these residents, that are at odds over the supposed noise from the dog park, realize that just as many RR residents attend the park as do LKWD residents’ do? Lakewood residents Chad Bray and Sarah Luikart, along with the dogs Buster, Sable and Moxie, point out that the residents of other cities such as Bay Village, Avon, Avon Lake and others make the drive to the park weekly. “We meet people from all over that

come here so the dogs can have a place to play. They pick up after their pets and are very responsible,” says Bray.

There will be a hearing in front of Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas Judge Carolyn B. Friedman on August 15th. Attorneys for both cities are expected to attend.

Multiple attempts to reach several of the complainants, Michael and Carol Buddie and Lynn Merriman, as well as the Mayor and Law Department of Rocky River were not returned.

Thomas D. Corrigan, the Lakewood Assistant Law Director, says “We are fil-

ing a Motion to Dismiss, under Civil Rule 12-B-6, which states that the city has an opportunity to seek a motion of dismissal of a complaint where it fails to state claim upon which relief may be granted.” In other words, as a matter of law Lakewood is immune from suit for its operation of a city park because it is a governmental function.

Perhaps one Lakewood resident put it best. Julia Tozser, stated “there must be a better way to handle this situation. This just seems petty and extreme.” I am sure the dogs probably feel the same way.

Starry Night & Art Festival Gallery Pages 10-11



Left to right, Keith and Anna Jaworski of North Royalton were guests of Ruthie Davis and LO Advisory Board member Steve Davis. “You live in a great community here, Lakewood.” said Keith, “It’s nice to see people so involved.”

A Lesson Learned Too Late - Time To Pay The Piper

by Tim Kanak

The Lakewood Music Boosters (LMB) and students have finally been vindicated. Former LMB Treasurer, Kenneth Gilbert, was sentenced to a year in the Lorain Correctional Facility in Grafton by Judge Timothy E. McMonagle on Wednesday, July 25th. This will be a lesson to all those would-be and current volunteers who have stolen or consider stealing from a non-profit organization.

Mary Bond, the current President of LMB, was thrilled with the outcome: “Volunteer organizations are, on the whole, way too susceptible to activity of this nature. We are seeing this all over Northeast Ohio: Westlake, Strongsville, Eastlake, etc. Those criminals were just the ones that were caught. Recently, a Girl Scout leader in Delaware, Ohio stole \$5,000.00 from

the cookie fund. Deplorable.” Bond went on to say, “This is justice. He had over a year to make an attempt at restitution. We were promised payment over and over. He has yet to pay one dime.” Gilbert has closed his family business and the sale of the building he owns, once housing Gilber Publishing, Inc., will close within weeks.

Gilbert was made Treasurer in June 2004 and, according to the documents presented to the Lakewood Police and the Court of Common Pleas, he began writing checks to himself and his businesses almost immediately. He continued doing so over the course of the next two years as Treasurer. All told, Gilbert stole upwards of \$90,000 in that span of time. By the time it was discovered, the LMB bank balance was down to barely two thousand dollars.

Volunteer organizations, such as the LMB, routinely have events

throughout the year to raise funds for various causes. According to Bond, “if there is cash coming in, there is someone stealing it.” Bond and other members of the Music Boosters rewrote their bylaws to counteract the possibility of this situation recurring. “Non profit organizations should take the proper steps to ensure this doesn’t happen to them if it hasn’t already,” said Bond.

Several key points stand out in the re-written bylaws, including provisions covering the necessity of securing a non-profit institutional bonding policy; allowing for the removal of an officer who is failing to fulfill his/her duties; and requiring that financial statements be presented at meetings and bank statements made available, non-budgeted expenditures be voted upon by the membership, and that two

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Events & Notices

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

LCPI Holds Cornhole Tournament

by Mary Anne Crampton

Lakewood Community Progress Inc. (LCPI) hosts Lakewood’s 1st Annual Cornhole Tournament on Saturday, August 11 starting at 9 a.m. The event will be held at the parking lot located at the corner of Mathews and Detroit in the West End Entertainment District.

Proceeds from the tournament will benefit LCPI, the nonprofit, 501-c(3) community development corporation in Lakewood. LCPI is the oversight organization for Main Street Lakewood, a program of the Nation Preservation Trust to revitalize historic downtown areas. Main Street Lakewood activities include Clean-Up Crawl, Lakewood Walks Main Street, Light Up Lakewood, and advocacy work on behalf of downtown merchants, building owners and all Lakewood residents who value a vibrant, inviting and safe downtown area.

Participants must register by Wednesday, August 8th and be 16 yrs. of age or older. Cost is \$50 per two-player team. A minimum of four games per team is guaranteed in this flighted tournament. Rules can be downloaded from www.americancornholeassociation.com.

Registration forms can be found at Geiger’s-Lakewood or at Around the Corner or they can be downloaded from their websites: www.shopgeigers.com or www.atccafe.com. A last-minute in-person reg-

istration session will be held at Around the Corner from 6p.m.- 8 p.m. on August 8th. Checks should be made out to LCPI.

Food and drink will be available for purchase by players and spectators.

First place prize is \$500; second place is \$250 and third place finishers will receive \$100.

Along with Around the Corner and Geiger’s-Lakewood, event sponsors include: The Lakewood Observer, Sweet Designs, City of Lakewood, Lakewood Chamber of Commerce, David Estrop, Laskey CPA and Computer Systems Development Services. The volunteer tournament committee includes: Leslie Favre, Ed Favre, Mickey



Krivosh; Suzanne Metelko, Mikelann Rensel and David Shaw.

A great time will be had by all.....get your team together and join in the fun!

Lakewood Walks Main Street

by Mary Anne Crampton

Celebrate health! Celebrate Lakewood! Join in as Lakewood Walks Main Street on Wednesday, August 22!

Main Street Lakewood, in collaboration with Lakewood Hospital and the City of Lakewood’s Division of Human Services, encourages all Lakewood residents and workers to make walking part of their everyday routine by exploring Lakewood’s Main Street on Wednesday, August 22, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Grab a friend, your family members or simply get out of your own chair and experience the benefits of a walk in downtown Lakewood. You will surely see someone you know, and most likely learn something you didn’t about the breadth of services available in our Main Street District. Main Street Lakewood is defined as the business district along Detroit Ave. from Arthur Ave. to Bunts Rd.

Participants who check-in with all of our walking partners will be eligible

for great prizes from local merchants. Walkers who complete the two-mile route double their chances of winning.

Walkers may enter the route at any point along Detroit Ave. Look for Lakewood Hospital balloons marking our walking partner stops. Registration forms will be available from any of the walking partners on the day of the event:

One-Mile Walking Partners

- Blue Onion Take-Out and Catering
- Déjà vu
- Geiger’s Clothing & Sports
- Hixson’s Flowers
- Lakewood Hospital
- Professional Building - Tent
- Winking Lizard

Two-Mile Walking Partners

- Blue Onion Take-Out and Catering
- Déjà vu
- Geiger’s Clothing & Sports
- Hixson’s Flowers
- Lakewood Hospital

Professional Building - Tent

- Lakewood Public Library - Circulation Desk
- Lion and Blue
- Souper Market
- Winking Lizard

This is a “rain or shine” event. Spread the good word about good things happening in walkable Lakewood. We look forward to seeing friends, neighbors and colleagues in downtown Lakewood on August 22!

I Walk for A Living, I Walk for A Cure

by Carman Bernazoli

We are down to the last few weeks prior to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer 3 day walk. This is a great opportunity for you to help us raise more funds.

Many generous merchants have donated gift certificates and services to make a wonderful wellness basket. These businesses include: 4 Chefs Food Products, Sweet Designs Chocolatier, New Balance, Lakewood Massother-

apy, Fitness Edge, Changes Hair Salon, Golden Touch Jewelers, Goddess Blessed and Italian Creations. Wellness baskets are valued at \$500.00 each. A simple \$5.00 donation will enter you in the drawing. Starting the week of July 23, 2007, the basket will be on display at the Rego Brothers Market at 20267 Lake Rd., Rocky River. Simply let the cashier know you want to enter the drawing to win a basket. The drawing will be on August 15th, 2007. All donations go toward a great cause. Be part

of one of the biggest fund raising events that has come to Cleveland.

If you are interested in making an individual donation, you can mail it to P.O. Box 770573, in care of the 3-day. Give your name and address and I will send you a donation slip for tax purposes.

I would like to thank the Rego family and their employees for stepping up and helping make this fundraiser happen. Also, thanks to all the merchants who participated by supplying such great stuff for the gift baskets.

Lakewood Resident Needs The Community’s Help To Become Famous



by Barb McCann

Life-time Lakewood Resident Barbara McCann is a finalist in the Ohio Lottery’s Make Me Famous scratch-off ticket promotion. The “Make Me Famous, Make Me Rich” game show replaced Cash Explosion and airs on Saturday nights at 7:30. An audition tape was mailed in after her second chance ticket was drawn. The homemade tape was aired on the March 3rd show. Through an online community challenge voting competition, she became finalist number

five. There are nine other finalists from communities all over the state; Mentor, Cuyahoga Falls, and Akron are a few. The winner of the final vote will be co-host of the Saturday evening show and their community will be highlighted on the show. Voting begins after the 7:30 August 18 airing of the “Make me Famous, Make me Rich” show on Channel 5 and continues through Friday August 24. To view the audition tape and to help a Lakewood friend by voting online go to www.makemefamousmakemerich.com/talentsearch

THE

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Join the Discussion at: www.lakewoodobserver.com

LAKEWOOD CAR KULTURE SHOW



Saturday August 18th, 2007 • Show Hours 11:00am - 7:00pm

Registration Starts at 10:30am

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Lakewood City News

How We Formed a Neighborhood Watch for 2,000 Households and Businesses in Ward 3:

A Community-Based Effort

by Susan Kelley

“A neighborhood becomes stronger, safer, and cleaner when neighbors watch out for one another. Police and human service providers become more effective.” - M.L. Madigan, Council, Ward 4.

In late May of this year, a neighbor and I were discussing our area of Lakewood (Ward 3, south of Madison). There have been changes in our neighborhood that we are noticing, just as you probably are. Noise levels are higher and proceed later into the night, more people are speeding, there is more disregard for property, and more trash is sitting on people’s tree lawns a week before pickup. There are more and more stories from the neighborhood about these things happening, and some are downright serious!

A funny thing we noticed about a lot of the stories we had heard is that while a lot of people had seen suspicious or out-and-out illegal activity, they had not seen the proper authorities who could take action.

We realized that the City can’t be everywhere at all times and also that they can’t respond to our concerns if they aren’t aware of what we see...so...it was time. Time to form our own Block Watch and time for us to be part of the solution.

We knew about Block Watch from a discussion in the summer of 2006 with a community-policing officer and knew that Mary Louise Madigan had formed groups in her Ward.

We also realized that our street was not the only one in the neighborhood experiencing these changes and decided that we could do the entire neighborhood as easily as we could our street.

So, we went to City Hall and asked for the Block Watch package (readily available). We had discussions with Mary Louise Madigan who was very supportive and knowledgeable. She directed us to the Community Policing Officers and Terri Richards (Emergency Response Team Coordinator) to help us get started.

It’s a very simple process:

Work with the Community Policing Officers and Terri Richards to set a date for your meeting. Determine a location to have the meeting (either a residence or a public facility, such as a school gym). Put out a flyer announcing the meeting to your neighbors. Optionally, you can do some research on-line for any supplemental material you deem valuable. Great supplemental material from City Departments (i.e., Refuse, Fire, Police, etc.) is available. The City’s website is another great source for Ordinance clarification.

Continue to work with the Community Policing Officers and Terri Richards refining any material you want to distribute and do a simple meeting Agenda. Hold your meeting - the Police Department has a great presentation. This is not a complaint meeting, this is an ACTION meeting! Have the neighbors who are willing to be part of Block Watch sign-up at this meeting. Find 1 or 2 individuals to be Street Captains (they will update participant lists, provide Block Watch information to new homeowners, act as a clearing house for concerns, and call the correct City Department for assistance if you are uncomfortable doing so).

The key elements in a successful Block Watch are: working with your neighbors to plan on how you as a group will deal with situations in your neighborhood; reporting activities that are suspicious to the proper City Department (i.e., Police, Fire, Building/Housing, Public Works, etc.); and informing your neighbors when something happens - a great way to do this would be a quarterly newsletter.

We ended up developing three handouts, which are now available to Lakewood residents through Community Policing or Terri Richards. You can modify these for your street or neighborhood situation.

Why was this done? Because my neighbor and I are your neighbors, who care about our neighborhood and care about our City.

The text of the general information handout follows:

Anyone can be a victim of a burglary, vandalism, or other crime. Despite our best efforts, we sometimes feel alone and vulnerable to crime. There is a viable protection tool

available - something residents in the community can do by banding together with their local law enforcement agencies to prevent crime before it happens. It is not a crystal ball; it is a Community Block Watch Program. It can be called Block Watch, Crime Watch, or Neighborhood Watch. Whatever the title, it’s one of the most effective and least costly methods of crime prevention and reduces the fear of crime. The Block Watch unites law enforcement, local organizations, and individuals in a community-wide effort to reduce residential crime and the fear of crime. To have a Block Watch, you do not have to be a victim of a residential burglary, assault, or robbery. Crimes like vandalism, damage to property, excessive noise, and traffic violations can be reduced through the Block Watch Program. In addition, developing neighborhood functions and general safety programs can also be part of the Block Watch Program. Thousands of Block Watch Programs have been established all over the country. Any resident can take part: young or old, single or married, renter or homeowner. Block Watch is a very successful anti-crime effort. It breaks down the isolation of neighbors as they work together to build a plan on how to deal with issues in their own neighborhoods. When something happens, neighbors will be informed. Block Watch members are NOT vigilantes. They are the extra eyes and ears for reporting crimes and helping their neighbors. Members learn how to make their homes more secure by watching out for each other’s homes and neighborhood. They report activities that raise their suspicions to the proper City Department (i.e., Police, Fire, Building/Housing, Public Works, etc.).

Cove United Methodist Church

PRESENTS

The 6th Annual NOAH'S ARK Bell Choir Service



Rarely in a lifetime
do you hear music so wonderful
that it stirs your very soul!
Share this moment
with your whole family!

Join us as the 11 member Cove United Methodist Church Bell Choir performs Noah and the Ark, composed by Tammy Waldrop and narrated by Kinzer Habecker. The one-hour service concludes with the Cove United Methodist Church Bell Choirs' postlude, a stirring performance of Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken by Joseph Haydn. Service performed by Rev. Jan Munsey Fischer.

"A spectacular performance..."

"...the Bell Choir stirs the soul!"

September 9, 2007

10:45 AM

12501 Lake Ave. • Lakewood, Ohio 44017 • 216-521-7424

Markling Clears Run For Board

by Tim Kanak

On July 27th, Matthew John Markling officially became the first individual to submit petitions to run for the Lakewood Board of Education with the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections. Markling was initially approach by Board President Linda Beebe to run for the school board.

Markling, a professor of law and a practicing attorney, has been a very active participant in the recent District initiatives addressing school climate and code of conduct. He is running for the School Board on a platform of academic excellence, school safety, and leadership.

Questions have been raised about Markling’s run for the board over possible conflicts of interest due to Markling’s association with the school board via his position within his law firm, McGowan & Markling Co., L.P.A. Markling stated that “It is true that my law firm and family will be financially impacted if I am elected because we cannot accept assignments after January 2008. However, I hope that this loss demonstrates the commitment my wife and I have to the District.”

McGowan & Markling have been providing legal services to the Lakewood Public School for many years.

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9 am to 9 pm

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Join the Discussion at: www.lakewoodobserver.com

Lakewood Public Library



On Wednesday, July 25, wizards and muggles gathered at the pavilion in Madison Park to celebrate the birthday of Harry Potter. The celebration was a little early as Harry's birthday is actually July 31 according to the books. Pictured above is Drew Sheldon who won the costume contest in the birth through five age range.



On July 20, Jungle Terry showcased 16 animals to 150 people at Lakewood Public Library's Madison Branch. While displaying his unusual pets, Jungle Terry excited, educated and inspired the crowd to view animals safely and read about them in books. Pictured here are ten small children holding a three-year-old albino python.

Friends of Lakewood Public Library Host August 11 Book Sale At Omni

by Paul Dimmick & Eileen Wilbourn

During the renovation of Main Library, the Friends of Lakewood Public Library have moved to Omni, the former Lake Erie Screw facility, at 13000 Athens Avenue. This is located in south-east Lakewood, across the street and south of Madison Park, between Halstead and Clarence Avenues. The book sales will continue every sixth Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Because of space constraints, there will be no magazines, records or other odds and ends. However, there will be a full selection of all other types of books and AV materials. Donations are still being graciously accepted. Small donations of books

may be taken to the Main and Madison Branches. For larger donations, please call the library at 216.226.8275 x 102 to make arrangements. If you have any questions or concerns, you can still contact the Friends through the library. We thank you for your support and patronage and hope that you will continue to support the book sales during this period of transition. In recent years, the income generated by the book sales has been used to fund numerous programs for children and adults. However, one of our more prominent purchases, made in 1990, was the Homeward Bound delivery van. In 2007-8, our most pressing ongoing project is to raise money to buy

a new library van. The current van has been in service long beyond its expected lifespan. We will return to the library in time for the Spring Book Sale on March 28 & 29, 2008. The new facilities will have expanded space and many improvements. In the mean time, please join us for our book sales at Omni, the former Lake Erie Screw Building. FRIENDS OF LAKEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

BOOK SALES AT OMNI (FORMER LAKE ERIE SCREW BUILDING):
Saturday, August 11, 2007
9AM-5PM
Saturday, September 22, 2007
9AM-5PM
Saturday, November 3, 2007
9AM-5PM
Saturday, December 8, 2007
9AM -5PM

Library Events Calendar

FAMILY WEEKEND WONDERS

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

Upcoming Themes: August 10, 11, & 12	
Lovely Letters, August 17, 18, & 19 Rhymin' Rhymes*	
Day	Time*
Friday	10:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	10:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m.
Sunday	2:00 p.m. In the Madison Branch auditorium

FRIENDS OF LAKEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY Book sale at Omni (former Lake Erie Screw building) 13000 Athens Avenue August 11, 2007 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

WHAT NOVEL IDEAS! Book discussions for students sixth through eighth grade.. Need to read before school begins? Choose from the following books and participate in book discussions designed to help with your summer reading assignments. Books must be read before the program to participate. To register, please stop in or call 216.226.8275 ext. 140

Tuesday, August 7	Son of the Mob by Gordon Korman
Thursday, August 9	Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief by Wendelin Van Draanen
Tuesday, August 14	When Zachary Beaver Came to Town by Kimberly Willis Holt
Thursday, August 16	Hole in My Life by Jack Gantos
7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at the Madison Branch	

FRIENDS OF LAKEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

BOOK SALE



SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 2007
9 A.M.—5 P.M.
AT THE "OMNI"
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Lakewood Opinion

Don't Raise Taxes, Just Collect Them!

by William George

There are some people in city government who want to increase income tax rates for our residents. For some time now, I have wanted to analyze the fiscal responsibility of the City of Lakewood. In examining the city budget and the latest census bureau report for demographic and economic information, what I found was very interesting. I compared Parma and Lakewood, since many demographics for the two cities are similar. The most recent audited financial statements (2005) show that the City of Lakewood collects approximately \$16.5 million a year in income tax. To give you some comparison, the City of Parma collects

almost twice that much, coming in at approximately \$32.3 million. Parma has approximately 85,000 residents, compared to 56,000 in Lakewood. Thus, the difference in population is 34%, while the difference in income tax collected is 49%, a net difference of 15%. To look at this differently, the average income tax dollar collected per capita in Parma is \$749 vs. \$497 per capita in Lakewood (even though average median income is almost identical for both cities).

I also examined income tax rates. Lakewood assesses 1.5%, with up to .5% credit for the "working city" (net 1%). Parma's rate is 2.5%, but awards a 2% credit for the "working city" (net .5%). The effective rate of city income tax for a resident of Lakewood work-

ing in Cleveland would be 1% vs .5% (half a percent) for a resident of Parma working in Cleveland. I was unable to draw any "hard" conclusions from this information since I could not determine the number of residents that work in their resident city vs. working in other cities. So why does Lakewood collect so much less in income tax?

Further examination of the two cities' budgets reveals some interesting facts. Keep in mind that this information is for the fiscal year 2005, the latest currently available. Parma has a budget of roughly \$70 million, compared to \$66m in Lakewood. Virtually all of the revenue sources are the same. For both cities, six revenue sources make up approximately 98% of all revenue:

"Grants and Entitlements"; "Charges for Services"; "Operating Grants and Contributions"; "Investment Earnings"; "Property Taxes"; and "Income Taxes". These revenue sources seem proportionally appropriate, with the exceptions of "Charges for Services", "Property Taxes", and, as discussed above, "Income Taxes". Charges for services includes business-type activities, for which Parma collects only \$1m vs \$14m for Lakewood. Regarding property taxes, Parma collects \$9.5m vs. \$13.7m for Lakewood. This is very disproportionate considering Lakewood has 26,000 residential units compared to 35,000 in Parma. This is not surprising, since Lakewood is the 10th-highest property-taxed community (out of 81) in Cuyahoga County. But "Property Tax" and "Charges for Services" are discussions I'll save for another time. The huge disparity in "Income Tax" revenue as mentioned in the first paragraph is my main focus for now.

Median household income is almost identical for both cities, coming in at \$43,000 for Parma and \$40,000 for Lakewood. However, the population distribution is much different in the "renter" category, that being the population between the ages of 25 and 34. Twenty percent of Lakewood's population lies in this category, vs. 13% for Parma. I was interested in our current method of tax payer identification, so I called the income tax department and was told that there is no "effective" way to identify these individuals at the present time. I disagree. Aside from potential use of state databases for cross-checking against state tax filings, a simple solution would be to require landlords to turn in a "tenant" form every year as part of their application for their annual license. I'm a landlord of seven rental units and would have no problem doing this. But for some reason, administrators decided it would be easier to raise taxes rather than collect them. I also asked the tax department how many people filed income tax returns for 2006. I was told "between 28,000 and 30,000". But according to the census, there are over 33,000 Lakewood residents in the work force. Conservatively, I'm assuming that all of these individuals live and work in Lakewood and would be paying only 1% net. I'll also use the median family income less 25%, assuming these individuals have lower-paying jobs. Based on these conservative calculations, there is potentially \$900,000 and \$1,500,000 tax dollars uncollected from 2006.

Our property taxes are already among the highest in the county. There are over 740 homes for sale in Lakewood. Are we going to attract buyers for these homes by raising income taxes? I think not. Don't raise our taxes before you figure out how to collect them. It is not fair that people live in our city and use our services but don't pay for them like the rest of us.

A Lesson Learned Too Late continued from page 1...

unrelated members man each cash box at fundraising events.

The Lakewood Music Boosters support over six thousand music students in Lakewood schools, K-12. Many of those students rely solely upon organizations such as the LMB to be able to play an instrument, receive music lessons, attend band camps, and fund trips to regional or state music events. The money raised comes from several outlets, such as spaghetti dinners, various orchestral concerts, and booths strate-

gically placed at popular events. Also, the students themselves go out and raise money from community supporters.

One parent of an orchestral student, who asked not to be identified, said that "this whole situation is a mess. Why should people continue to give money if some (expletive) is gonna steal it?" He has a point.

There were 19 Lakewood residents representing the students at the hearing, comprised of members of the LMB and Lakewood City School teachers and administrators. Gilbert had only the support of his wife, Ann, and one

of his three children. They sat stoic and emotionless throughout the proceedings. Among the many supporters from Lakewood, a few had an opportunity to address the court and Gilbert.

Past LMB President, Lauren Mueller, who was president during the time Gilbert began his pilfering of the monies, had much to say. "While Mr. Gilbert was Treasurer, he pretended he was our... pretended he had the same vested interest in the goals of our group. He came to meetings every month with financial statements which were his version of the truth, but in reality they were full of lies. But, because he was a parent, like the rest of us, he had our complete trust, while he violated [us] in the most egregious way."

Beth Hankins, the Lakewood Orchestra Director for the past 17 years, pleaded with Judge McMonagle. "Your honor, teachers are always searching for what we call 'a teachable moment.' Today we have before us the opportunity to write the end of this story that will be shared over and over again, not only presently but also in the future when these six thousand students become adults. How will they share this story?"

Mary Bond was the last to address the court. She began, "The true victims of this crime are all who volunteered their time and efforts on behalf of the students. That includes all the hard work by the students themselves. Sadly, in a way, I suppose Mr. Gilbert actually stole from his own children as well." Bond became emotional several times while referring to the effort of all those involved, which seemingly came to a screeching halt by the actions of a thieving and deceptive Gilbert.

David Estrop, the Superintendent of Lakewood City School District, was pleased with the outcome. "We were happy to assist the boosters with their troubles. Although we have no official relationship, we are both looking out for the students. This is just a very sad case. It is important to point out that even though they faced these problems, they did a lot right and wasted no time in their attempt to make things right. I applaud Mary and the other leaders for acting so quickly and so strongly."

The music boosters did recoup approximately \$65,000 from their bonding company. Travelers, no thanks to Gilbert.

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Lakewood Schools & Sports

Campers Learn To Make Peace

by Kay Kulma

Trinity Lutheran Church and Faith Lutheran Church held their annual summer Peace Camp the week of July 9 at Faith. The theme for Peace Camp this year was, “Listen, God is calling.”

Each afternoon at Peace Camp was dedicated to learning about peace-making. Campers were taught about conflict resolution and how to deal with bullies. Five counselors from Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in Ohio were brought in to lead the camp, including traditional activities such as crafts, music, Bible studies and games. Other activities included a trip to the park, water day and hearing screenings by the parish nurse.

On Thursday night of camp week, parents of the campers were invited to a special evening program at Faith. Campers had the opportunity to show their parents what they had learned all week. Counselors led everyone in songs, and groups of campers wrote and performed skits to showcase their new peacemaking skills.

During the week, campers also took time to help the Lakewood Christian Service Center. The Center provides food and assistance to needy



Children playing a game at the park during Peace Camp

Lakewood residents and families. Campers went out in the neighborhood and asked for food donations. Peace Camp collected almost 20 bags

of food for the Center.

Peace Camp is a yearly summer event for Faith and Trinity. If you would like to enroll your elementary-

age child in Peace Camp for next year or your middle school-age child as a helper, please contact Trinity (216-226-8087) or Faith (216-226-6500).

Ironsister

by Eileen Dixon

Coleen Barta of Columbia Station, Ohio—sister of longtime Lakewood resident Eileen Dixon, wife and mother of four boys—completed the IRON-MAN triathlon on June 24 in Coeur d’Lene, Idaho, with a total time of 14 hours, 30 minutes and 39 seconds.

Her goal was to complete the race by the age of 40 and cross the finish line by the cutoff at midnight. She finished around 9:30 p.m. looking fresh as a daisy while her support crew, sister Eileen, niece Chelsea and cousin Maggie, cheered her on.

Barta trained for the 2.5 mile swim in local area pools and Lake Erie for nine months. It was her best swim ever in the choppy Coeur d’Lene Lake, with winds blowing up to 30 miles per hour. She prepared

for the biking leg of the triathlon in the comfort of her home for up to 8 hours at a time, using a trainer while listening to music or watching movies. This allowed her to tackle the rolling foothills of the mountains for 112 miles. Training for the 26 mile marathon by running through inclement weather in the Rocky River valley primed her for the last leg of the race through the town of Coeur d’ Lene. “It was my faith that carried me through,” said Barta.

Lakewood Grad Heads To Germany

by David Conner

With a degree in politics and German, Greer Connor will put her negotiating skills to work as an au pair with a busy professional family in Berlin, Germany.

A Lakewood High School graduate in 2001, Connor received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Ithaca College with magna cum laude honors this spring. During her college career, she interned at the Lakewood and Washington offices of U.S. Representative Dennis Kucinich, and the Center for American Progress in Washington, D.C.

Connor expects to enjoy her second stay in Germany, having spent a year there for voluntary church work following high school. “It’s a break



from the books—a chance to reconnect with friends made in 2002. It’s an adventure,” she tells friends.

In Berlin, she’ll care for the four children of Almut and Armand Gruntuch, who are partners in an architectural practice. Their son and three daughters are between 5-12 years old. Perhaps Connor will be called “UberNanny.”



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Lakewood Sports

Lakewood's Best Kept Secret

by Joe Ott

What Lakewood High School athletic team is one of the most successful in Ohio Statewide competitions? Which one ranked fourth in 2006 in the Ohio coaches poll? What team qualified for participation in regional races for the last 20 consecutive years? What Lakewood High School team has won 35 Lake Erie League titles, which no other team has matched?

What sport receives little recognition in the public media or from its peers for its successes?

The answer to all of the above is: the Lakewood High School Boys Cross Country Team.

The boys team, consisting of some 30 athletes, train and compete from August through November each year. The goal at the beginning of each season is to qualify for the season-ending state meet in November, and the team has accomplished it seven of the last 11 years.

The team has been coached by Rick Ventura, a University of Oklahoma graduate, since 1997. A long-time runner himself, he's known to be dedicated to teaching his runners well with a carefully-drawn, season-long training plan.

Seasonal training begins with



Mass start

six runs per week featuring hard but manageable workouts consisting of daily runs up to 10 miles in length. The workouts vary in length and speed and typically take place on the bridle path beginning at Mastick Park in the Rocky River Reservation of the Metro Parks, which provides varying conditions including hills and uneven terrain commonly found at meets.

Other common training routes are from the High School to Lakewood

Park and to or from Lakewood Park to Edgewater Park and back.

The boys team usually competes in 11 5K (3.1 miles) races during the season. These races occur every weekend from the end of August to the first weekend of November, regardless of the weather. The race courses are in northern Ohio and New York in city parks or around school campuses, but never on a stadium track. The state championships, held in November at Scioto Downs in Columbus, start and end inside the horse race track in front of the stadium.

Meets typically start with a mass start in a field and quickly narrow down to a single lane path that can be anything from grassy to muddy tree root strewn paths. Twisted ankles, sprains, and season-ending injuries are not uncommon. Runners wear cross country shoes that have a series of spikes on the sole. Another common injury is being spiked by other runners.



Above: Coach Ventura provides pre-meet pep talk

The runners often find themselves racing in snow, sleet, through mud and puddles, and often in rain -- all of which adds immeasurably to the difficulty and hardship they endure.

Spectating itself is a tough sport. Spectators, typically family members, are forced to endure the same conditions as the athletes. To get good vantage points, spectators are sometimes forced to do a little hiking through the woods.

The athletes accomplish their races with little public attention and recognition and support, and without cheering crowds typical of more common stadium-based ball-and-stick sports. However, in the end they enjoy and understand their accomplishment.

This year the L.H.S. Cross Country Team will be competing in a new league with some new stiff competition. I encourage everyone to attend a cross country meet this fall and cheer on these dedicated Lakewood Ranger Cross Country athletes.



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Lakewood Sports

Bend It Like Blades

Lakewood Man Pursuing Soccer Dream At Northwestern

by Mike Deneen

As you probably know, English soccer star David Beckham moved to the US this summer to join US-based Major League Soccer (MLS). The arrival of the handsome star and his former Spice Girl wife has turned lots of Americans, including many here in Lakewood, into overnight soccer fans. However, soccer had already been a lifelong love for many Lakewood residents. One such Lakewoodite is Mark Blades, who is currently a sophomore on the Northwestern University team.

Blades, who moved to Lakewood as an infant with his family, began playing soccer in his yard at the age of three. He played in Lakewood recreation leagues as a child, and then played on the Lakewood traveling team with kids his age and one year older. At around that time he started playing for Ohio Premier, a leading club in the area. He then moved on to play for Internationals and then finally ended up at Cleveland Soccer Academy. Lakewood has had a strong tradition in soccer for many years, something he believes helped to develop his skills. "Lakewood has a good rec program and also a lot of kids play soccer in Lakewood, so I think the volume of kids adds to the level of play," says Blades.

Blades played his high school soccer at St. Ignatius, where he led the team to back-to-back state titles his junior and senior years. Ignatius finished the 2005 season, Blades' senior year, ranked the number one team in the entire nation. In addition, he was named Ohio Player of the Year. However, it is his junior year that he remembers most fondly. "The highlight of my career was winning the first state championship my junior year because my brother and my two best friends were on that team with me." Mark's older brother Gavin, who began playing in the same Lakewood yard, is now playing Division I college ball at Yale.

When it was time for Mark to decide on a college to attend, he had plenty of options. He chose to attend Northwestern University in suburban Chicago. "I decided to play at NU



Mark Blades on the pitch at NU.

because it is a great combination of athletics and academics. On the athletics side, you get to play in the Big Ten and play against teams like Indiana and Ohio State. Then on the academics side I get to attend one of the best academic universities in the country."

Blades started all 22 games for the Wildcats during his freshman season of 2006. The transition to Division I college athletics is a difficult one in any sport, and soccer is no exception. "The college game is a lot faster and a lot more physical than the high school game," says Blades. "The speed of play is a lot faster in college and at the same time the game is a lot rougher." Mark

smoothly made the transition, earning a place on the Big Ten All-Freshman team. He quickly impressed the coaches with his ferocious tackling and intense competitive drive. Mark's play helped Northwestern to earn a spot in the NCAA tournament, something the program had only achieved once before in its history. The team then won three consecutive tournament games, including a win over traditional power St. Louis University in St. Louis. The team reached the "Elite Eight", the best finish ever for a Northwestern men's soccer squad.

NU head coach Tim Lenahan points to Blades as an important contributor. "Mark has emerged as one

of the top left backs in the Big Ten," says Lenahan, "He showed his versatility last year when we moved him to right midfield where he did a great job in leading us to an NCAA quarter-final appearance. He has emerged as one of the true leaders on our team in spite of just being a sophomore. It is no surprise that every team on which he participates, be it St. Ignatius, the Chicago Magic or Northwestern, seems to achieve unprecedented success."

The future seems very bright for Blades. NU is returning a lot of talent to this year's team, and Blades' goal is to win the Big Ten title and make another strong tournament run in 2007. Off the field, he has yet to declare a major at NU, but is leaning toward psychology. After he graduates in three years, he hopes to play soccer professionally. "It is has always been my dream to play soccer professionally and I am going to do everything I can to make that dream a reality."

If Blades plays in the MLS in 2010, he could be playing on the same field with the aforementioned Beckham. So what does a longtime soccer lover think of US BeckhamMania? "I think Beckham coming to the US is awesome for American soccer and I am excited about his arrival," says Mark, "I think he will do great things for soccer in this country and it seems that everybody is excited about him, which is great."

All-Day Charity Baseball Game, August 11th At LHS Stadium

by Ivor Karabatkovic

An all-day fundraiser baseball game will be played on Saturday, August 11th at Lakewood High School Baseball Stadium. Come join LHS Baseball Alumni and the Lakewood Recreation Department for a whole day of the summer game that will raise money for a great athletic program and will bring smiles to everybody's faces.

Eric Converse, a LHS Alumni who graduated this June, organized the event for kids 14 years of age and above.

"This event will be a fun-filled day of baseball that will be enjoyable for everyone," Converse said. The event

will start at 10 a.m. on "The Turf" at Lakewood High School and will go all day. Participants can sign up at the Lakewood Recreation Department on Warren Rd. or by calling the Recreation Department. Also, registration tables will be set up at the stadium for the first hour of the event to sign up that day.

A \$10 registration fee allows participants to play all day and includes a commemorative T-Shirt. Players decide for themselves whether to donate pledges for every inning or hour played.

Sign up your kids (14 years old and up) today. The player with the highest pledged amount will be awarded an Autographed Baseball that the Cleve-



land Indians Charities kindly donated to this event. There will be Indians tickets given away for other high pledges, along with other great items.

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Lakewood Hospital's Starry Night Event and

Photos by: David Lay, Ivor K



John O'Neil dances with his daughter Claire.



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Arts Festival

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Karabatkovic, Rhonda Loje



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The Herbal Harvest:

A Thymely Discussion

Jeff Endress

It is August. The garden has been yielding its bounty. The greens have been a part of the menu for a three (or more) months, the broccoli, squash and cucumbers came forth last month and are now being joined by the eggplants, peppers and tomatoes. There is nothing as enjoyable as savoring the fresh flavors of just-picked, garden-ripened vegetables. But with the abundance, there comes a problem. Even after we've shared our bounty with friends, co-workers and neighbors, there is still much left over. How best to save that goodness for a rainy, or better yet, snowy day? We'll have time in a future issue of the Observer to discuss what to do with all that produce, all those vegetables. For now, let's focus on something that I consider a bit more timely.

Every accomplished cook knows the huge culinary benefits that are reaped when freshly grown produce is used in recipes. Beyond the produce itself is the significant enhancement that is provided by fresh herbs. Many of us have small kitchen herb gardens where we can snip off a bit of basil, rosemary or oregano. Given a bright sunny spot, a good early-morning soak-

ing, these little patches of flavor can be prodigious indeed. But, care must be taken. A wonderfully lush cilantro can bolt, and go to seed overnight (and now you have coriander). All herbs are best before they bloom and begin producing seed. It is important to snip back those blooms. We don't generally think of our herbs in the same way as our tomatoes. Sure, we snip as needed, but many times the bulk of the herb harvest never gets harvested. The productive herb garden will yield a great deal more than a snip or two. One needs to be fairly aggressive and do some significant pruning. Unlike picking a cuke, it is only through cutting the plant that we realize our harvest. How can we best preserve these unused cuttings for future use? Now is the thyme to do so, while the flavors are still savory.

Preserving herbs does present some challenges. The most common means of preservation is drying, but it is that very process that causes the huge difference you experience between store bought, dried hers and fresh. The process of drying means the evaporation of the water within the plant. And as that process occurs, essential

oils, together with their more-pronounced flavors, are diminished, if not lost altogether. And it seems that the more delicate the herb, the more pronounced the loss. Certainly drying is an option. It is certainly easy and does preserve at least a portion of the flavors from our summer herbs. Tied bunches of herbs should be hung and allowed to dry, the leaves then stripped from the stems, and placed in heavy freezer bags and frozen or refrigerated until needed. A food dehydrator can speed the process a bit. But, although this is perhaps an adequate method, the flavor loss is still troubling. And there are other options.

With other garden produce, freezing would be the obvious answer. And some herbs, such as parsley and chives, hold up to freezing very well. But freezing most fresh herbs has the same impact as the first frost. Once bright green and vibrant, the basil becomes an unappetizing goo. There are, however, some preparations which can be implanted to allow for successful herbal freezing. I had previously written about making a pesto (not limited to basil) and freezing the product in ice cube trays. I have also had some good results in making what amounts to herbal popsicles, adding water or broth to the food processor and chopping up the herbs, much as one would do for a

pesto, but without the oil. The resulting liquid can again be frozen in ice cube trays for future use.

Another good way to preserve those summer fresh flavors is to preserve the herbs in good quality, extra virgin olive oil. This can be done as a mélange, a mixture of complimentary herbs, or a singular preparation. Herbs with an oiliness to them, such as rosemary, work particularly well preserved in oil. It is important that the herbs have been well washed all moisture removed. Water and oil do not mix, of course, and the presence of stray water from the washing can result in unwanted bacteria or mold growth. The oil itself can be used in cooking, or as a dipping oil for crusty baguettes, but the preserved herb is also quite useful in soups and sauces during the cold winter months.

Whether you choose to dry, freeze or immerse your herbal harvest in oil isn't really the issue. The quest here is to preserve, in one form or another, the flavors of the herbs that you have been snipping at all summer. And while you continue to take a fresh snip here or there as required by your daily culinary needs, don't hesitate to take a more aggressive stance with your healthy herbs and harvest some of that foliage for future use. After all, the thyme is now!



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Help us celebrate *A Century of Touching Lives* by joining us for a free concert on Saturday, August 18, beginning at 1 p.m. at the Lakewood Park band shell.

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Ragtime and jazz music | Bob Gatewood and Calabash – 3:45 p.m.
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Swing music | Rock Shop – 5 p.m.
Music from the ‘80s and beyond |

Pulse Of The City

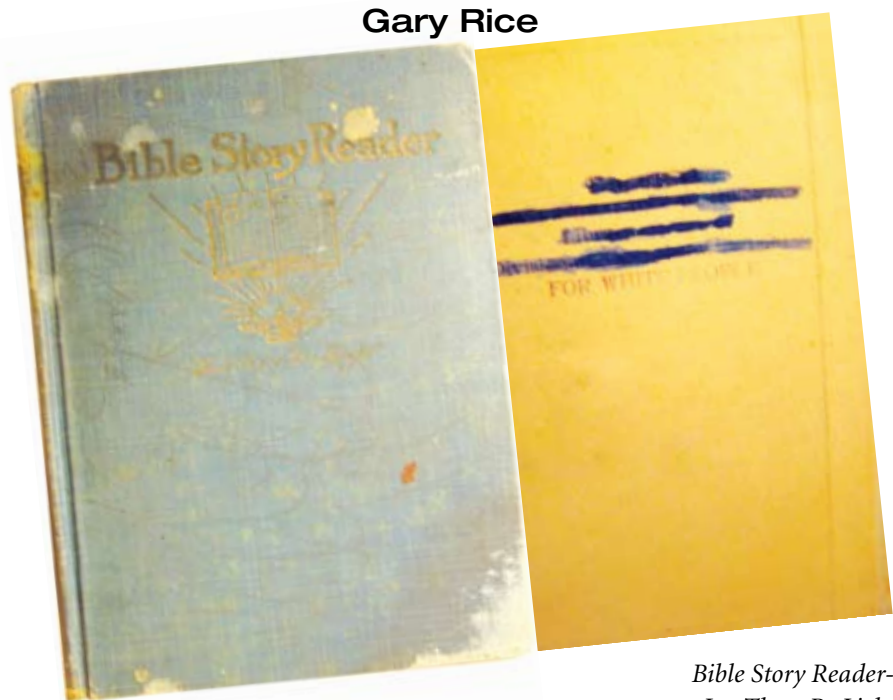
Historical Objects Raise Complex Questions

Ever go to a flea market or a yard sale? These are fantastic places to find a virtual cornucopia of items you won't see at the local mall. I've been a history buff ever since my childhood. Once in awhile at one of these sales, an object pops up that directly relates to my historical interests. At that point, it usually goes home with me.

For many of us, historical stuff is "boring." But it can be controversial, as well. In the past twenty or so years, there have been lively discussions in historical circles as to what to include in the history curricula of our public schools. During the time of the "Cold War" 1950's, when America was fighting Communism, historical emphasis was on patriotic and citizenship-related historical events and people. More recently, there has been a move away from the "dead white men" aspect of historical study, to include more contributions by women and minorities.

While we certainly will always engage in the discussion of what, exactly, should be included in the public school day, we know very well what, or rather Who, has been taken out of it: God. As you all know, that's been a hot-button issue--perhaps THE hot-button issue of our times.

That issue was possibly THE gal-



Bible Story Reader-
Let There Be Light
Inside front cover "For White People"

vanizing bond of the new American conservative movement. It also helped the Religious Right to define their own mission in no uncertain terms. The discussion of God and public schools continues to this day.

Several 1962-3 landmark Supreme Court cases ended mandatory Bible readings and prayers in the public schools. These cases drew lines of clear

separation between Church and State. While it is often believed that prior to these decisions religion was fairly common in the schools, the truth is that many states had discontinued Bible readings or prayer in the school day by the time those cases were decided.

Still, in the communities where the Bible and prayers were offered, those case resolutions caused a world of controversy and resistance. They helped to ignite a discussion about alleged Supreme Court "activism" that also continues to this day.

That brings me to these pictures and to the title of this column. It's a little book that I found while rummaging through the castaways of some flea market or garage sale many years ago.

What you're looking at is a discon-

tinued 1920 public school book from a southern state. It is titled "Bible Story Reader." As you would expect, it contains many of the most popular Bible stories from both the Old and New Testaments. It includes a vocabulary section. It speaks, of course, of the Love of God...and it did so in the public schools back when this practice was permissible.

I'll leave it up to you, my readers, as to how you feel about whether we should put some religious activities back into the school day. That's not the point of this column. We can debate the pros and cons of that one at another time.

No, there's a second point to be considered here. Once in awhile, comments seem to come along expressing some fear of the way our city might be going. Sometimes that fear appears to have been expressed with not-too subtle references to certain elements coming into Lakewood.

Sometimes, it seems that some people even feel that racism is a thing of the past, or perhaps even an irrelevant issue today. Some even seem to feel that the cry of racism has been overused at times.

Well, we might take a little closer look at that Bible Story Reader (by the way, having the sub-title "Let There Be Light"). You know...that book about God's Love... You see? On the inside front cover, below something that's been scratched out... There it is...FOR WHITE PEOPLE, stamped with capital letters. By whom, we do not know.

It's so sad to think that some here in Lakewood seem to wonder why people continue to be concerned about prejudice...



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Lakewood Perspective

The Rules of Engagement

Bret Callentine

I really didn't want to do this, however, with the politicians ramping-up their campaigns, I definitely want to say my piece before the Hollywood "B-listers" once again undertake their verbal assault on my answering machine.

So far, the closest we've come to any real issue is whether or not Hillary can beat Obama in the Iowa Caucuses' swimsuit competition. But, before the races really heat up, I thought I would fire a warning shot across the bow of the political campaign machines. And this goes for local politicians as well. If you want my vote, you absolutely, positively must be well-educated, well-prepared and especially well-spoken.

Lost are the days of getting a direct answer to a direct question. Gone are the straightforward explanations of a candidate's political aims or personal goals. But what really drives me crazy is the complete and utter disregard that most candidates have for the true art of debate. Unfortunately, far too many politicians have given up sawing the budget in half and instead prefer to perfect their capacity to deceive, practicing the art of misdirection using flashy props or scantily clad assistants.

It's bad enough when a candidate deliberately dodges the question, but worst amongst the evils of political prestidigitation is the logical fallacy. You may not be familiar with the terminology but we all know how the arguments go. With the Latin translation compliments

of the Cal State Northridge website, here are a couple of the most used...

Argumentum ad hominem [*personal attack*]: Unfortunately this is the most predominantly used tactic in the political arena. This method redirects the focus of the argument on the character of the person instead of the ideals they propose. Obama will be dismissed as "lacking experience." Guliani will be criticized for his marital track record. And Kucinich will no doubt be called every name in the book. By attacking any perceived flaw in the person they avoid exposing themselves to making critical judgments of their policies.

Argumentum ad numerum [*appeal to numbers*]: Similar to the fallacy argumentum ad populum [appeal to popularity], this is the equivalent of your childhood plea "come on mom,

EVERYONE else has one, why can't I?" To which your mom would invariably retort: "If everyone jumped off a bridge, would you?" No matter how many people believe something, that doesn't necessarily make it true, but rare is the candidate that will push an agenda that doesn't get good polling numbers.

Argumentum ad nauseam [argumentative repetition]: The quickest way to strengthen your message is to say it loud and say it over and over again. And the easiest way to start the process is to limit your speech to short, easily-repeatable quotes. How a candidate does in a debate is often evaluated by the number of sound bites that end up on the evening news; rarely is the meaning behind the rhetoric equally evaluated.

Argumentum ad misericordiam [*appeal to pity*]: Yes, sex sells, but nothing gets votes better than a tug on the old heartstrings. Granted, I do think we need to help the homeless, fix medicare, and care for the environment. However, rarely are we told how legislation will help, usually we're only shown who it will help. And trust me, there is a big difference.

Argumentum ad antiquitatem [*antiquity or tradition*]: This method tries to equate acceptability with the standardization of practice. More simply put, it's the "well that's the way we've always done it" argument. You're most likely to see this type of defense when the younger candidates challenge the establishment.

This is not the entire list, but you get the general idea. The key is that use of any of these tactics represents an active attempt to avoid direct discussion and indicates a person who doesn't put enough value on their own position. I can respect a person even if I disagree with their viewpoint, but I have trouble even listening to any person who hides behind the tricks of the tongue.

So, remember candidates, no gerymandering, no flip-flopping, and no hitting below the Bible Belt. Keep to the issues and out of the gutter. Now touch gloves, go to your corners, wait for the bell and come out fighting.

Tax Time, Again!

by Ryan Demro

This week, County Commissioners Hagan and Dimora voted to raise the sales tax from 7.5 cents per dollar to 7.75 cents per dollar. That may not seem like much, but if you consider our economic station as Cuyahoga County residents, it's abominable.

We live in the third highest taxed state in the nation, in the tenth highest taxed county in the nation, in the suburb with the second highest level

of property taxation. One could easily make the case that Lakewood residents are some of the most highly taxed people in the nation. Despite this, and the fact that we already have the highest sales tax in the state, these commissioners voted to raise the tax anyway.

Commissioner Peter Lawson Jones was the only representative to present a basket of reasonable alternatives that spread the burden of taxation more evenly among those who would benefit from the construction of a convention center and accompanying Medical Mart. Peter recognized the fact that a sales tax is one of the most regressive. That means it hits those at the bottom end of the economic ladder the hardest. If you are lower middle class, lower class, or downright poor, Commissioners Hagan and Dimora think you should bear the burden

of this tax. They don't think that Chris Kennedy of the famous political family should bear the primary burden of a project from which he will reap significant benefits. The Commissioners did not feel that the hospitality industry and the big corporations that dominate them should pay the price either. These commissioners feel that you, the little guy, should pay the price.

I believe that you and I, the little guys, should have a say in this big decision. I think that we should have the right to ratify or reject their decision. That is why I am leading an effort with Cleveland City Councilman Zack Reed to place this issue on the ballot. Over the next thirty days we will work with a multitude of volunteers to collect over 45,000 signatures. Look for us in a civic space near you.

Visiting FOX 8

by Bonnie Fencel



Bonnie Fencel and Robin Swoboda pose for a picture at FOX 8.

My visit to the set of *That's Life* on Fox 8 with host Robin Swoboda was enjoyable. I met with her on-air to discuss beauty information and the various shampoos that are sold at Carabel Beauty Salon & Store. The crew of the live show was friendly and hard-working. Arranging tables, pushing tables back and forth, blasting music between segments—what fun it was! To wrap up the day, Robin and I posed for a picture together. *That's Life* is great to watch if you like television shows with an upbeat and positive twist.

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Minding The Issues

On Platforms And Achievements

Lakewood Public Library’s new building looms majestically above the avenue, like a distinguished paterfamilias watching over his protégés. The city’s school buildings have all been rebuilt and spruced up and technologized. Considered as mere buildings, however, these are no more important to us than vine-covered relics of ancient civilizations at Angkor Wat or in Mayan jungles. It is only their users the readers, the teachers and students - who give our buildings meaning and raise the question as to their ultimate importance. What thoughts, what knowledge, what insights, what wisdom, what dreams, what careers will issue from our Library and from our schools? These are meaningful achievements; the buildings are only platforms from which such achievements may spring.

A city is not bricks and mortar; a city is its people, and the spirit of the people determines its worth. Political systems, such as democracy, are also platforms. Democratic institutions are no guarantee that a society will be just, fair, peaceful, or prosperous. Iraq and Palestine are tragic examples of this. The fruits of democracy in our own country have certainly been happier than in the two cases just mentioned, but they are far from what we might desire. How well has our democracy dealt with long-range problems such

as environmental degradation or fuel dependency? Or with basic policy issues such as immigration? Or with problems infecting the democratic process itself, such as the obscene importance of big money?

Indeed, how effective has our democracy been in selecting our national leaders? On this question, I will not belabor the obvious by dwelling on our current President or his predecessor(s), but let’s look at the list of contenders now running for the office from both parties. Can anyone really believe that this is a list of our country’s wisest and most competent leaders? The same holds for our much-revered Constitution; it is largely what we make of it. Where, for example, is it set in stone that regulation of interstate commerce includes the prohibition of child labor? Indeed, it is our ability to change the Constitution that is often its saving grace. For example, the Constitution once condoned slavery, then was amended to prohibit slavery. Later it was interpreted, in 1954, to prohibit municipalities from segregating students on the basis of race. More recently, in 2007, it was interpreted to prohibit municipalities from integrating students on the basis of race. Interpretation is all. The Constitution

Gordon Brumm

is a platform, and we use that platform as a point of departure to achieve a better or a worse society.

Our economic system – free-market capitalism – is also a platform. Our economic freedom is ours to use as we wish. It has rewarded us in many ways, but the record is not perfect. Have we used our choices wisely and justly? We have achieved prosperity, but for whom, and how responsibly? Is the nation’s prosperity widely shared? – It would seem not, for the gap between richest and poorest is widening. Do we consume with due regard for crucial resources? – Our nation consumes about five times the amount of energy-relative-to-population as the world average (25% of energy consumption vs. 5% of population).

So let’s be wary of false pride and complacency. Our platforms are not achievements. They are not cause for self-satisfaction, but rather challenges, bidding us to fulfill their promise. Our society and our city are always works in progress, and progress comes not with resting on the platforms given us, but on exercising the vision and the initiative to leap higher.

A Note on Gun-Play and Gun-Glorification

Certain conservatives are fond of riding the thesis that bad behavior, including criminality and other social ills (e.g. drug use, school dropout), is

determined by bad culture (e.g. single-parenting), which in turn is influenced by government policy (e.g. welfare). We may be witnessing a confirmation of that thesis, though not in a way that conservatives can be proud of. We see an alarming increase in the number of Cleveland-area shootings recently, not merely by gangs or dedicated criminals but by apparently peaceful and law-abiding individuals. We also see the predominance of the gun culture. The NRA is riding high, and their toadies in the legislatures follow their bidding, while presidential candidates squirm to evade their denunciation. The Second Amendment is often presented, without challenge, as unequivocally guaranteeing the right of every citizen to use guns of every variety. As a consequence, some seem to believe that it is un-American, or at least un-manly, not to be ready to use a firearm whenever the occasion arises -- and their belief leads them to behave accordingly.

All this is encouraged by government policies and non-policies such as the right-to-carry law and the defeat of any kind of substantial gun control. Of course correlation doesn’t amount to causation (though this never seems to bother conservatives in their pronouncements about social decay), but in this case the correlation is quite suggestive. Guns have been glorified as every Americans’ birthright, and all too often the result is a death-rite.

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8/11/07
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8/15/07
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Lakewood Arts & Entertainment

View Of A Legend Through Teenage Eyes

by Emily Ott

One could rightly say that the most widely adored singer/songwriter over the past few generations is Bob Dylan. He has provided much influence over many people, beginning with the folk movement - writing and performing protest songs, including one about Medgar Evers' death. He directly influenced the music of the 60's counterculture (regardless of the fact that he did not want to be associated with "hippies"). Dylan's music was played on the Furthur bus, the famed Day-Glo painted bus owned by author Ken Kesey and ridden by his Merry Pranksters. Though some people do not know which songs he has actually written (his music has been covered by a wide range of artists), there are many Dylan fans out there who love him more than anyone could love any boy band, or any other pop band for that matter. I am one of those fans, so, of course I had to go to his concert on July 14th at the Plain Dealer Pavilion, in the hometown of rock 'n roll.

Jimmy Vaughan, an amazing performer, opened the concert. I got the impression that not everyone there during his performance actually knew his songs. This was made apparent when he had the audience sing and few did, prompting him to ask the audience if we could hear him. Overall he played well, and made the impressive move of playing his guitar while holding it

behind his head. His female partner for a couple songs, Lou Ann Barton, was good as well, although I could not make out anything she was singing.

When Bob Dylan appeared, the place went absolutely crazy. He opened with a lesser-known song, **Cat's In the Well** from "Under the Red Sky" in 1990, followed by **Don't Think Twice, It's All Right**, a classic from 1963, and **Watching The River Flow**, from 1971.

Then he played **It's Alright Ma, I'm Only Bleeding** and **To Ramona**, both of which featured a bit of stanza skipping, but it didn't matter to the audience. He then played keyboard for the rest of the concert, starting with **The Levee's Gonna Break**. Following that was **My Back Pages**, featuring the recurring line, "Ah, but I was so much older then/I'm younger than that now," which the crowd applauded every time. During this song he brought out his harmonica, and everyone went wild. It was amazing to see and hear him play harp, which he played pretty well. Both his voice and style of music have changed many times during his career. While some people might criticize his singing voice as having deteriorated over time, the way he plays harmonica has stayed the same in the best sense.

During **Spirit on the Water**, Bob received much denial from the crowd when he got to the lines "You think I'm over the hill/You think I'm past my prime", but he received cheers when he

sang "Let me see what you got/ We can have a whoppin' good time" and when he played harmonica at the end of the song. During **Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again**, he skipped around the stanzas, completely missing three of them, but it was still a great version of the song, even if the last verse was almost unrecognizable. The next song, **Nettie Moore**, got applause from the audience when Bob sang the line "I'm in a cowboy band". Though Bob wrote this song, it is based on a song written in 1857.

The last song before the encore was **Highway 61 Revisited**, another classic. When it ended, the crowd applauded for over three minutes before Bob and his band came out again.

The encore consisted of **Thunder on the Mountain** and **Blowin' in the Wind**. Everyone knew it was **Thunder on the Mountain** by the first few guitar notes, and they were pretty excited. Before the last song, Bob introduced the band members (Denny Freeman on guitar, Donny Herron on violin, mandolin, and steel guitar, Stu Kimball on rhythm guitar, George Recile on drums, and Tony Garnier on bass guitar). Then Bob got out his harp for the last time that night for **Blowing in the Wind**.

All in all, the Bob Dylan concert was great. Bob's singing was great, and his band played pretty well. He played

guitar for about the first 5 songs, the rest were on keyboard, and he also played a little harmonica. Bob seemed to be having a good time, which helped everyone else have a good time too. He and the band were laughing and smiling. You could at times see him look into the crowd and smile at people. Bob also danced from time to time, in-between scowls at the band members (Stu Kimball on rhythm guitar moved out of Bob's sight so he couldn't give him mean glares). Dylan is known to be hard to perform with because the band members never know what the tempo or key will be when he starts a song. Bob Dylan never plays a song the same way twice, so listening to him in concert is always unique.

Conclusion? Bob is a great musician, even in his "old" age. He's the oldest person to have a #1 album on the Billboard charts ("**Modern Times**", 2006). In addition to his many accomplishments, he is known as the most covered artist in history. Bob Dylan is also known for directly influencing other great musicians, like the Rolling Stones, the Beatles, and Eric Clapton. Dylan is still a great performer. There's a Mexican performer that is still putting on shows in his 90s, while Bob is only 66. Imagine, the world could have more than 20 more years of Bob Dylan!

Concert Calendar by Bob Ignizio

Featured Event: The Lakewood Kar Kulture Show

(on Madison Avenue between Lewis Dr. and Clarence Ave.)

Saturday, August 18th will be an auto enthusiast's dream come true. But, as cool as it is to check out the classic cars and hot rods (all pre-1972), the Lakewood Kar Kulture Show is more than just cars - there's also a heck of a good lineup of music.

Detroit rockabilly trio Bones Maki and the Sun Dodgers have been together since 2001. Their sound recalls the early days of rockabilly, with the band performing their tunes in a stripped down format (without drums) of electric guitar, acoustic guitar, and string bass. The group has played everywhere from Las Vegas to Chicago to England, Holland, and Spain, and now it's Lakewood's turn to check 'em out.

Also bringing some first rate rockabilly to the streets of Lakewood are Kentucky's The Star Devils. They've played all across the fine United States as well, sharing the stage with everyone from Jerry Lee Lewis to Ike Turner to Hank Williams III along the way.

Rounding out the day's musical entertainment is Lakewood's own Uncle Scratch's Gospel Revival. The duo of Brother Ed (drums/vocals) and Brother Ant (guitar/vocals) has been giving Hell to the Devil since 2001 with their brand of lo-fi garage rock. If you've never seen an Uncle Scratch show, you don't want to miss this opportunity.

Now That's Class (11213 Detroit Ave., Cleveland)

Saturday, August 11th, The Regulations (from Sweden), Caustic Christ (from Pittsburgh), and The Bill Bondsmen (from Detroit) will take the stage. Fans of raw uncompromising rock will definitely want to be there. 18 and over.

The Winchester Tavern (12112 Madison Ave.)

Friday, August 10th the Tavern will have Andy Tanas. Andy is best known for his stint in Black Oak Arkansas from 1977 to 1980. He also played bass for Swiss metal band Krokus in the mid-eighties. Since the nineties, Andy has been writing and recording his own blend of country and rock, including his most recent release, *Songs From the New South* (2004). This is an all-ages show and admission is \$7; it's set to start at 9 pm.

Saturday August 18th is Prog Fest, featuring The Byron Nemeth Group, Rob Metz, The Doug Johns Duo, and Rare Blend. If you're a fan of top notch musicianship blended with high energy rock/fusion, check this show out. This is an all ages show starting at 9pm, and admission is \$7.

Beck Center Announces New Associate Director of Dance Education, Melanie Szucs

by Fran Storch

Lakewood, Ohio – Beck Center for the Arts announces the appointment of Melanie Szucs as Associate Director of Dance Education effective August 20, 2007. Szucs replaces long-time director, Lynda Sackett, who is retiring on August 31, 2007, after more than 40 years of service at Beck Center.

Szucs has been a dance instructor at the Beck Center since 1984 and is currently the Artistic Director for the Beck Center's Dance Workshop. She has over 25 years of teaching experience and has instructed at many area dance studios. "The Dance Department has really grown since I've been with the Beck Center, both in talent and enrollment," said Szucs, "I plan to continue to build upon this success." In addition to her role as Associate Director, Szucs is excited to continue teaching dance

classes at the Beck Center.

"I am very pleased that Melanie will be assuming the role of Associate Director of Dance Education," commented Edward P. Gallagher, Beck's Director of Education and Creative Arts Therapies, "She brings with her much talent, a lifetime of experience, a wealth of knowledge, and dedication to the program and its philosophy."

Beck Center for the Arts offers professional theatrical productions along with comprehensive curriculum-based arts education in creative arts therapies, dance, music, theater, and visual arts, along with gallery exhibits featuring local and regional artists. Located at 17801 Detroit Avenue in Lakewood, Beck Center is just ten minutes west of downtown Cleveland. Convenient on-site parking is available. For more information about Beck's Dance program, call (216) 521-2540 or visit www.beckcenter.org.



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by Val Mechenbier

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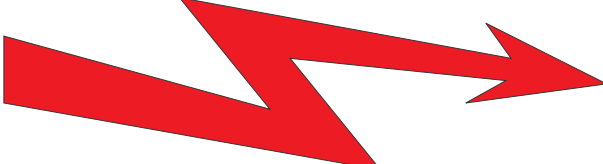
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