

THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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Volume 3, Issue 25, December 11, 2007

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Main Street - Lights Up Lakewood, MAMA Celebrates, And Richard Haas Delivers

Lakewood Celebrates The Season In Style



Clockwise from top; Thousands showed up to "Light Up Lakewood." Mayor Elect Edward FitzGerald arrives with his daughter Bridget to see Santa. Richard Haas, one of the top muralist in the world writes out the key to his two new murals in the Grand Reading Room at Lakewood Public Library (keys on pages 10 and 11), Santa holds the youngest in the Seelie family line. Adam of Phoenix Coffee takes large steps as he strolls down Main Street at Light Up Lakewood. MORE INSIDE!



Lakewood Chamber Of Commerce Announces "Why I Love Lakewood" Essay Winner

by Patty Ryan

The Lakewood Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that Jaret Pustai, a fourth grader at Lakewood Catholic Academy, is the winner of the First Annual "Why I Love Lakewood" Fourth Grade Essay Contest.

The essay contest was open to all fourth grade students in Lakewood and was run in conjunction with "Light Up Lakewood", the City's holiday lighting ceremony. Jaret's essay was selected from nearly 100 other entries because it was well written, original and captured the spirit of what most Lakewood kids love about their hometown.

As part of his prize, Jaret helped Santa flip the switch to light up the holiday decorations on Detroit Avenue at Friday evening's Light Up Lakewood

opening ceremonies. Jaret also received a bike helmet and a gift certificate from Spin Bike Shop in Lakewood, courtesy of Spin and the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce. Following is a copy of Jaret's award winning Essay.

WHY I LOVE LAKEWOOD by Jaret Pustai

Lakewood is the best city in the world! I love Lakewood Park. It is so fun. I like to go down by the lake and look at Cleveland and watch the waves go by. It is also fun to just ride a bike on the pathway.

Another thing I like about Lakewood is Lakewood Public Library. I always find what I am looking for whether it's for a book report or just for reading. It's very big, neat, and clean. Another think I love is my school. I learn something new there everyday.

Its nice and clean like the library. I even like the outdoors. It's not polluted at all; it's nice and fresh.

In the fall I like to rake leaves and jump in them. In the winter I like to have a snowball fight. In the summer I like to go swimming. And in the spring I like to watch the rain fall down.

Another thing I like about Lakewood is Madison Pool. They have clean water. It's fun to go off the diving board or the slide. Or it's just fun to swim. Another thing I like about Lakewood is their stores. They have a lot of stores in Lakewood.

You could probably find anything in Lakewood's stores. I like Lakewood because of their churches. They are so big and clean. We have mass at our school every Friday. These are the reasons why I love Lakewood.

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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

Local Coach Joins International Panel Of Experts

Diane Helbig, Founder and President of Seize This Day Coaching, has joined the team of Top Sales Experts at the behest of its creator Jonathan Farrington. Top Sales Experts is a team of some of the world's best and brightest in the sales coaching and training arena.

"This is indeed a huge honor. I never expected when my articles were chosen for Top10SalesArticles.com that it would lead to my inclusion on the panel of experts," claims Helbig.

The team of experts was originally formed to act as an adjudication panel for the Top 10 Sales Articles project. It is expanding to include other sales experts and to offer a resource center for business owners, sales and marketing professionals, and entrepreneurs who wish to improve their skills and results. According to Helbig, no matter what your industry or level of sales experience, you can find guidance, knowledge, and sales solutions from any one of the sales specialists in the team. You can learn more about this group by visiting <http://www.topsalesexperts.com>.

Helbig, who coaches small business owners and salespeople, also



publishes articles about sales and marketing strategies. Her work has been published online and in the e-book 'The Magic of Sales and Marketing Revealed.' In addition, some of Helbig's work will soon appear in a book to be released by the founder of SelfGrowth.com. To learn more about Diane Helbig and her coaching practice, Seize This Day Coaching, you can go to her website at <http://www.seizethisday-coaching.com>.

Letter To Future Mayor Fitzgerald A Plea To Hold On To What We Have And Need

Mr. Fitzgerald,
It seems congratulations are in order. You have made many comments regarding the Office on Aging and Transportation, none of which is making us Senior Citizens very happy. We desperately need these above services because we totally depend and rely on them for many things.

I volunteer at Senior Center East on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10-11am. We would love to have you join us, just to see the faces of these people and the smiles. You could see how much we need Office on Aging and Transportation. There are several in wheelchairs, several with walkers and just elderly like me. We sing, some dance, we love and we care about each other. Some come for lunch and some come for the company that the Office on Aging provides.

As for transportation, this is a major issue for each and every one of us. Each trip by our transportation is \$2.00, by Westlake Cab it is \$4.00 plus tip anywhere in Lakewood. A trip to St. John West Shore is \$2.00 each way, and by Westlake Cab it would be \$16.00 plus tip each way. Most of us have no family members who could take us. The Circulator does not go to some of these places. What would you do in this situation?

Our Division of Aging Transportation is the very best. We never worry about falling, as they would never let us. They are like our family. They are

the kindest, most caring people and we love each and every one of them.

Several of us have families out of state. Who would we call with our problems? Who would we call when we need a ride? The Office on Aging and Transportation.

I read an article stating you wanted to do more for the children. We all want our children to have the very best and be happy. The now have several beautiful, new schools, a fantastic library and Lakewood Park offers several excellent activities in the summer for the children.

We senior citizens are not asking for anything new-we just want to keep what we have: The Office on Aging and the Division of Aging Transportation.

We are warm, happy, caring people. I wish you would come meet us at Senior Center East. I'm sure you would see things differently.

We look forward to meeting you.
Sincerely,
Carol Mazany

The Lakewood Charitable Assistance Corporation: 2007 Food Drive

by Larry Baldanza

As the holiday season approaches, the Lakewood Charitable Assistance Corporation prepares again for the eighteenth year to distribute bags of food for the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holiday. Even in a community as apparently comfortable as Lakewood there still exist neighbors in great need for whom the gift of this food is crucial both for a healthier and brighter holiday season.

A fourteen member year-round board raises funds and handles the logistics of buying and gathering food. The board is proud of the fact that it has

virtually no administrative expenses and uses all cash donations toward the purchase of food. The majority of the food comes from generous donations of canned goods and staples collected by students at public and parochial schools in Lakewood. "The goal of the food drive is twofold," says LCAC President Mike Porter, "To add something special for families that allows them to enjoy a holiday meal with all the trimmings and to draw together our community and show that we as a community care about our neighbors and friends."

All this activity comes to a climax

on the weekends before Thanksgiving and Christmas. The donated food is sorted and packed in roughly 300 bags Friday night. Saturday morning, perishable food is packed and volunteers then deliver the bags to families and the elderly.

The two-day period of Friday and Saturday before these holidays is the LCAC's time of greatest need. We need volunteers to sort, pack and deliver food. Even a few hours of help either day is greatly appreciated. Friendly veteran volunteers and board members are there to answer questions and offer guidance every step of the way. This is an excellent opportunity for families and people of all ages to volunteer right here in your own community and brighten the holidays for others.

The circumstances of the past few years, both economic and charitable, have led to a sudden decline in cash contributions to our organization. Traditionally, we appeal for volunteer help only at this time of year, but any person or organization that can help us sustain this good work with a cash contribution will be warmly appreciated. Contact: (216) 916-7722 or visit www.lcac.info

Lakewood Historical Society Museum Store Online!

by Rhonda Loje

Looking for great Christmas gifts? Check out the Oldest Stone House Museum Store, which is now available online at www.lakewoodhistorymuseumstore.com (thank you Lakewood Observer!). Available for purchase on the website are books on Lakewood and Ohio history, notecards made with vintage postcard images, Society mem-

berships, Lakewood pottery, 2008 Calendars featuring vintage school scenes, Lakewood afghans, Preservation Reserve wine and other items. Complete your holiday shopping in one stop! All proceeds support educational programs of the Lakewood Historical Society.

For more information, contact the Lakewood Historical Society at 216 221-7343 or lakewoodhistory@bge.net



THE

LAKESWOOD

OBSERVER

Your Independent Source for
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The LAKESWOOD OBSERVER is published biweekly by Lakewood Observer, Inc., 14900 Detroit Avenue, Suite 309, Lakewood, OH 44107.

216.228.7223

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For more information, please call 216.529.8558 or 1.800.380.4828.
lakewoodhospital.org/neuro

City Council

Council's Triple Play

It's a new season, a new council, and a new administration and Lakewood City Council will execute a triple play. It will organize itself, appoint a new member, and make a budget.

That was in the back of the minds of council members as they rode out the clock at the December 3, 2007 meeting. President Robert Seelie called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Nationwide actions of multinational corporations can trickle down to the local level. The AT&T Corporation is getting out of the pay telephone business. So many people use cellular phones now that the pay phone is no longer profitable to the company according to news reports. This means that the pay phone which is used by prisoners in the Lakewood jail needs a new operator. Global Tel Link will take

over service of that phone in a contract approved by council.

But, it is the 2008 budget that is commanding the attention of this departing council because actions taken now will affect the new council's budgeting process. Each year, a budget is prepared as required by state law. This has to be done by March 31. In order to operate the city in the first three month period, council in December usually approves a ninety day budget. However, during this year's campaign for Mayor and the ward council seats, the prospect of increasing demands on the budget combined with only modestly increasing revenues was a prime issue.

Stan Austin
City Council Reporter

Therefore, this council wants to leave the next council and administration quicker control over the 2008 budget. It is doing this by approving a forty-five day budget that will allow the new lawmakers the ability to fashion a budget that more conforms with the fiscal concerns expressed during the campaign.

The next play in the triple play is organization. From the Lakewood City Charter – "The President and Vice President of council shall each be elected by a majority vote of Council. The member of Council present who has the longest consecutive tenure of office shall preside over the organizational meeting until the President of Council is elected."

Thus, on January 2, 2008 Michael Dever (at large) will open the meeting at which the first order of business will be to elect a council president.

So much for the boilerplate. What is the real world process by which council elects its leaders? After looking in the mirror and thinking, "It ought to be me," how does just one emerge? If there is an incumbent president, the position frequently continues in that member's hands. This time, there is no incumbent with Seelie not having sought reelection.

At this time council will be one member shy because Edward FitzGerald (at large) who was mid term will presumably resign his seat by December 31, 2007 in order to assume the duties of Mayor on January 1, 2008.

So what is actually happening right now and will intensify in the next few weeks is a series of personal contacts

among the members of the new council. These contacts could be one-on-one via the telephone. Perhaps there have been some breakfast get-togethers. One, two or perhaps three members will emerge as a candidate for president. Each will present their case based on skill, tenure, and/or friendship in hopes of gaining the necessary four votes. Into the mix will be the different committee chairs. Some members might have a recognized ability in the City's finances, for instance, thereby making that person an obvious choice for chair of Finance. So, a vote for president might be given in exchange for support for a favored committee chair.

Ultimately, this new Lakewood City Council President will be responsible, perhaps more than at any other time in the City's history, given the contentious campaigns, for moving the City's business forward.

Finally, council will have to fill the vacancy mentioned above. It has sixty days to do this. If council does not act, the Mayor makes the appointment. Council can use any process or set any criteria it sees fit to make the appointment. In the past fifteen years when vacancies have occurred the nominee usually came from the ranks of the Lakewood Democratic Club. On the Observation Deck many posters have suggested some of the people who just ran for council but lost would be good for the seat because of a demonstrated interest in the city and the position.

These three plays will be made by council in the next few months. But to continue with the baseball analogy, they can do it ugly or pretty. We'll be following them in the Observer and on the Observation Deck as the play unfolds.

Lakewood Gift Certificates

by Mary Anne Crampton

Lakewood CertifiChecks are the perfect gift for teachers, coaches, employees, friends and family. Don't forget to put Lakewood CertifiCheck gift certificates on your holiday shopping list! We have already filled orders from Los Angeles and Washington D.C. – it seems everyone sees the value and fun that comes with supporting Lakewood businesses.

Lakewood CertifiCheck gift certificates are redeemable at over 175 Lakewood businesses throughout the city. They function like a cashier's check and are directly deposited into business bank accounts at full face value. Customers receive change in cash. Lakewood gift certificates are



available in denominations from \$5 to \$25. There are no service charges associated with Lakewood CertifiChecks during this introductory period. LakewoodAlive and Lakewood Community Progress Inc. are subsidizing administrative and start-up costs as a community service.

Lakewood CertifiCheck gift certificate order forms and a complete list of participating merchants can be downloaded from www.lakewoodalive.com. A limited number of the gift certificates are also available at Phoenix Coffee, located at 15108 Detroit Avenue.

Spend it here. Keep it here. Buy local!

Lakewood Public Library Events Calendar

Sunday With the Friends New Main Library Auditorium 2:00 p.m.
December 16 Tracy Marie & Friends With special mystery guests along for the ride, sweetheart singer-songwriter Tracy Marie serenades the new Library with her original rock, country and blues and a larger-than-life voice that must be heard and felt to be believed.

January 6 Sugar Coat Crackerjack keyboardist Chris Hanna accompanies jazz vocalist Kelly Wright in her confectionary quest to reinvent your standard afternoon of standards.

Lakewood Public Cinema The Legend of Drunken Master (1994) Directed by Chia-Liang Liu: Is it possible that the greatest Kung Fu movie of all time is comedy? Yes, and it's a fact-loose historical drama as well. Don't bother looking for any wires on Jackie Chan as the legendary Wong-Fei-Hong. The young master must return to the forbidden art of drunken boxing to stop westerners from smuggling priceless artifacts out of China during the Ching Dynasty.Saturday, December 15 at 7:00 p.m. in the new Main Library Auditorium

Lakewood Historical Society and the Lakewood Public Library Present: Streetcar: A Film by Jasper Woods (1955) Two Showings!Back by popular demand – a rare treat for film lovers and local history enthusiasts alike! Relive the last days of the streetcar in Cleveland with this lyrical, avant-garde film completed shortly after they were gone forever. Catch a glimpse of Cleveland in the 1950s and witness people from all walks of life rubbing shoulders in cramped cars as seen through the lens of acclaimed photographer Jasper Woods.Thursday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m. and 7:45 p.m. in the new Main Library Auditorium

A Night at the Opera (1935) Directed by Sam Wood (ALL AGES) The Marx Brothers embrace the pomposity and pretension of the opera world with gleeful anarchy, yet manage to leave all the wonderful music intact. Why? Because the happiness of young lovers is on the line, of course. Groucho shines as the self-promoting promoter, Otis B. Driftwood, while Harpo and Chico pretty much play

themselves. "C'mon, you're gonna be late for jail!"Saturday, January 5 at 7:00 p.m. in the new Main Library Auditorium

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

Upcoming Themes:		December 14, 15 and 16	Monkey Business
		December 21, 22 and 23	Who is Eric Carle?
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	

Homework ER: for students in kindergarten through eighth grade Tuesday, September 4, 2007 – Thursday, May 22, 2008 Need a little extra help with your homework or just want a cool place to work? We transform part of the library into the Homework ER with helpers and a cart full of resources. Homework ER will be closed for school holidays and vacations. No need to register. Monday-Thursday, 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. at the Madison Branch

Four O'clock Club: for students in kindergarten through eighth grade-Tuesday, September 4, 2007 – Friday, May 23, 2008 Join the Club! Come for a different activity each weekday. No need to register. DAYTIMEACTIVITYMonday4:00 p.m.Make-It-Take-It (craft day)Tuesday4:00 p.m.Marvelous Mysteries (surprise day)Wednesday4:00 p.m.Twist, Shout, Act It Out (movement, music and dramaThursday4:00 p.m.Games Galore (game to play or make)Friday4:00 p.m.Make-It-Take-It (craft day) At the Madison Branch

Lakewood Public Library

The Lakewood Public Library And Grant Elementary Make A Difference

by Tracie Drake

The Children's and Youth Services Department of the Lakewood Public Library took part in "Make a Difference Day" at Grant Elementary School on November 5th, 2007, as part of the school's "Making a Difference Month." According to Meg Ostrowski, a Grant PTA member, "Making a Difference Month" was a month-long effort to help each student realize how they can and do make a difference," not only in their school but in the community and the world as well. To introduce the theme of making a difference, children's librarians Tracie Drake and Audrey Sumser planned and presented story times, led discussions, and created activities for seventeen kindergarten through 5th grade classes that highlighted individuals, both real and fictional, who have had a lasting, positive effect on society.

As a part of the day-long event, the Children's and Youth Services Department designed a book drive to benefit a local charitable organization and then partnered with the Grant P.T.A. to make this idea a reality. Beginning November 5th, students were asked to bring a gently used book to school that would be collected, sorted, and repaired by library staff and then donated to the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cleveland, a non-profit organization that provides support, meals, and generosity to the area's homeless families through a network of religious congregations. While everyone involved hoped for tremendous results, the limited time-frame for the project would mean that the students would really need to take the making a difference theme and the book drive to heart.

The students of Grant Elementary responded with great character and charity. When the books were collected and brought to the library on November 19th, 465 books had been donated to the cause, demonstrating the level of care and commitment the students felt towards this project. While the majority of titles were aimed at children, at least 20 of the donated books were inspirational titles for adults, indicating the students' awareness for books that reach readers of all ages. "I am very proud of the giving spirit of the Grant School students, staff, and families when it comes to helping others," stated Grant principal Mark Gleichauf. "Collecting nearly 500 books in just over a week is overwhelming."

To honor the school's achievement, Mark Gleichauf and Grant PTA organizers Meg Ostrowski and Karen Lee were asked to present the books to Interfaith Hospitality Network's Vicki Smigelski at the library on November 27th, 2007. At the book presentation, Mark Gleichauf and the Grant PTA members accepted a certificate of

appreciation, signed by Library Director Kenneth Warren, on behalf of the 400 Grant Elementary students while the Interfaith Hospitality Network graciously accepted the collected books. Remarked Vicki Smigelski, "It is wonderful to see the generosity of young children and their wonderful spirit of giving to those less fortunate."

When media pundits question the focus and values of today's youth, they should look more closely at the students of Grant Elementary School. Perhaps they would see that character, integrity, a sense of community, and the spirit of giving is how these students truly make a difference in the world.

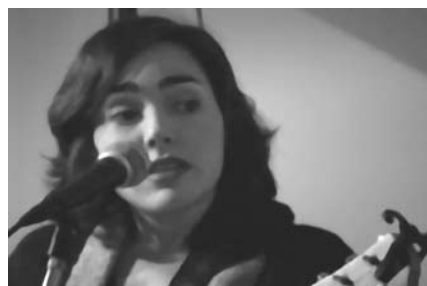


Meg Ostrowski, Karen Lee, Mark Gleichauf, Vicki Smigelski, Tracie Drake, and Audrey Sumser gather around the 465 books donated by Grant Elementary students to the Interfaith Hospitality Network.

Friends Of Lakewood Public Library Events

Larger Than Life: The Voice Of Tracy Marie

by Ben Burdick



It's been ten years since singer-songwriter Tracy Marie took a leap of faith and devoted herself full-time to the Cleveland music scene. Armed with nothing more than an acoustic guitar and a heartbreaking voice that has to be heard to be believed, she has since become a major player as both a performer and a promoter. Yet for all her personal success, with two critically acclaimed CDs and numerous accolades under her belt, Tracy remains focused on the local scene, promoting the culture around her and creating a sense of community among Cleveland artists.

At the Lakewood Public Library,

Tracy Marie is more than just another musician. She has worked tirelessly over the last few years to promote the Library's humble auditorium as a great venue to both audiences and performers alike. **Sunday, December 16** will mark her return to the Lakewood Public Library and her debut upon its new stage in the state-of-the-art and quite pretty New Lakewood Public Library Auditorium. The free concert begins at 2:00 p.m., part of the long-running **Sunday with the Friends** series of programs sponsored by the Friends of Lakewood Public Library. Audiences should be prepared for original songs worth listening to in a variety of genres—blues, rock, soul and even a little country.

Powerful, personal music makes Tracy Marie welcome in every corner of the country. She's performed with Buddy Miles at Asbury Park's famed Stone Pony and been spotlighted in Los Angeles showcases. She's sat in with countless blues bands in the Chicago area and performed her own original

music in Nashville at the Ryman Auditorium, home of the original Grand Old Opry. She's even found herself in New York City backed by the legendary Stanley Jordan at the storied Cutting Room. But here in Lakewood, she finds herself back at the Library, playing with friends for the community she loves and believes in. Welcome home, Tracy.

For a taste of Tracy Marie in concert, visit lakewoodpubliclibrary.com/tv. No mere YouTube clip can capture the power of her live performance, but the Library believes that this video from her last LPL performance is the best-sounding video they've ever produced. (Selections from the concert are also available on DVD—ask for "What's Going on at the Lakewood Public Library?" Look for the one with Tracy on the cover.) YouTube.com/assassinwoman offers even more video selections, along with Tracy-led interviews of other Cleveland music luminaries. Check out tracymarie.com for the definitive online guide to all her various projects.

It Doesn't Get Sweeter Than This!

by Eve Klodnick & Martha Wood

Does anyone ever really get tired of hearing those classic old love songs and standards? If you ask the members of Sugarcoat, the answer is no.

The group consists of only two players, Chris Hanna on keyboards and Kelly Wright on vocals. Their simple, straightforward approach to such songs as "Cry Me a River," "Don't Get Around Much Anymore," "At Last," and many others can be heard in clubs from here to Akron.

The talented and versatile Chris Hanna has a long musical history in Cleveland. He has played with such illustrious local acts as Colin Dussault, Rosavelt, Kristine Jackson, The Stokes Brothers and The Jack Fords. Born and raised in Lakewood in a family of four-

teen, he still resides here with his wife Sara and their two children. Though his musical career and family keep him hopping, he still makes time to play at numerous fundraisers and stop by for the occasional appearance at the Westerly apartments to accompany his mom; also a pianist.

Kelly Wright began singing in her sophomore year at Lakewood High School. A three-year member of the vocal jazz group "The Roadshow," she was afforded the opportunity to travel and perform locally with the well known young group. Enthusiastic fundraising earned the students a yearly recording project at Suma Studios and several trips to Western Michigan University to attend vocal jazz workshops. Kelly resides in Cleveland but calls

Lakewood home, as her small business is here. Kelly and her sister Carrie are in their fourteenth year as co-owners of the popular breakfast stop, The Borderline Café. When she's not pouring coffee or crooning tunes from the forties, she plays a mean tambourine and provides backing vocal for the local indie rock favorite, Anne E. DeChant.

The Friends of Lakewood Public Library are very pleased to welcome Sugarcoat back for their second performance at Lakewood Public Library on Sunday, January 6 at 2:00 p.m. Sugarcoat will ease you into the New Year by serving up an afternoon of sweet Jazz standards and songs your grandmother would have loved. Songs from a time when the world was a bit simpler and a Hershey's chocolate bar still cost a nickel.

Lakewood Public Library

STREETCAR: A Film By Jasper Wood

by Ben Burdick

Rail enthusiasts, beware the ides of March!

Earlier this year, on that fateful day, several distinctly different audiences collided in the old Lakewood Public Library Auditorium. Film buffs elbowed their way past local history lovers while the earlybird railroad experts held onto their seats only through sheer numbers. The big draw that night was the northeast Ohio premiere of Streetcar: A Film by Jasper Wood. And for the first time in recent memory, the Library turned away patrons at the auditorium door. There simply wasn't enough room.

No one who made it into the sweltering, standing-room-only crowd was the least bit comfortable during the screening. At least the lecture by Christopher Wood, son of the late artist, was mercifully brief and to-the-point (in addition to being illuminating and often humorous.) From the relative comfort of the podium, the historian/librarian could not help but sense the mounting claustrophobia of the crowd.

But once the program was finally over, a funny thing happened. Almost no one left. Despite the cramped conditions, over a hundred people stayed to share impressions and memories

and other feelings stirred up by the special event. In the end, the dregs of the crowd had to be shooed out by staff members at closing time--over an hour after the program had finished.

It's easy to see why people made such a big fuss. The lyrical, avant-garde film, shot in gorgeous, gritty black-and-white, offers a glimpse of 1950s Cleveland during the last days of the streetcar. Neither a documentary nor a narrative, the unique short simply takes you for a ride and lets you rub shoulders with

people from all walks of life. Film-maker Jasper Woods was best known in his day as a photographer with an eye for overlooked people and places.

All of his talents come together in this small masterpiece of a city, some trains, and a way of life.

Since the film finally made its hometown debut (over five decades after it was originally completed) the demand for Streetcar has not died down. Christopher Wood has tried to remedy the situation, screening the film for several other



When Lakewood Reads, Cleveland Reads

by Chris Sinagra

Joining the board of a non profit was new to me, but ironically it has led me back to something I am familiar with ... Lakewood.I joined Cleveland Reads a little over a year and a half ago to aid in its mission to serve as Greater Cleveland's central literacy resource for youth, adult, and family literacy. Founded in 1987, the organization (Cleveland Reads) has an established history as

a broad-based coalition of community and civic leaders dedicated to providing a diverse array of literacy services.

Today Cleveland Reads provides the following core services:

Literacy HOTLINE, 216-436-2222, a single point of contact for the general public to receive literacy information and assistance, program referrals for learners, and training opportunities for volunteers.

Literacy Network (Lit Net)—Cleveland Reads coordinates supportive services to over 110 literacy providers at 147 sites to enhance and strengthen their programs. Some of the services include: technical assistance, collaborative grant opportunities, free books and materials, and educational seminars.

Literacy training sessions targeting \$ Volunteer tutors \$ Corporate tutors \$ Civic groups \$ Literacy program staff \$ Parents and families

The Three R's: Raising Real Readers—no-cost workshops for parents that provide proven, strategic approaches for reading to their children and assisting them in reading at home—the single most important factor for success in school.


Lit Kits for Kids—easy-to-use modules developed for tutors to strengthen a child's reading skills. Interactive activities build reading comprehension, language development, vocabulary enrichment, and reading fluency. Lit Kits meet Ohio Department of Education learning standards and have a built-in measure of success for the tutoring sessions. With the explanation of what Cleveland Reads does, I was ready to go to work. As I entered service on the board, I was unaware of the importance Lakewood plays in

Cleveland Reads. I was proud to find out my hometown is very involved in supporting literacy efforts.

Cleveland Reads receives a considerable amount of its volunteer tutors from Lakewood. Over the years, more than one hundred and fifty Lakewood residents have shown interest in becoming literacy tutors. Lakewood ABLE/Plus (Adult and Basic Literacy Education) and Urban Family Learning Centers at Lakewood Lutheran School understand the importance of literacy, and they also work hand in hand with Cleveland Reads.

The Lakewood programs utilize volunteers from Cleveland Reads, and their tutors have logged more than five hundred hours. Over two hundred students have worked to improve their skills and better their lives due to the efforts of the Lakewood programs. It is my hope that the relationship between Lakewood and Cleveland Reads remains strong and that we find ways to continue positive trends in our city. We need to work together to influence people towards the enjoyment of reading and all the advantages it brings.

During the busy holiday season as we reflect on the various gifts and blessings we have, I ask that you look up Cleveland Reads at www.clevelandreads.org and take some time to volunteer, donate, or connect Cleveland Reads with a worthwhile organization. Your time and interest will not only help Lakewood, but Cleveland as a region. If you have any questions about the organization, please contact: Cleveland Reads 1331 Euclid Avenue Cleveland, OH 44115 Literacy Hotline: 216-436-2222



Congratulations!


Gina Gavlak Receives American Diabetes Association's Distinguished Achievement Award

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) presented Gina Gavlak, RN, BSN, diabetes program development coordinator at Lakewood Hospital Diabetes Center, the ADA's Outstanding Advocacy Award for Distinguished Achievement.

The award is given to three individuals nationwide who demonstrate a significant and ongoing commitment to supporting ADA activities to affect public policy and protect the rights and livelihoods of those with diabetes in their communities.

We congratulate Gina on receiving this prestigious award.

For information on Lakewood Hospital Diabetes Center, call 216.529.5300 or visit lakewoodhospital.org/diabetes

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Lakewood City News

First Federal Of Lakewood Awards Classic At Mastick Scholarships

by Christina Capadona

First Federal of Lakewood, sponsor of the 15th annual Classic at Mastick 5K Run, has awarded Classic at Mastick Scholarships to local high school senior runners, based on nominations from high school cross country coaches. The scholarships were presented at a December 1st ceremony at First Federal of Lakewood's corporate headquarters.

"These student-athletes were nominated by area coaches at the Classic at Mastick race this past August, based on leadership and excellence in both academics and athletics. First Federal of Lakewood is proud to award \$7,500 in scholarships to these 15 recipients and wishes them the very best in all their future pursuits," said Gary Fix, First Federal of Lakewood president, CEO and managing officer.

The 2007 Classic at Mastick Scholarship winners are: Nicole Georgalis,

North Olmsted High School; Andria Bazilevich, North Olmsted High School; Emily Moran, Magnificat High School; Jackie Pring, Valley Forge High School; Liz Bailey, Columbia High School; Justin Wolfe, North Olmsted High School; Tim Chippy, Midpark High School; Ellie Brandt, Rocky River High School; Cassie Kohler, North Royalton High School; Matt Furlong, Fairview Park High School; Alex Kearney, North Olmsted High School; Peter Miles, St. Edward High School; Kelly Collins, New London High School; Alyssa Molnar, Avon Lake High School and Ray Nelson, St. Ignatius High School.

First Federal of Lakewood, with 12 locations in Northeast Ohio, has total assets exceeding \$1 billion. Founded in 1935, First Federal of Lakewood is a community savings and loan institution with a deep-rooted tradition of financial strength, stability and integrity. Visit www.FFL.net for additional information.



First Federal of Lakewood Classic at Mastick Scholarship Winners: Row 1: Nicole Georgalis (North Olmsted High School), Andria Bazilevich (North Olmsted High School), Emily Moran (Magnificat High School), Jackie Pring (Valley Forge High School) and Liz Bailey (Columbia High School). Row 2: Mr. Gary Fix (President & CEO, FFL) Justin Wolfe (North Olmsted High School), Tim Chippy (Midpark High School), Ellie Brandt (Rocky River High School), Cassie Kohler (North Royalton High School) and Matt Furlong (Fairview Park High School). Row 3: Alex Kearney (North Olmsted High School), Peter Miles (St. Edward High School), Kelly Collins (New London High School), Alyssa Molnar (Avon Lake High School) and John Nakel (Classic at Mastick Director) Not Pictured: Ray Nelson (St. Ignatius High School)



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Lakewood Schools & Sports

Supporters Needed For LHS After-Prom

by Wendy Brickman

In many of our minds the memory of prom night is one of the most significant. Seniors look forward to it all year. They remember it for a lifetime. Lakewood High School’s prom and after-prom are notoriously successful

and well attended events. This spring, as in many years past, the senior class parents will sponsor the after-prom. This exciting party is held in Lakewood immediately following the prom, providing a fun and safe environment for attendees to extend the enjoyment of the evening. Traditionally, student

attendance at after prom is equal to, if not greater than that of prom itself. The after-prom party is built around a theme, a secret strictly kept until the night of the event. Past year’s themes include “Around the World” and “Night at the Oscars”. Popular activities have included games, con-

tests, inflatables, sumo wrestling (!), photo opportunities and, of course, lots of food. Parent volunteers execute the set up in a single day, transforming Lakewood High from school to fantasy-land in time for the party goers who arrive around Mid-night on prom evening.

After-prom is supported by volunteer efforts and donations from individuals (parents and other supporters) and local businesses. This allows the committee to keep ticket prices low to ensure affordability for students, while still providing an unforgettable event in a supervised environment. Fund-raising and planning efforts are starting now. Please consider donating what you can to this important tradition. No amount is too small.

Volunteers may contact After-Prom Committee Chairperson Kathy Grane at 226-4578 for further information, or join us at the next committee meeting on January 14th from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM in the LHS L-Room. To donate, please write a check to Lakewood After Prom Committee and mail to Treasure Leslie Sluka at 2100 Lincoln Avenue. Questions may be sent via email to LHSAfterProm@gmail.com.

Rangers Basketball: Winning Two At Home

by Todd Shapiro

The Lakewood Rangers boys’ and girls’ basketball teams earned home victories last week in Northern Ohio Conference crossover games at Lakewood High School. December 4th was the Kevin Knab show in Lakewood’s East Gym when the Rangers defeated Cuyahoga Falls 68-43. Knab, a 6-6 center, scored 27 points including 11 of 12 from the foul line and added 11 rebounds and three blocked shots. Knab scored 16 of his points in the first half as Lakewood cruised to a 38-22 halftime lead.

Senior forward Joseph Mastrodonato scored 12 points and had three steals while forward Dan Shannon nailed three 3-pointers. The Rangers improved their record to 3-0 under first-year head coach John Silva going into last Friday’s Valley Division opener at Garfield Heights.

The upcoming week is one of

the biggest on the Rangers schedule. Tonight, Lakewood plays host to the Westlake Demons in a non-league game. The Demons are coached by Bob Patton Jr. Patton, Ohio’s Mr. Basketball in 1990 is the son of former Lakewood basketball coach Bob Patton.

Arrive early at Lakewood’s East Gym on Saturday when the Rangers face their cross town rivals the St. Edward Eagles. The Eagles, ranked 11th in the nation, recently defeated defending California state champion Campbell Hill in a nationally televised game on ESPN 2. Lakewood will also travel to Elyria for a divisional showdown with the Pioneers on Friday.

The Rangers girls’ basketball team improved their record to 2-2 on December 5 with a 56-42 victory over the Parma Lady Redman. Jamie Wright led the Rangers with 20 points. Wright, a 5-8 junior, was 8-of-8 from the free

throw line. Senior Rachel Niemi added 14 for the Rangers including draining her first eight free throws.

The Rangers got off to a quick start against Parma taking an early 9-0 lead, helped by a 3-point field goal by Chelsea Kovach. Lakewood’s stifling defense held the Lady Redman without a field goal for over 13 minutes of the second and third periods while building a 19 point lead. A key to the Rangers defense was the play of freshman Martha Nagbe. Nagbe, a 5-5 guard, had five rebounds, two steals and a pair of blocked shots in the Lakewood win.

Lakewood opened divisional play Saturday at Brush and play their first home divisional game Wednesday against Garfield Heights. The Rangers will also be next Wednesday December 19 taking on the Medina Bees.

St. Edward Basketball Shines In Front Of A Sold Out, Nationally Televised Game

by Ivor Karabatkovic

St. Edward High School put Lakewood on the National Map as they defeated California Division 4 state champions Campbell Hall and superstar guard Jrue Holiday, 78-73 in an overtime thriller on Thursday night in Lakewood. When NBA superstar LeBron James was a senior at Akron’s St. Vincent - St. Mary, ESPN held its first ever High School showdown at Cleveland State’s Wolstein Center. Now with St. Edward and future Michigan State Spartan star Delvon Roe, St. Edward fought hard to have the game televised at their gym in Lakewood. Extra auxiliary lights helped brighten up the gym, which was otherwise too dark for ESPN cameras, but it was a night where stars shined. Forward Delvon Roe finished with 18 points, 12 rebounds, 6 assists and 5 blocks. Despite a solid performance, his breakaway slam dunk sent the crowd into frenzy and won back the momentum for St. Edwards. They never looked back. Senior forward Tom Pritchard, who will play college basketball at the University of Indiana, finished with 23 points, snagging 14 rebounds in the season opener. Senior guard Frankie Dobbs scored 14 points, including key free throws that put away the game for the Eagles, in overtime. Guard Alex Sterba scored 13 points before being removed from the court after re-injuring his knee. Sterba, who played his first game in a year, injured his knee last January. The injury required a surgery which sidelined him for most of his junior year. The atmo-



Delvon Roe, who had 18 points in thursday’s win over Campbell Hall High School, goes up for a spectacular dunk. The play ended up on the prestigious ESPN Sportscenter “Top 10 Plays” the next morning.

sphere was loud, and the sea of green and gold swarmed the gym. A crowd of 2,000 packed the sold out gym. The Eagles will take on the rival Lakewood Rangers at Lakewood High School’s East Gym on Saturday, December 15th. Junior Varsity plays at 6pm, and the stage will be set for a showdown as the Varsity squads take the hardwood floor at 7:30pm. Tickets will disappear quickly and seats will be limited to those that wait. Lakewood lost to St. Edwards in a blow out last year, and won in a last second thriller the year before at Lakewood High School. Lakewood is undefeated at 3-0.



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Tuesday	10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.	Parents/Tots
	7:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.	All Ages
Wednesday	1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.	Adults Only
	4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.	Skills Practice/All Ages
Thursday	8:30 P.M. - 11:00 P.M.	Adults Only
		(Live Organ Music)
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
Sunday	2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.	All Ages
	8:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.	All Ages



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2007			
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Friday	Dec. 21	1:00 - 3:00	P.M. All Ages
Monday	Dec. 24	1:00 - 3:00	P.M. All Ages
Wednesday	Dec. 26	1:00 - 3:00	P.M. All Ages
Thursday	Dec. 27	1:00 - 3:00	P.M. All Ages
Friday	Dec. 28	1:00 - 3:00	P.M. All Ages
Monday	Dec. 31	1:00 - 3:00	P.M. All Ages
2008			
Tuesday	Jan. 1	1:00 - 3:00	P.M. All Ages
Wednesday	Jan. 2	1:00 - 3:00	P.M. All Ages
Thursday	Jan. 3	1:00 - 3:00	P.M. All Ages



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Lakewood Health News

Lakewood Hospital Employee, Gina Gavlak, Receives American Diabetes Association Distinguished Achievement Award

(December 7, 2007) – The American Diabetes Association (ADA) presented Gina Gavlak, RN, BSN, diabetes program development coordinator at Lakewood Hospital Diabetes Center, the Association’s prestigious Outstanding Advocacy Award at the organization’s Community Volunteer Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting on November 17, in St. Louis, Missouri.

The award is given to three individuals nationwide who demonstrate a significant and ongoing commitment to supporting ADA activities to affect public policy and protect the rights and livelihoods of those with diabetes in their communities.

“This award validates the commitment that Gina has to help lead the fight against diabetes. She is continually focused on changing the face of diabetes in our communities -- by raising awareness of this devastating disease on the local and national level,” says Jack Gustin, president of Lakewood Hospital. “Her passion for this cause is contagious; she inspires us all to make a difference. We are very proud of her hard work.”

An ADA volunteer for 15 years, Gavlak is currently the Advocacy and Programs Chair for the Cleveland Ohio Leadership Council, a post she has held since 2003. In addition, she serves on the National Leadership Council and national Advocacy Committee and is also a grassroots advocacy leader.

“It is an incredibly humbling experience to receive an award for something that I love to do,” says Ms. Gavlak. “While I am honored to receive this award, it is my hope that people will realize how important it is to speak up for what you believe in. It’s as simple as sharing your story. It’s all of our voices together that creates a powerful message and raises awareness on the seriousness of diabetes. It’s all about teamwork and I’m happy to be part of a great team.”

Ms. Gavlak brings her experience as a nurse and educator to bear on public policy designed to benefit people with diabetes and helps protect their rights. As part of her anti-discrimination efforts, she has conducted Safe at School training in several school districts and has presented diabetes information sessions for families with children with type 1 diabetes. Her most impressive advocacy accomplishment to date is helping to move the Ohio Diabetes Cost Reduction Act (DCRA) by increasing public awareness through publishing numerous letters in area magazines and newspapers and counseling and educating hundreds of DCRA advocates on effective lobbying techniques.

“Diabetes is especially prevalent in our area and Gina has helped us reach our goals of providing expert care and education in our community, and beyond,” says Fred DeGrandis, CEO and President of Cleveland Clinic Regional Hospitals. “Our west side communities should feel confident they are receiving the best diabetes care pos-

sible and know that our hospitals are striving to provide the very best care for everyone who suffers from this disease.”

Ms. Gavlak resides in Sheffield Village, with her husband and two children.

For more information about Lakewood Hospital Diabetes Center,

call 216.529.5300.

Lakewood Hospital is a 400-bed acute care hospital that has served the diverse health care needs of the City of Lakewood and Cleveland’s Westshore communities since 1907. Offering a wide range of health services and education programs for women, men and children,

each year Lakewood Hospital provides high quality and innovative patient care for more than 130,000 patients. In 1997, Lakewood Hospital became part of the Cleveland Clinic health system, a partnership between the Cleveland Clinic and nine community hospitals. <http://www.lakewoodhospital.org>

Cleveland Sight Center Vision Rehabilitation Pilot Program Launched In Lakewood

by Koula Callas

Cleveland Sight Center launched its first community-based, vision rehabilitation and technology training program, EnVision Independence, in Lakewood last week. The Sight Center has, for many years, helped individuals who are blind or visually impaired learn rehabilitative daily living skills to help them live more independently. This training typically takes place at the Sight Center’s University Circle location as well as during in-home visits for clients across Northeast Ohio. The Westerly Apartments is the location of this community-based pilot program, designed to offer in-home vision rehabilitation training using a class-like setting.

There is no cost for the classes, which are being funded through a grant from The Kelvin and Eleanor Smith Foundation. All Lakewood senior citizens who are blind as well as those who are visually impaired due to macular degeneration, glaucoma, and other eye diseases, are encouraged to participate. “The change in a client’s confidence and outlook on life once they have

completed their vision rehabilitation is remarkable,” says Peggy Keating, Director of Senior and Outreach Services at Cleveland Sight Center, “We hope to expand this program to communities throughout Northeast Ohio after the pilot program is complete.”

Each EnVision Independence session lasts seven weeks, with classes taking place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in one of the Westerly apartments. The classes are taught by licensed social workers and rehabilitative professionals, including rehabilitative specialists who are blind. Group counseling and mobility skills (techniques to navigate the physical environment within and outside of the home), are included in the program. The apartment is furnished with special adaptive equipment and low vision aids. Each participant will receive \$350 worth of low vision/vision rehabilitation aids to keep, and will have the option to request in-home follow up.

Technology training at the adjacent Barton Center complements the daily living skills training. Cleveland Sight Center staff will introduce voice-activated, large text, and other software

programs designed to enable individuals with vision loss to communicate effectively using the latest computer technology. More than \$15,000 worth of software and equipment has been donated to the Barton Center, and is available for use by all Lakewood residents with low vision. The Lakewood Department of Aging is working closely with the Sight Center to identify clients for future sessions of EnVision Independence (transportation may be arranged through Lakewood Senior Services). Lakewood residents interested in enrolling in EnVision Independence may contact the Lakewood Department of Aging at 216.226.9339, or Debi Welsby at Cleveland Sight Center, 216.791.8118, ext. 228. Cleveland Sight Center, a nonprofit agency founded in 1906, provides people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired with educational, rehabilitative, preventative, and many other vision support services. The Sight Center also offers recreational activities, including sailing, golf, beep-baseball, crafts and more, and has a camp, Highbrook Lodge, in Chardon where campers of all ages can enjoy summer fun.

Drivers Beware—Lakewood Walks And Runs

by Jeffrey Lambert-Shemo

One of the greatest assets of Lakewood is that it is a very walkable town. Lakewood has 185 miles of sidewalks, and they are heavily used by residents, friends, kids, parents and dogs alike. From my doorstep I can make it to the YMCA in one mile, passing the Winking Lizard Tavern, Geiger’s, Melt, the Souper Market, Rozi’s, Phoenix and a plethora of other wonderful local businesses along the way. By walking I save on fuel, CO2 emissions and the battle of persuading my 3-year-old daughter, “Just get in your seat...no, it’s not time for you to drive!”

Anyone who does a lot of walking in Lakewood has likely dodged a car while crossing one of the hundreds of intersections in town. On my 7 a.m. walks with my pointer and husky, there have been plenty of times when drivers did not see me crossing. Although I have never caused damage, I tend to get a lot of yells when I “whack” the trunk or side of a car so that the driver will at

least know I was there. My plea goes out to all drivers who pull up to a stop sign or intersection and coast into the crosswalk without looking first:

Please, stop at the white line!

Once your car comes to a halt at the white stop bar, you can see the sidewalks and crosswalks clearly, and then

you can safely scoot up to turn. Help us all out and keep walks happy and healthy for everyone. I love Lakewood and the sidewalks, and I love waving “thank you” to all of the kind people who stop and allow me to use the crosswalk before they enter the intersection.

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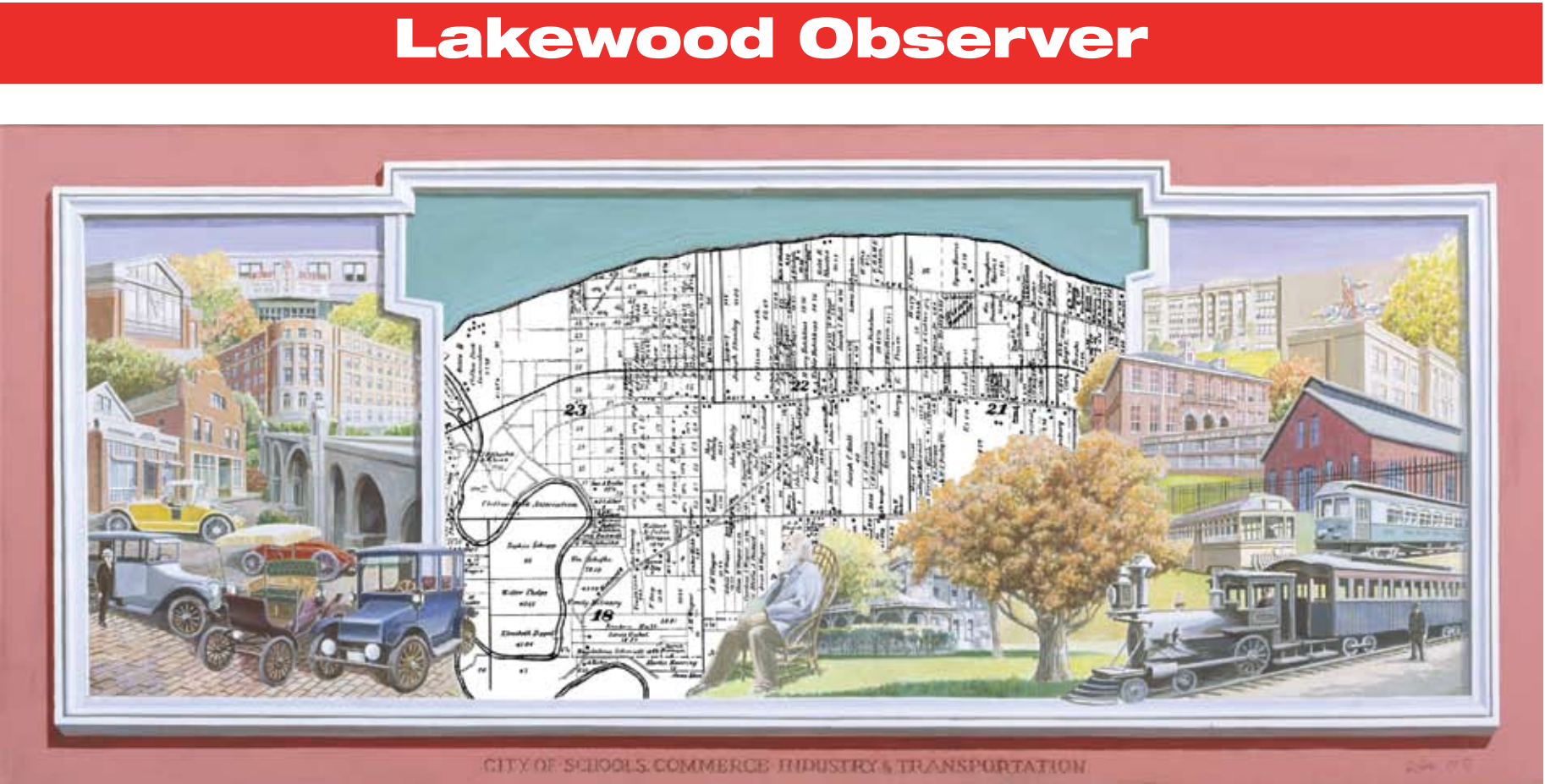
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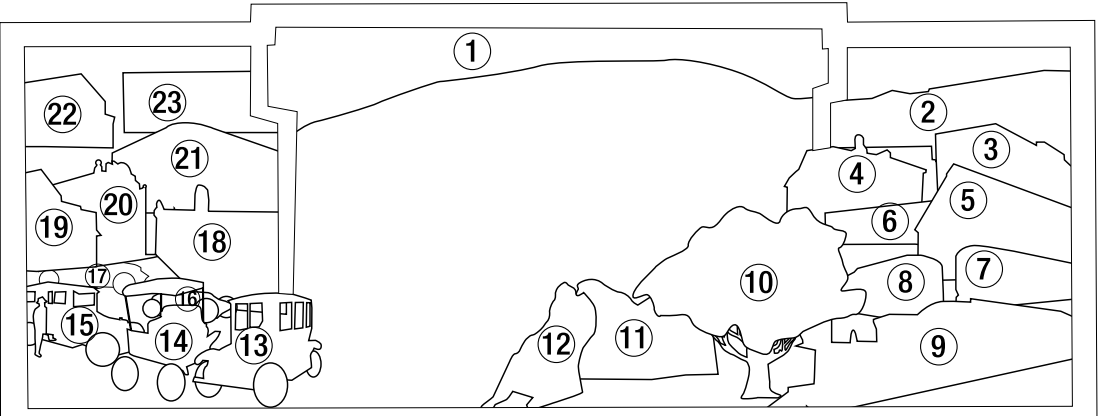
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The keys to the two murals by Richard Haas now hanging in the Grand Reading Room in the Lakewood Public Library; 1) 1885 Map of Lakewood, 2) Lakewood High School, 3) Jefferson Junior High, 4) Grant School/Board of Education, 5) Union Carbide, 6) White Sewing Machine Corporation, 7) Lake Shore Electric, 8) Clifton St. Streetcar, 9) Short Line circa 1880's, 10) Oldest Oak Tree, 11) The Kirtland House, 12) Dr. Jared P. Kirtland, with Kirtland Warblers, 13) Baker Electric circa 1912, 14) Baker Electric 1902, 15) Winton 1917 with Alexander Winton , 16) Templar Race Car 1912, 17) Templar 1922, 18) Hilliard Street Bridge , 19 & 20) Birdtown Stores, 21) Lakewood Hospital circa 1950, 22) YMCA, 23) Detroit Theater showing "GI Joe" starring Burgess Meredith.



Cleveland Clinic Pelvic Floor Disorders Center at Lakewood Hospital



Lakewood Hospital Community Health Center
Lakewood Women's Health
1450 Belle Avenue, Suite 310
Lakewood, Ohio 44107

www.lakewoodhospital.org

Now accepting new patients

We are pleased to announce the opening of the Cleveland Clinic Pelvic Floor Disorders Center at Lakewood Hospital under the direction of **Marie Fidela Paraiso, M.D.**, a Cleveland Clinic urogynecologist and reconstructive pelvic surgeon.

The Center is able to care for women who are experiencing health-related issues such as incontinence, urinary retention and pelvic pain disorders. The Center offers cutting edge and traditional procedures using sophisticated diagnostic tools to treat conditions such as urinary incontinence and pelvic organ prolapse.

For more information or to make an appointment, please call 216.227.2508.



Lakewood Shops Main Street Grand Prize Winner

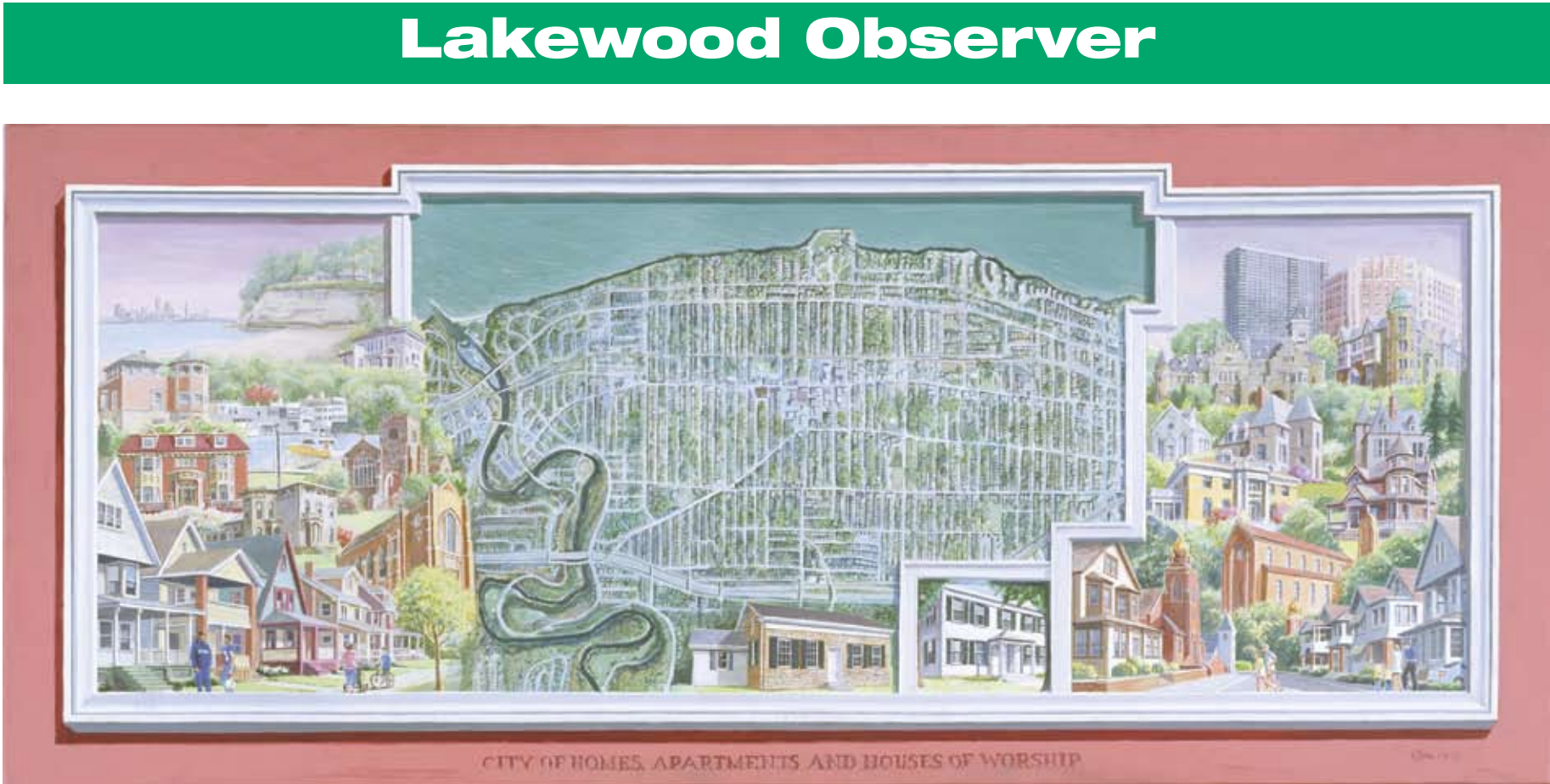
by Mary Anne Crampton

The Grand Prize winner for Lakewood Shops Main Street was Garfield Middle School 6th grade student, Mitchell Gregg. Mitchell and his dad came to collect the prizes which included \$150 in gift certificates from Main Street Lakewood merchants, \$50 in Lakewood CertifiCheck gift certificates, and a basket of Christmas Ale donated by Rozi's (Dad promised it would remain unopened under the tree until the big day!). Mitchell's prize will make Christmas shopping for his family much easier this year – no trips to the mall for Mitchell! Mitchell lives on

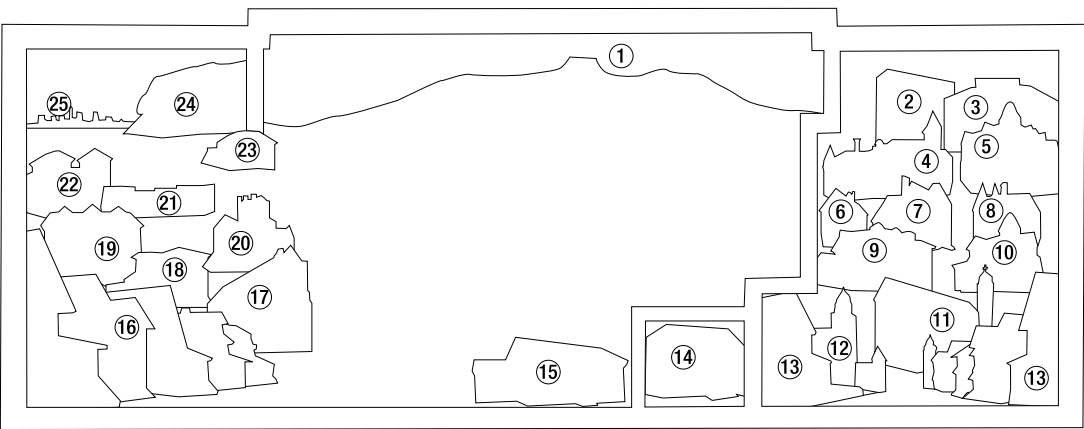
Marlowe with his mom and dad, Peggy and Matt, his sisters Erin and Lindsey, and brother Shaun.

The second place winner was Clifton Boulevard resident, John Hubbell. John works at Peck Engraving and is a frequent Main Street shopper. He was delighted to receive his \$50 in gift certificates from Main Street Merchants, and another \$50 in Lakewood CertifiCheck gift certificates, redeemable at any of the 185 businesses located throughout the city.

Many, many thanks to the 25 Main Street Lakewood merchants in wonderful, walkable, downtown Lakewood who donated so generously to this event!



1) Image from Google Earth Maps, 2) Winton Place, 3) Lakeshore Towers, 4) Theodore Kundtz Mansion, 5) Edgewater Cove Apartments, 6) Lakewood Methodist Church 1876, 7) ?, 8) Baker Mack House, 9) Morse Faber House, 10) Grace Mansion, 11) St. Cyril and Methodius Theologian Bysantine Catholic Church, 12) St. Nicholas Ukrainian Orthodox Church , 13) Birdtown Streets, 14) Nicholson House , 15) Honman House 1838 – The Old Stone House, 16) Westside Street, 17) Presbyterian Church, 18) John C. Hall House 1875, 19) Cindy and Mark Stockman’s House, 20) St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, 21) Clifton Lagoons, 22) Elliott Ness House, 23) Mike and Rhonda Loje’s House, 24) York’s Beach, 25) City of Cleveland



MAMA’s Holiday Hop

by Justine Cooper

MAMA’s Holiday Hop on December 1st was filled with magical events from Santa at vintage Mahall’s Bowling alley to professional Carolers, from Vox Element to Santa for children and their pets at Pet’s General. There were refreshments and sales and open houses, including Lakewood’s newest business Metropolitan Staging hosting an upscale Open House featuring their own wine from their winery in Kelly’s Island! Pop Shop Gallery had a full house perusing their art while Wobblefoot Gallery impressed locals with their fine art collection!



Aidan is not that thrilled to ride in Santa’s Rocket Car after he blasted down Detroit Ave. at Light Up Lakewood.



Jay, Perla and Little Michael visit Santa with their Guinea Pig at Pet’s General Store.



Santa and Lakewood family Mikale, Brittaney, Brandon, and Kaila

Goddess Blessed owner Kathy Curran stated “The Carolers were the best part of the day for me! I had a full house and they all came out and sang with the Carolers!” The Twelve Shops of Christmas contest winner, Michael Sanders is not only a Lakewood resident but a reservest and was thrilled to have some extra Christmas shopping money! All participating businesses were joyful to be part of yearly tradition and meet new customers while visiting with loyal customers! They all express their gratitude for those that come out and patronize their business

throughout the year and wish you the Happiest, most Loving and Peaceful Holiday and year ever!



Twelve Shops of Christmas contest winners Michael Sanders and his fiancée Christina Michael was born and raised in Lakewood and is currently an Army reservest. It could not have come at a better time as they are leaving for Las Vegas next week to be wed! Congratulations and thanks to all who entered the contest!



This young local caroling group is Vox Element; Lindsay Jordan, soprano; Bettyjeane Wischmeier, alto and Jonathon Berner, tenor. Evan Wilhelms, bass and Brian Kleve, bass donated their time for this holiday event! For booking please contact: Bettyjeane Wischmeier at 440-666-6230 or bwischmeier@gmail.com

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Lakewood Perspective

The Religious Right...And Wrong

Bret Callentine

Let's get something straight, right at the outset. I prefer the term "Jesus Freak", not "Bible Thumper", "Holy Roller", or even "Religious Fanatic". "Jesus Freak" is just fine. Specifically, I'm a Christian, raised in the Methodist Church, married to a Charismatic Catholic, and currently pursuing my faith at a Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod). Call me whatever you want, but don't ever assume that my faith is based on peer pressure, stems from a personal insecurity, or is born out of some kind of fear of death or the unknown.

And I'm serious when I say "call me whatever you want". I know who I am and I feel secure about my beliefs. Further, I'm not the type that is bothered by opposing points of view. I don't take personal offense at movies such as "the Last Temptation of Christ" or even the recent release, "the Golden Compass". Sure, reading a book that proclaims

religion to be worthless might not be my first choice, but it doesn't bother me that they're out there. This country is based on the right not only to have differences, but to display them proudly. After all, this is America, not the Sudan.

The reason I go into this now is that, knowing my religious foundation, a lot of people have been asking me my opinion regarding the British teacher who got into trouble by naming the class teddy bear Muhammad. Filled with a surplus of generally misinformed, pre-conceived notions about the behavior of us Jesus Freaks, many people were very surprised by my answer. I think the punishment fit the crime. I'm saddened by the fact that there are people and countries out there who feel this type of religious law is necessary; however, she should have

at least been aware of these laws before taking the job or moving to the country in the first place.

That said, I do take issue with anyone who thinks this system of religious beliefs is acceptable, just not with a government or courts that simply uphold the existing law. My beef is with the religious leaders who teach hate, subservience and intolerance in a thinly veiled attempt to hold power, wealth and position. They should be preaching love, freedom and compassion in the hopes of sharing the salvation of the soul that awaits anyone with the strength to seek it.

I would argue that what's happening in many of the Middle Eastern theocracies has very little to do with religion at all. The very nature of religion is that while the observance of its practices can be mandatory, true belief

of its teachings cannot. I'm just not sure that some of the more radical leaders of Islam have ever heard the saying, "you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink". I don't know about the other major religions, but when Jesus Christ commissioned his disciples to "go out, teach, and baptize," he didn't add the phrase, "and kill anyone who doesn't cooperate". True faith cannot come from force.

Even if faith could be coerced, what does it say about the primacy of a deity if their followers fear the simplest scrutiny? If any practice, belief or ritual cannot hold up to question and, yes, even criticism, its validity is dubious at best. But then validating their practices has never been a primary concern when it comes to being a religious zealot. How often in history have bad things been justified by the pretext that "it's for the good of the people", or that it's a "necessary evil"? Before Jihad, there was "ethnic cleansing", before that, the Holocaust, and before that, the Crusades. History is clear in its understanding of what is and isn't a "necessary evil", even if the present is still undecided.

Pray For Peace...Really?

by Shelly Gould Burgess

I get frustrated. I want the world to be a better place, but it seems to be deteriorating around me not just day-by-day, but minute-by-minute. I try to do what I can to have a positive impact on the world while working full-time, raising two small children and being supportive of a husband with a new business. I recycle; I vote. In my life I've been a community activist, political activist, vegan-turned-vegetarian (cheese weakness!) and a teacher. I've worked hard. Yet every time I turn on NPR I hear news of a new tragedy somewhere: a cyclone that killed 2400 people in Bangladesh, a roadside bomb in Iraq that killed soldiers and children during distribution of toys, a nightmare here, a disaster there. I think everyone who is more concerned with activism than apathy gets frustrated at times.

I think for activists the idea of turning inward to make a difference seems at best futile and at worst like the ghost of the hippie era ("Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me - tra la

la!"). I've come to the conclusion that the best way for me to make the world a better place is to become a better, more evolved person. The kindnesses I can muster despite the stress of daily life make as big or a bigger impact than my (also important) activism. I'm not saying that voting and campaigning don't matter, but I am saying that by trying to find some peacefulness inside myself and, as a result, being nicer to the people around me, I make an important impact on the world.

Prayer and meditation are essential to this. I've been meditating and praying for peace for almost twenty years, and it has made a difference (no matter what my cynical husband says). Do you remember those computer-generated "Magic Eye" pictures from a decade ago? It's sort of like that for me; looking at something and seeing it on one level when suddenly a whole new picture emerges - one that was there all the time. When I pray that the world is changing for the better, I start to see a peaceful state develop in the world around me.

With this in mind, on December 10th the Shri Ram Chandra Mission, the organization behind the raja yoga meditation practice Sahaj Marg, is joining with the United Nations to host worldwide prayer sessions for peace. SRCM is a non-profit, non-governmental organization associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information. SRCM is not associated with a church or religion. The idea behind the prayer sessions is that people in communities all over the world will sit together and simultaneously pray that the world is becoming more peaceful. It is hoped the prayers will have a cumulative effect. This event will take place locally in Lakewood, Strongsville, Cleveland, University Heights, and Wooster and coincides with the United Nations Human Rights Day. Human Rights Day is observed worldwide on the occasion of the drafting in 1948 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

You're invited. We won't be addressing envelopes for a candidate or making phone calls in support of an important bill. We'll just sit together in a room and imagine that the world is becoming more loving and peaceful. You have to admit it's not a bad way to daydream and in conjunction with other people doing the same thing at the same time in other places, maybe... just maybe...it will make a difference. It certainly can't hurt. Please come and see activism in perhaps a different way, through the heart and mind. We'll be meeting on December 10th at 7:00 in the Women's Pavilion at Lakewood Park. We'll talk first about ideas of how to pray, and then we'll just dive in and do it for about fifteen minutes. Then we'll eat...in a world whose Magic Eye picture just may be more visible by the time we're through.

The reason people like Osama bin Laden attack the United States is not because we represent an affront to his God, his Prophet, or his religious practice, it's because we demonstrate the very possibility that religion and faith can prosper in a free society. The West isn't a threat to Islam so much as it is a threat to the individual Imam. After all, there is no insult without pride, ego, and especially insecurity, traits not even I would suggest are associated with Muhammad.

I also have a problem with people who extol the premise "do as I say, not as I do". I always wondered how an entire country could follow a short, skinny, ugly looking, dark haired man who preached the virtues of creating an "Aryan" nation. Yet you get the same thing out of leaders who explain that becoming a martyr is the greatest possible fate, yet are usually the first ones into the "spider hole" when things get tough. I'm not trying to insinuate any superiority here, but when the hummus hit the fan for Jesus, he took the cross himself, he didn't go run and hide in the hills of Pakistan.

I'm not trying to start some kind of a holy war here. I'm just trying to get my point across that in the last half century or so the very goals of most organized religions have taken a beating at the hands of a relatively small group that chooses earthly greed over heavenly gain. I pray that atheists, agnostics, or those unfamiliar will not close their eyes to the blessings of grace due to the injustice that is done in the name of God, whatever that God's name may be.

Challenge my spirituality and I will debate you, however refuse to worship my God and I will not fight you. I simply ask that you evaluate my religion by watching those who love, not those who hate.

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The Holidaze: Is That All?

I heard recently that the average American gains seven pounds between Thanksgiving and New Years. I was flabbergasted. “Is that ALL?” I thought, incredulous. I mean, we are in the middle of a season that centers, more than any other, on consumption, not only of food, but also the related bacchanalia of seasonal consumerism. We eat ourselves fat as we spend our wallets thin. And at the end of it, as we look back onto what we had hoped would be memorable holidaze, we are likely to think, “Is that all?”

What we lose, in all the frenetic effort of parties, piles of gifts and unrealistic expectations, is the reality that the most important thing we take with us from the gatherings of family and friends are the memories; not the sweater, the tie or the added pounds, but the memory of special moments. The gifts or the food may contribute, but, in the end, those are faded, broken, and we have only the memories. And this is indeed the time to build them, because in the end, that is all there is.

I grew up in a beautiful Georgian behemoth. The spirit of consumerism has since ruined its century-old graciousness as new owners declined historic preservation in favor of cul-de-sac additions, deforestation, and other modern “improvements”. But this season still draws me back to the three-storied open stairway of my childhood home, rising from the end of a center hall, with the monstrous Christmas tree at the other end. This is the stage for my Christmas memories. Much of it is a blur, with one year melding into another, but there are still those moments that stand out with a vivid sharpness that belies their distant past. The Christmas that I received the “Johnny Reb” cannon, I discovered that, given the proper elevation from the stairway landing, it was possible to shoot the tennis ball sized ammunition and shatter the antique, hand blown ornaments off the Christmas tree. One year, as I emerged from my room after changing into my authentic Cleveland Indians uniform, I stumbled upon my father paying Santa his appearance fee.

Most of all, I am drawn back to the kitchen, with its smells and warmth. The Christmas kitchen. Oh, the aromas and the delightful tasty treats which flowed from that God-awful avocado green oven. My mother would frequently refer to it as her “crummy bake oven”, but the food that emerged from it was anything but crummy. Gingerbread men and sugar cookies with colorful candy decorations and sugary sticky frosting. Sweet yeasty Christmas

bread with citron and cardamom, fresh from the oven on Christmas morning with steaming plates of fluffy scrambled eggs with chives and cream cheese. Turkeys the size of my little brother, with savory herbed sage stuffing. My father’s “spoil your dinner” eggnog.

No doubt it all added some pounds, but that wasn’t all, no, not by a long shot. There were the memories, still as vivid as when the events took place decades ago. The sound of the sugar under foot, almost as if we were walking at the sea shore on the Outer Banks. Standing there in an apron several sizes too large as my mother patiently helped us to roll out the chilled butter cookie dough and cut out the cookies. The taste of the lemony frosting and

the smell of vanilla and anise seeds as we artfully decorated our creations, making sure that there was always a special one for Santa. And, of course, eating any “mistakes” that we may have created, as we “taste tested” the candy decorations, just to assure that they were fresh.

There was also a burned mouth from an uncooled cookie and maybe a finger burn or two, lessons taught quickly and learned well. But also learned was the more important lesson of including everyone in the process of memory-building. Of making sure that each has an important role to play, from helping in basting the turkey, to decorating the cookies, to stirring the Christmas morning eggs. As we mud-

dle through the busiest season of the year, remember not only to carve a perfect slice of turkey or ham, but also to carve a slice of time. It is the greatest gift of all and the foundation of the memories we cherish.

The Johnny Reb cannon is long since gone, as is the munchkin-sized Indians uniform. Countless other gifts have passed through our hands, broken, worn out, discarded. The additional holiday pounds remain a constant for those of us who love to cook (or consume the production that we create), but is that all that these times with our families and loved ones mean? The truer measure is the accumulation of the priceless memories. And as we reflect upon those, we are justified in asking, “Is that all?” for there can never be enough.

Jeff Endress

Forget About Losing Weight

by Jeffrey Lambert-Shemo

With the New Year around the corner, “How to Lose Weight” will be covering magazines at the grocery stores, leading the broadcast on the Today Show and hitting you in between eight-minute segments of your favorite reruns. Fortunately, there is a way around the media telling us all that we are fat and giving us the answers through four-minute ab routines, flavorless no-butter mashed potato recipes and tips on which \$1,800 elliptical machine will hold the most amount of laundry when we stop using it on January 13. This year, utilize realism in goal making and motivate yourself.

Most goals will include a weight loss number, such as 10, 20, 30 pounds or more. That number is given the entire job of motivating a human being who faces emotional stress, chocolate cravings, the need for a cocktail at the end of the night and the horrible responsibility of enjoying one’s self at a party. This is quite a bit of responsibility for a little number.

Individuals oftentimes give the job of motivating to someone or something else. But weight control programs, personal trainers or weight loss medications can get quite expensive, and only seem to motivate for as long they are getting paid to motivate you. So what is the answer? Be your own motivation.

If you truly want to change your life and your outward appearance, do it for you and do not trust anyone else to do it for you. Utilize professional assistance such as weight loss programs, nutritionists and fitness professionals

to help you with your goals, but do not rely on them to motivate you. These individuals have the knowledge to teach you the appropriate actions required to help you reach your goals, and a little knowledge can go a long way. Just realize that they are being paid to help you, not to motivate you long-term.

Now, back to goals. Goal setting is one of the best ways to keep yourself motivated. However, the goal you set can make or break your success. If you want to lose weight, set a concrete goal that will help you to lose weight, rather than having weight loss as your goal. If weight loss is your primary goal, your actions will simply be pieces in the puzzle towards reaching your goal. Instead set a goal to change your actions, which will result in weight loss, making weight loss a secondary goal.

The best motivation I have found

is to pick a date and make a lifestyle change that you will maintain until you reach that date. Then reassess. For instance, set a goal this January to exercise three times per week until May. Utilize professionals to help you if necessary. Find a fitness professional or a club like the YMCA to help you reach your goal of exercising. As a side benefit you may lose some weight, but I guarantee you will feel better about yourself and be healthier come May 1.

Another option is to set a goal to change your eating habits until May 1. With this option you can utilize a weight loss program or, better yet, a nutritionist to help you change your eating habits. You will likely reach your secondary goal of weight loss by May 1.

This year, don’t make a resolution—make a change and reap the benefits.

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Lakewood Pets

CCLAS, Citizens' Committee For A Lakewood Animal Shelter, Hosts "Angel Trees"

by Donna Blakesmith

Merry Christmas Everyone!!!

Our "Angel Trees" are up for the season!!! Greg, the owner of Pet's General Store, 16821 Madison Avenue, and fellow CCLAS member, is once again hosting one of our trees in his store window. The Lakewood Public Library, 15425 Detroit Avenue, is the host for our other tree in the new building of the Main Branch. Our "Angel Tree" is located on the first floor, in the main reading room.

As in past years, for each \$5.00 donation, an angel ornament will be placed on one of the trees for the entire Christmas season (the trees will be taken down immediately after New Year's Day). Each angel will have the name of the donor's pet being remembered or honored, along with the owner's name. And, as in past years, every cent of every donation goes towards the Lakewood Animal Shelter and the animals of Lakewood.

CCLAS and the City of Lakewood share the cost of having every animal adopted from our Shelter spayed or

neutered. Some of the "Angel Tree" donations go towards that fund.

We are hoping that not only will you donate many angels to our trees, but also ask your friends, family, and neighbors to decorate the trees too. Ask them if they would like to become involved. Look at the attached "Angel Tree" form - there are spaces for information if the donor would like to become a CCLAS member and/or volunteer.

As an incentive, if anyone donates \$50.00 or more, not including membership dues, they will receive a handmade, punched tin ornament for their own tree at home. As you do your Christmas bustling, ask the stores you shop in if they would display one of our posters and some brochures with the donation form inside. Ask them if they would donate to our trees.

Especially the Lakewood establishments. Anyone who can help pass out brochures and place "Angel Tree" posters around town, please contact me and I will get supplies to you.

And then, stop by and see our "Angel Trees" and have a wonderful holiday season!

Adopt A Pet



Holly is the one with red ribbons. She is #490, a girl, a fluffy gray dust-bunny, and a bit over a month, old. She is the one starting trouble.

Ivy is the one in the green ribbon. She is #492, a girl, and the rest of her info is the same as Holly. She is the one looking cute, trying to be good....and slipping into the hat. Their mother is a medium sized cat, and these kittens seem to follow her, size-wise.

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Pulse Of The City

The Leap Of Faith--Not Silver Or Gold...

The cold clammy plastic oxygen tent covering my frail undersized body distorted my view of the quiet, anti-septic hospital room. The soft plastic see-through walls of the tent made the outside world appear like a fun-house to my scared little eyes. Close by, my mother, father, and a clergyman conferred in subdued tones. I'd just experienced a surgery on my throat. Things had not gone very well. What remained was a game of watching and waiting. Only it was not a game...and it was certainly no funhouse.

I endured quite a few surgeries as a child, attempting to correct various throat and ear conditions. During that time, I learned much about prayer, and about the leap of faith.

Our different religions have various ways of dealing with the trials of life. Over the years, I've had the opportunity to learn about many of our faith traditions. Surprisingly, or perhaps not so, there are many common threads in our great faiths. That more commonality has not been emphasized has probably been due to the historic position taken by many religions that they alone have the only true pathway. Because of this, confusion, frustration, and, at times, conflict and bloodshed have been the sad results of many of the religious interactions in history. As a result, the topics of politics and religion are normally avoided by many who simply seek to live and let live with one another. In many ways, that's a shame. Both of these topics have been crucial in the shaping of the world as we know it today. There is, indeed, much to discuss among us.

That this discussion is becoming even more crucial is due in no small part to the proliferation of nuclear arms in the world. At some point, religious or political animosity might well escalate to the point that humankind's very existence is threatened. Although the most visible issues seem to be between Eastern and Western worldviews, the fact remains that even in our own country many people seem to be more aggressive in espousing their particular religious or political perspectives. America, from its inception, has been a

pluralistic society. Although there were official churches in several of the states at the time of America's revolution against England, our national policy with religion was stated in the establishment clause of our Constitution's First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

From this document was drawn the concept of "separation of church and state," although in the last fifty years or so, vigorous debate has ensued as to exactly how separated church and government should be--particularly in the field of education and the celebration of holidays.

Should government be concerned with religious holidays? By that word's historic definition, "holiday" derives from the old meaning: "Holy Day." Interestingly, after the violent French Revolution, an effort was made to wipe out all religious holidays, and even to replace the calendar and change the measurement of time itself! The decimal system, based on multiples of 10, was incorporated with French clocks (each minute having 100 seconds, with 100 minute hours, and 10 hour days), the calendar (still divided into 12 months but of 30 days' duration each), and the week (divided into 10 days). Holy days were "replaced" by days honoring secular humankind. Months were renamed after events of nature like Germinal (seed) and Thermidor (heat). Each day was noted (instead of being a Saint's day) by having an association with a natural item--i.e. the 8th day of Nivose was Fumier (manure) day.

Fortunately, this system only lasted for a few years, until Napoleon Bonaparte restored the traditional order of things. The decimal system of measurement is the principal remnant of this significant effort to diminish the role of religion in a society.

It probably would be safe to say the French Revolution ignited the discussions about science and religion that continue to this day. The thing is, one

Gary Rice

is about facts and the other is about faith, or perhaps accepting faith as fact. I see no conflict between science and religion at all. To the contrary, science, to me, helps to increase my faith. Nothing that I learned in a science class, with the notable exception of dissection, has interfered with my faith. Even dissection has its purpose. I simply would have trouble doing it. I very much enjoy learning about our various faiths. I can celebrate my own faith tradition, while at the same time appreciate the faiths of others.

This is indeed the time of Christmas. It also is the time of Chanukkah for those of the Jewish tradition. Christmas, of course, celebrates the birth of Jesus in the town of Bethlehem, in the city of David. Chanukkah is a Jewish holiday, held on the 25th day of the month Kislev, in the Jewish calendar. The holiday celebrates the significant miracle of one day's supply of lamp oil lasting for eight days in the Temple during a revolt in ancient times.

Some people these days prefer to say "Happy Holidays" in order not to offend anyone this time of year. I suppose I tend to say either "Merry Christmas" or "Happy Chanukkah," depending on whom I am speaking

with. I have many good friends among Christians, Jews, and people of other faiths. Greetings, to me, while important, are but a window looking into the wonder of faith.

You see, I truly do believe in faith... and miracles too. So many times since those dark hospital days of my childhood, I have gone to prayer and those prayers were answered in incredibly sublime and powerful ways. Here's just one example: Just a few weeks ago, I suffered from two toothaches at the same time! While I was waiting for a dental appointment, I was driven as close as I've ever been to the breaking point one night just before bedtime. Although my own faith tradition was not Catholic, a simple plastic rosary had been given to me a few years ago by a fellow at a flea market. Grabbing the plastic rosary from my nightstand, I placed it around my neck, saying "Not silver or gold...if I have to suffer, Jesus, let it be with Thee."

Taking that leap of faith, I found that the pain was gone instantly. That's all I can tell you.

Merry Christmas! Happy Chanukkah! Happy whatever-your-faith! I wish a comforting faith of some kind for all of you in this hectic and uncertain time, as we mark the pulse of this city for another year.



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The First R (Reduce!)

Heather Ramsey

In 2006, Americans threw away 251 million tons of solid waste. That averages out to 4.6 pounds per person per day. More than half of this waste is discarded in landfills, and more than half is coming from homes and apartments (rather than businesses). I don't know how that number strikes you, but to me that seems like an awful lot of trash. Though recycling has increased in recent years, trash has continued to increase as well. So the first, and generally best, method to take care of our trash problem is to decrease the amount of trash we create.

This method, known as source reduction, has been made famous as the first R in the three R's of waste management: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. Source reduction simply means reducing the amount of trash we create, and it is the first priority in managing waste. Reducing waste is important not only because of the unappealing nature of landfill growth and proliferation, but also because it conserves the resources used both in making products that end up as trash and managing the trash after it is created.

By buying fewer items that will end up in the trash, or items with less packaging, you are saving the resources that would've been used in making said items or said packaging. This could

mean leaving trees standing to absorb carbon dioxide or using less oil to create a plastic package and then ship it to your local store. Not only that, but the waste you prevent will be saved from transportation (which emits greenhouse gases from the burning of the fuel used in the transport to the landfill), incineration (which emits carbon dioxide, and the even more dangerous nitrous oxide), and/or decomposition (which emits methane, also more dangerous than carbon dioxide). By reducing our trash to 1990 levels (cutting about 45 million tons overall and slimming our waste per person to around 3.75 pounds per day), we would prevent the carbon emissions equivalent of 18 million tons!

The question becomes, of course, how to do it. For this particular target, each person would have to reduce

their waste by around 20% (eliminating around .85 pounds per day). As packaging and containers make up practically a third of household waste, that might be a good place to start. Much of today's packaging exists more to get your attention with an attractive display than to protect the product inside. Next time you are selecting between similar products, choose the one with less unnecessary packaging. When buying produce, opt to buy it unpackaged when possible. Similarly, buy things in bulk and in concentrate (when practical)--one larger box or bottle takes fewer resources than many smaller boxes or bottles would, and this is often reflected by a lower price! If you live alone, try to reduce the single-serving packages that you buy, and, instead, opt for larger packages that allow for easy saving of leftovers for future use.

Unfortunately, the amount of trash is not the only problem--there is also toxicity to consider. Many household products contain any number of

dangerous chemicals, from formaldehyde to sulfuric acid, which then end up in our landfills. When using products with hazardous ingredients, be sure to follow the directions carefully and use only the amount that you need. Consider replacing these products with safer alternatives, such as baking soda, vinegar, or lemon juice. Tips are available at <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/reduce/catbook/alt.htm>. Also, consider recycling things like motor oil and old batteries (simply drop them off at the Lakewood Recycling Center) rather than disposing of them yourself.

As paper and plastics make up nearly half of our trash, conscious decisions about the packaging we buy can make a big difference. Just don't go overboard and buy more than you can use--the savings on packaging won't help much if you're throwing away all of the leftovers! Not only can your buying decisions save you money, but creating less trash will save the city money, as well as helping our environment.

Just For Today...

by Ronald Ciancutti

Just for today:

Let's not be so quick to judge the guy going too slow in the car in front of you or the woman that has to get a price check at the register for an unmarked item. You've been that person on occasion.

Just for today:

When you see your children seeking approval, even though you don't like what they did, give it to them anyways. They hang on your words and live for your approval -- just like you did and probably still do with your parents.

Just for today:

Bypass that want inside of you to deliver a thinly veiled insult or depreciating remark to someone you don't really care for. They know you don't like them. They know you are thinking plenty of negative things. Let it go. Be the bigger person.

Just for today:

After you park the car and before you get out, stop. Close your eyes. Put into perspective the importance of your day. Someone did your job before you and someone will do it after you. Your bills will get paid, your problems will get worked out, and some won't end so well. There is nothing to do about the problems of the past -- let them go. Try to remember that your days on this planet are limited. Are you sure you want to waste another one embroiled in regret and anger? This is a new day. Do something with it others would envy. When's the last time you met your spouse for lunch?

Just for today:

In the privacy of your home when no one is watching, turn the TV on and wait for a commercial you really hate to come on or a talk show host to tell you how to live, diet, exercise, find love, deal with your divorce, or build your own jewelry business at home, and when you are completely sick of them, turn your back side to the screen and shoot them a moon like you used to in high school. That's right, a big shiny full moon, maybe give it slap or two to bring home the point. Then as demurely as possible pull up, shut off the set, and go make your self a hot fudge sundae. And lick the bowl at the end.

Just for today:

Respect the powers on this earth and outside of this earth that are far greater than yours. Laws of God and nature made us all equal. The most rotten prisoner on death row had a mother who bore him and a want for happiness in his life. Are you judging without being judged? Are you disregarding people because your position is higher than your own? Hey buddy, who the heck are you? There but for grace my friends...but for the grace...

Just for today:

Open your heart and your mind to give without expecting a return. Don't kill the messenger today; the bank teller who doesn't really know why you are overdrawn, the pizza delivery kid who forgot to bring your pop with the order, the oblivious senior citizen counting pennies out in line in front of you. Would it kill you to say, "That's okay?" Or even "Here, let me help you."

Try to recall:

Your days on this earth that did not include such worry, hassle, or frenzy. I watched a mother of three in the mall the other day; the oldest was maybe 5. The youngest was about 2 and was clearly the "easy" child. The other two were fussing, and she was trying to set out their Happy Meals, and take off their coats, and get everything in order amidst absolute chaos. When she finally exhaled and slumped into her seat next to the two year old, he waited a moment, looked at her, and then offered her a French fry. She melted and absorbed him with a hug. It choked me with emotion. Such a simple act of kindness turning a whole situation upside down. You have that opportunity each and every day. What do you say? You gonna use it or do you have much more important things to do today?

Start the New Year with a new attitude; just for one day. If you notice that the love you spread grows exponentially, maybe try a second day, even a third. What a difference you could make.

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You Are Here

The Glue That Makes It All Work

Carolynne Zettler was raised in Sandusky. She and her husband spent some time in Boston before deciding that Lakewood was the place they wanted to call home, fifteen years ago. Carolynne is a Registered Nurse who works for Lakewood Hospital and the Help Me Grow program. We met Carolynne when she did our home visit just days after our daughter, Storey, was born. We invited Carolynne to participate in the “You Are Here” project at that time, when she suggested that we do the interview in our home as her favorite place in Lakewood. “Our house is your favorite place in Lakewood?” we asked. She responded that, while our house is nice, her favorite place is in the homes of all the families with newborn babies, where she regularly does her Help Me Grow site visits. We were happy to oblige her. Carolynne kindly shared with us what brought her and her husband to Lakewood and what has kept her here ever since.

“We appreciated the old homes,” Carolynne told us. “My husband had done lots and lots of work on homes and it didn’t faze us at all to put up an addition – he knew how to do that stuff, so an older home didn’t scare us. We liked the wooden floors and the woodwork; we always liked that. But we knew also that we had to be near Cleveland because of my husband’s work as an environmental engineer. My in-laws lived in Lakewood, [so] we looked in Lakewood. I was just supposed to look at suburbs, and we were seeing so much, coming from the Boston prices. I started in Westlake and was like, ‘Oh, we can afford this,’ and we looked in Avon Lake, ‘Oh, I can afford this.’ I came to Lakewood and was like, ‘WOW, we can really afford this!’ And it was a good feeling. I con-

Jason Weiner & Kris Williams



Carolynne Zettler with Storey Rain Williams.

vinced my husband to fly in to look at a house. We bought the house a week later and moved in that summer. So it was definitely affordable for a new family and you know, we never knew how long we would stay here but friends have kept us here.

“I think, for my family, the strongest part of Lakewood is people,” Carolynne continued. “I came here pregnant, not knowing a soul other than my in-laws – I actually did know one other couple – and, being pregnant, you’re just looking for doctors, you’re looking for hospitals, you’re looking for groups... The one friend I did know here said, ‘Oh, you have to look into Lakewood Early Child PTA!’ And so I did. I had my daughter at Lakewood Hospital...I had all of my kids at Lakewood. When it was time for me to switch my careers, (because of family – I was working evenings but as the kids get older, that’s where their time was now, in the eve-

ning, going to practices and lessons), I went back to Lakewood Hospital, for Help Me Grow and doing home visits. I joined Lakewood Early Childhood PTA and met – still – my best friends. I met them with their “firsts,” as we call them, and now there’s four of us that had been in a play group for fifteen years, and we had 13 kids among us all and they’re just good friends. I think the more time you spend as a new mother with other women, there’s just

so much you have in common, so many wonderful experiences and none of us worked full time, so we always had the really-needed experience of doing things together. That bonding and those friendships have kept us here. That, to me, is such a sense of community, and that’s what keeps you here. My daughter is now in high school, and Lakewood High School is huge, but there are so many people I know and so many people I trust.”

“Every step along the way there’s fabulous opportunities: we’ve used the Beck Center, the Y, the library; so many neat opportunities for the kids and for the families,” Carolynne concluded. “I think the more you do together, the more you play together, the more you interact with the community, that’s kind of the glue, I think, that makes it all work. And what I’m trying to do through my visits, I always recommend the Nursing Mom’s Chat and the Family Room. A first time mom, or somebody new to the community, they have no idea. So, that’s what I’m encouraging and looking forward to.”

You Are Here is a project that highlights what Lakewood residents think and feel about their city. Interested in participating? Please contact Jason or Kris at 216.221.5146 or lakewoodandyou@yahoo.com.*



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Lakewood Arts & Entertainment

Your Lakewood Neighbors Appearing On Stage At Beck Center

by Fran Storch

One of your Lakewood neighbors or friends may be appearing in Beck Center's upcoming production of Disney's Beauty and the Beast, now through December 30 on the Mackey Main Stage. The following cast members call Lakewood their home: Josh Cutting, Amy Christina Hall, Lesley Dohrn, Assad Khaishgi, Lee Domenick, Larry Nehring, Rachel Fichter and Persis Sosiak.

Lee Domenick portrays Monsieur D'Arque, the warden of the insane asylum. Ironically, in real life, he is an Episcopal priest and Rector of Church of the Ascension on Detroit Avenue.

Amy Christina Hall is Madame de la Grande Bouche, the opera-singing wardrobe. She attended the Cleveland Institute of Music where she completed a Professional Studies degree in Voice in 2004. Amy has performed with the Cleveland Opera on Tour.

Originally from Karachi, Pakistan, Assad Khaishgi moved to Lakewood in 2001. He loves this show as well as dancing and singing as the Dinner Bell.

Professional Equity actor, Larry Nehring returns in his role as Lumière, the debonair candlestick. He has been an active part of the local theater community for the last 13 years. Larry is Artistic Director of the Cleveland Shakespeare Festival.

New to the cast this year are Josh Cutting (Candle Man), Lesley Dohr (Lady with Baby/Broom & Dustpan), Rachel Fichter (Silly Girl/Plate), and Persis A. Sosiak (Spoon/Villager). They join a cast of over 40 actors, singers and dancers who bring this fairy tale to life on the Beck Center stage.

This is the Beck Center's third and final production of this Disney favorite – just in time for the holidays. Audiences young and old will enjoy this "tale as old as time." Don't miss it. For show times and to reserve tick-



ets, call the Beck Center Box Office at (216) 521-2540 or online at www.beckcenter.org.

The Versatile Wobblefoot Gallery

by Marc Mannheimer

Diversity is pervasive at the Wobblefoot Gallery, a peek around the corner from Madison Avenue at 1662 Mars. Behind its deceptively small storefront lies a long hall displaying

soothing watercolors of freight ships and detailed nature landscapes by featured artist, Chris Gregg, and two large adjoining gallery rooms holding portraits, a smidge of impressionistic work and plenty of imaginative paintings involving animals of various genres.

In my two visits to this gallery and framing studio owned by Tubal Cogar, I found the animal pictures to be particularly intriguing. Upon first entering Wobblefoot on the night of the October MAMA artwalk, my attention slipped past the Kachina dolls at the entrance and the already noted freight ships and landed on a large oil painting of a jungle elephant metamorphosing in stages into a butterfly.

If this concept compelled me, I was taken to another level by the numerous and somewhat surrealistic acrylics by Robert Tubbesing in the first display room. His one or two human and animal figures in each work are dwarfed by elaborate surroundings so fantastical and intricate as to boggle the mind. In "Cathedral Tiger", a construct of multi-hued, geometrical patterns frame the image of a tiger with haunting light green eyes.

Also of interest at Wobblefoot is a book written and illustrated by Tubal, entitled "The Journeys of Wobblefoot". It can now be ordered at the shop and online at wobblefoot.com. From the looks of a sample copy, it is quite an adventure, a book for both children and adults, accompanied by colorful beautifully executed illustrations. Hours at the gallery are convenient -- 10 A.M. - 5 P.M., Tuesday - Friday, Saturday, 10 A.M. - 3 P.M., and Monday by appointment. For more information, call -- (216) 226-2971 or visit the website.

Realty Reality: Questions From Our Readers

by Maggie Fraley
Realtor

Clients frequently ask, "What's next?" after finding a home that they love. Although each transaction is very different, there is a general sequence that is consistent in most cases. So, in this issue I'll be sharing the *timeline of a transaction*.

*An offer is written (called the Purchase Agreement).

*A promissory note for the earnest money is included with the offer (can be 1-5% of the purchase price). The buyer will redeem this note by a bank check after the offer is accepted, and it will be applied to the down payment at closing.

*The seller will accept, reject or make a counter-offer.

*Within a few days (or hours!), negotiations will be completed, and the buyer and seller have an accepted offer.

*An inspection is usually scheduled to occur within 7 days from the

time of the accepted offer (the listing is then contingent).

*After the inspection, the results are accepted or rejected. Or, if there are safety hazards or major defects revealed after the inspection, the buyer and seller may choose to negotiate repairs. Then inspection results are accepted by both parties and the contingency status is changed to pending.

*From the time of the accepted offer, the buyer will have 21 days to formally apply for a loan. Unlike the pre-approval, this is a binding loan agreement with the lender. Title work will begin during this same time period.

*The time to close varies. The time of an accepted offer to the time that the buyer receives the keys typically varies between 30 and 60 days, but can be shorter or longer in some circumstances.

*In Northeast Ohio, the buyer and seller sign all documents separately. A few days before title transfers, the escrow agent will meet with them

individually to sign all documents and receive the balance of the buyer's down payment (the total specified in the offer, minus the earnest money).

*The deed is filed and the title transferred, typically soon after the meeting with the escrow agent.

*The new owner usually takes possession of the home on the same day as the title transfer, especially when a house is vacant. Infrequently it may be as many as 5 days later. If a longer period is agreed to, the seller pays "rent back" to the buyer as part of the contract. Those dates would be chosen at the time of the offer, based on what works best for the two parties involved.

Your realtor facilitates all aspects of the transaction, communicating with all parties, providing necessary documents, negotiating any problems, and keeping the transaction on time while keeping the buyer informed of each step, what is needed, and what will occur next.

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Lakewood Real Estate

The Time Is Right—Don't Wait To Buy A Home In Lakewood

by Kathy Lewis
Realtor

Now is the time to buy a house in Lakewood! As of December 2, 2007, the local Multiple Listing Service advertises 315 single-family homes (115 of which are priced under \$120,000), 152 two-to-three family homes, and 103 condominiums listed with real estate brokers. Choices are excellent!

It isn't news that we are currently experiencing a buyers' market in our area, as are the majority of communities in the US. Inventory of available houses is high, market times are longer than we experienced a few years ago, and good values are obtainable. Fixed interest rates for mortgage loans are very favorable. If you are considering a home purchase,

these conditions are terrific for you.

Also, lenders are eager to work with you and they have programs that are very attractive. Homebuyers can purchase a HUD home with a \$100 down payment when they use FHA financing. Also, sales allowances can be obtained with this FHA financing. These allowances can be put towards closing costs, repairs on the house, or paying down the unpaid principal balance of the mortgage. The new incentives will be offered on bids placed on or after November 15, 2007, and will expire on September 30, 2008. For more information on this program, see <http://www.fha.gov>, call 1-800-CALLFHA, or call a local loan officer who works with FHA financing.

First-time buyers in Lakewood may qualify for the Lakewood Home

Program, which offers down payment assistance. Both First Federal of Lakewood and Key Bank administer this program and can provide details on whether or not this program may work for you.

It's almost winter, and many buyers hold off looking for a house at this time of year. That means less competition with other buyers for available properties and better opportunity to negotiate with a seller. It also means sellers may be more motivated to negotiate post-inspection issues with you. Sellers are also more likely to offer incentives and consider helping a buyer with closing costs when market conditions are as they are now.

Even if you have a house to sell, you may want to consider taking advantage of these favorable buying conditions. You have the opportunity now to pur-

chase your next home at a great price. When you list your house to sell, take steps to stand out from your competition. Stage your home to show well, make necessary repairs, and preview your competition so you know how to price competitively. An experienced real estate agent can help you with all of these matters. Houses in good condition, priced appropriately, are selling.

While we hear much negative information about the conditions of the real estate market in our area and across the country, consider the positive impact of these conditions for making a purchase now. Historically, real estate has been a good investment in the long-term. Nearly nine out of ten consumers believe that buying a home is a good financial decision. Maybe for you, this is the time to make that decision and start building home equity.



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