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Volume 7, Issue 1, January 11, 2011

Introducing Lakewood's New Leadership

New Leadership At Fire Department Too

by Melissa Garrett

Mayor Michael P. Summers has announced Scott Gilman and Dave Dargay as his appointees for Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief, respectively, for the City of Lakewood. Gilman is replacing Larry Mroz who recently retired after 37 years of service to the City. Assistant Fire Chief Dargay will be filling a vacancy created by the retirement of Assistant Chief Davalla.

"I am pleased to announce the appointment of Scott Gilman to the position of Fire Chief," stated Mayor Summers. "Scott's firefighting knowledge and background make him an excellent choice for this position. Chief Gilman has a remarkable level of interest and enthusiasm for learning all there is to know about fire prevention, fire fighting, and fire leadership. I have the utmost confidence in his ability to effectively lead the Lakewood Fire Department."

Chief Gilman has almost 28 years of firefighting experience and an extensive background with the Department. He began his career with the Lakewood Fire Department in 1982 as a Firefighter Grade III. He was promoted to Firefighter Grade II in 1983 and Firefighter Grade I in 1984. In 1987, he was promoted to Fire Inspector. As Fire Inspector, Gilman was responsible

for inspecting buildings for fire hazards, building plans for compliance with fire prevention ordinances and codes and educating the public about Fire Prevention. In 1991, Chief Gilman was promoted to Fire Marshal. As Fire Marshal, he was responsible for supervising the Fire Prevention Bureau.

Assistant Chief Dargay began his career with the Lakewood Fire Department in 1983. He was promoted to Firefighter Grade II in 1984 and Fire Fighter Grade I in 1985. In 1989, Dargay was promoted to Captain, a position he has held until this most recent appointment.

"Dave Dargay will bring great leadership to our fire fighting and prevention efforts in Lakewood," stated Mayor Summers. "Assistant Chief Dargay is dedicated to training, safety and development. He brings a demonstrated commitment to protecting our city and our fire fighters."

Fire Chief Gilman will lead the Division of Fire's 88 members, which includes 39 Firefighters, 13 Paramedics, 24 Firefighter/Paramedics and 12 Firefighter/EMTs. He will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Fire Department, preparation of the Fire Department budget and making recommendations for new firefighting supplies and equipment to make the department

continued on page 5



The ex-Mayor of Lakewood and new County Executive Edward FitzGerald meets Bill Summers as the new Mayor of Lakewood, Mike Summers, looks on proudly.

by Christopher Bindel

Due to the Lakewood Observer printing schedule, two regularly scheduled and one special Council Meetings have actually occurred since the last paper. Therefore this article will include all the happenings in Council since the last issue on December 14, 2010.

The December 20, 2010 Council meeting marked the end of another year for Council, and was the last before many changes in Lakewood's government. This meeting was the last one for Mayor Ed FitzGerald and Councilwoman Nickie Antonio (At-Large), before they took their positions as County Executive and Ohio State Representative, respectively. It was also Councilman Mike Summers' last meeting as the Ward III Councilman, before replacing FitzGerald as Mayor. On top of all these pending changes, Council was sitting on a very full docket.

With the City Hall Auditorium full of people, Council President Kevin Butler called the meeting to order at 7:31 P.M. The first item discussed was a resolution from Mayor FitzGerald and Councilwoman Antonio recognizing Wilbert F. Knittel as Lakewood's Poet Laureate for 2010-2011. After very little discussion Council passed the resolution and allowed Knittel to take the podium. Knittel read a gra-

cious poem commenting on the city he loves and thanking Council for the honor.

Next Councilman Butler (Ward I) invited Nadhal Eadeh of the Lakewood Outdoor Basketball Committee (LOBC) to give a brief update on their work, trying to bring back outdoor hoops to Lakewood. Eadeh explained that he is a co-chair of the group which was formed after Lakewood took down all the hoops in the city. He commented that the city that was voted "The Best Place to Raise a Family" does have a lot for kids under the age of 12 to do, but for most teens, the city is lacking free activities. After 18 months of lobbying, Eadeh said LOBC was able to get a hoop erected on the tennis courts of Kaufman Park. During peak hours there was adult supervision at the court,

and they averaged between 25 and 30 kids. The court was meant to be easily accessible for kids and it proved to be so. However, as the only hoops available in the city, it often became over crowded. Many of the kids who played regularly took ownership of the court; self-enforcing the rules, understanding that if the court doesn't succeed there wouldn't be any hoops in Lakewood. Eadeh concluded by asking the City to consider allowing two more courts to open up throughout the city since they were so successful with the first. He sees the expansion of the program as necessary to avoid overcrowding at the current court. He then asked that the City open these next courts. LOBC funded the first court themselves.

continued on page 5

Lakewood Project To Rock To One-Hit Wonders Of The 80s

by Christine Gordillo

Lakewood Project, Lakewood High's rock orchestra, will perform its winter concert on Saturday, January 22 at 7:30 p.m. in the Civic Auditorium. The concert playlist will be one hit wonders from the 1980s. Special guest for the evening will be 70 Lewis, comprised of all former Lakewood Project alumni.

Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door. All seats reserved. You can order tickets via PayPal by going to the district web site at www.lakewoodcityschools.org and going to the Performing Arts page. Orders placed after January 15 will be available at Will Call for pickup the night of the show. If you prefer to mail-in your order with a check, an order form is available on the web site as well. Don't miss out on this great show!



The new Chief of Lakewood's Fire Department back in 2008 when Bill Clinton stopped by Lakewood High School.

Calendar Page

This calendar presents various Lakewood events and notices for the next two weeks (excluding Lakewood Public Library sponsored events found separately on the Lakewood Library page). Submit your calendar event to our online calendar at www.lakewoodobserver.com on the Home Page. This printed calendar listing is primarily non-profit events relevant to Lakewood. However, our website calendar welcomes all Lakewood businesses and organizations to submit events. Compiled by Mel Page

Friday, January 14

QUIZ SHOW Fundraiser for Cleveland Int’l Film Festival
7:00 - 10:00 PM, Virginia Marti College of Art and Design, 11724 Detroit Ave.
\$35 per guest. Hosts: Debbie “Sheepie” Marshall* and Beth Steele Radisek*. We’re bringing back this new series favorite where we ask you to go head-to-head against other attendees to test your film knowledge. Flex your film muscles as CIFF Artistic Director, Bill Guentzler, emcees a night of film-related questions created by the CIFF staff. The winner will not only get the all-important bragging rights for a year, but will also be the recipient of a CIFF gift certificate good for CIFF memberships, tickets, merchandise, or other Film (And Other Arts) Feasts events! Meet us at Virginia Marti College of Art and Design for this night where film fanatics get to shine! To purchase tickets, visit www.clevelandfilm.org or contact Debby Samples (216.623.3456 x14 or debby@clevelandfilm.org). Film (and other ARTS) Feasts is a series of events to support the Cleveland International Film Festival. Our generous hosts underwrite the costs of their events and all proceeds directly benefit the organization. www.clevelandfilm.org.

“Jazz You Like It” At Waterbury Coach House
7:00 - 10:30 PM, Waterbury Coach House, 13333 Madison Ave. 216-226-9772
Doris Long - Joe Hunter - Dallas Coffey & Guests. Playing Traditional Jazz In A Cozy Neighborhood Restaurant & Lounge. Every Friday night.
Swing Dance at Masonic Temple with Dave Kasper Quintet
8:00 PM - 12:00 AM, Lakewood Masonic Temple, 15300 Detroit Ave.
Everyone is welcome to join us at the Lakewood Masonic Temple Swing dance the second Friday of every month. No need for a partner or any previous dance experience. The evening begins with an easy Jitterbug lesson from 8-9pm. Social dance starts at 9pm. The cost is only \$10 per person or \$8 for students with a valid ID. Dress is comfy and casual. This venue is non-smoking and alcohol free. For more information please call Valerie at 216-374-1927. www.gettheswing.com.

Saturday, January 15
Lakewood Senior Health Campus Open House

12 - 1:30 PM, 1381 Bunts Road. See Page 7 for ad.
The Joe DeJarnette Quintet at Waterbury Coach House
7:30 - 11 PM, Waterbury Coach House, 13333 Madison Ave. Every Saturday evening.
UltraViolet Hippopotamus at The Winchester Music Hall
9 PM, Winchester Music Hall, 12112 Madison Ave.
Six piece jam band UV Hippo plays high energy shows with musically tight and diverse song writing; dipping into genres like rock, funk, and electronica jams. The band is known to blend strong songs and tight licks with improvisation to help find an original sound where their progressive aspirations meet their audience’s thirst for funk. Some say it’s rock. Some say it’s more like jazz. Still others report electronica, reggae and even bluegrass. Tickets are \$7.00. www.thewinchester.net.

Sunday, January 16
Northwesterly Assisted Living Community Open House
1 - 4 PM, 1341 Marlowe Ave. (at Detroit Ave.) See Page 23 for ad.

Tuesday, January 18
Lakewood Board of Education Meeting
7:00 PM, Warren Ave., Board of Education Auditorium
Lakewood City Council Meeting
7:30 - 9:30 PM, Lakewood City Hall Auditorium, 12650 Detroit Ave.

Thursday, January 20
La Bella Italia at The Clifton Club
6:30 PM, Clifton Club, 17884 Lake Road
“An evening in Italy” hosted by Landfall Travel and Italian Travel. See Page 18 & 22.

Saturday, January 22
Jump Rope for Heart
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM, Lakewood High School, East Gym
Lakewood elementary schools participate in jump roping to raise money for kids with special hearts through the American Heart Assoc. See Page 11 for story.
Lakewood Project Winter Concert
7:30 PM, Civic Auditorium at Lakewood High School, Franklin Ave.
Join Lakewood High School’s award-winning rock orchestra for its annual winter concert. See Front Page.

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Tuesday, January 25

Parenting for the New Year and Beyond!
6:00 - 7:30 PM, Horace Mann Elementary School, West Clifton
A comprehensive application to increase a parent’s understanding of child development, improve parenting skills, help balance a parent’s responsibilities; at home, at work, in the community, find ways to nurture the parent along with the child, and lastly help build a supportive network. The goal is to reduce stress and increase the joys of parenting. Presented by Barb O’Patry LPCC. A light meal and childcare will be provided and it’s all FREE. Please call to reserve a space (216)529.5018.

Lakewood First Time Homebuyers Program
6:00 - 7:00 PM, Lakewood City Hall Auditorium, 12650 Detroit Ave.
The Lakewood HOME Program provides one of the best mortgage financing packages available to qualified first time home buyers interested in purchasing a Lakewood home. Assistance, which comes in the form of a 0% interest, no monthly payment second mortgage is used to assist with both down payment and closing costs. Offered once a month to prospective homebuyers. Mandatory to those seeking assistance through the HOME Program. Information provided regarding program requirements and federal lead-based paint guidelines. Program participants are required to visit the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s website and take the Visual Assessment Training Course prior to attending the seminar. For more information, call the Division of Community Development at (216) 529-4663

Parkview Playschool Cooperative Preschool Open House
6:30 - 8:00 PM, Parkview Playschool, Inc., Faith Lutheran Church, 16511 Hilliard Rd.
Parkview Playschool, Inc., a new cooperative preschool in Lakewood offers educational services to three- and four-year-old children. See Page 22 for details.

Wednesday, January 26
Moving Forward: Emotional & Physical Rehabilitation after Cancer
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM, The Gathering Place West, 800 Sharon Drive, Westlake
Cancer survivors will learn strategies to manage long-term treatment side effects, such as cancer-related fatigue and weight gain. Moving Forward is for men and women who are currently in treatment or have finished treatment within the last year. The 12-week program will include twice-weekly circuit fitness training at the wellness center and a weekly support group. Advanced registration and written authorization from a physician is required. Participants must contact facilitator before participating. Cost: Free Contact: The Gathering Place, 216.595.9546 or www.touchedbycancer.org/
U.S. Coast Guard Aux. Boating Classes
7:00 - 9:30 PM, Garfield Middle School, 13114 Detroit Ave.
According to the ODNR Boating Accident Report for 2005-2009, there have been 285 accidents on Lake Erie involving 371 vessels, 147 injuries, and 15 fatalities. Two U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary public boating classes starting on Wed., January 26 through Wed., March 23. 1. Boating Skills & Seamanship and 2. Sailing Skills & Seamanship. Both courses are NASBLA approved. Call 216-226-7221 for more information.

More local events & listings at
www.lakewoodobserver.com

THE LAKWOOD OBSERVER

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As a product of citizen journalism, The Lakewood Observer is looking for people, ages 3-100, to get involved in the paper and the city. We are looking for volunteer writers, photographers, designers, and illustrators to help with the production of the paper. It does not matter if you are a professional or amateur, our editorial staff will be glad to help you through the process.

Register to our website Member Center where you can submit stories, press releases, letters to the editor, photos. No need to register to post online calendar or classified ads.

Upcoming Submission Deadline	Publish Date
Sunday, January 16	Tuesday, January 25
Sunday, January 30	Tuesday, February 8

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Lakewood Health News

Lakewood Hospital Receives Three Gold Seals of Approval™

by Anne Kuenzel

By demonstrating compliance with the Joint Commission’s national standards for healthcare quality and safety, Lakewood Hospital has earned the Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval™ in three areas: the advanced primary stroke center, heart failure and stroke rehabilitation.

The review of the three programs took place in September after an on-site evaluation by the Joint Commission. The reviewers conducted interviews with staff and patients while assessing processes and ability to improve patient care. The Gold Seal of Approval™ demonstrates Lakewood Hospital’s dedication to achieving the Commission’s high standards. “Lakewood Hospital has made exceptional efforts to promote better outcomes for patients in all levels of stroke care and heart failure,” says Janice G. Murphy, RN, BSN, MSN, FACHE, president of Lakewood and Fairview Hospital. “These certifications confirm the staff has gone above and beyond the standard efforts to effectively provide critical care elements necessary to achieve long-term success. They wholeheartedly deserve this advanced recognition.”

Stroke is the leading cause of serious, long-term disability in the United States, with about 4.7 million stroke survivors alive today. “In stroke care,

time is brain,” says Jean E. Range, M.S., R.N., C.P.H.Q., executive director, Disease-Specific Care Certification, the Joint Commission. “By achieving certification as an Advanced Primary Stroke Center, Lakewood Hospital has proven that it has the ability to provide effective, timely care to stroke victims and can significantly improve outcomes for stroke patients.”

The Cleveland Clinic Rehabilitation Hospital at Lakewood Hospital, which is part of system-wide comprehensive rehabilitative care for stroke patients, recently expanded to 35 patient beds. “We were pleased to achieve this certification,” said Dan Shamir, MD, medical director of the Cleveland Clinic Rehabilitation Hospital at Lakewood Hospital. “This confirms what we have known all along, that Lakewood Hospital is at the forefront of providing acute stroke rehabilitation to the western communities of Greater Cleveland and should be the facility of choice for anyone who needs stroke rehabilitation.”

Developed in collaboration with the American Heart Association, the certification in heart failure recognizes that Lakewood Hospital is making exceptional efforts to promote better quality of care and outcomes for heart failure patients.

“Lakewood Hospital voluntarily pursues the comprehensive, indepen-

dent evaluation for disease specific care,” said Deb Small, RN, BSN, MSN, Chief Nursing Officer of Lakewood and Fairview hospitals. “We’re thrilled to achieve all three distinctions.”

The Joint Commission’s Disease-Specific Care Certification Program, launched in 2002, is designed to evaluate clinical programs across the continuum of care. Certification requirements address three core areas: compliance with consensus-based national standards; effective use of evidence-based clinical practice guidelines to manage and optimize care; and an organized approach to performance measurement and improvement activities.

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Lakewood News

FitzGerald Takes Office, Bringing Message Of Unity To Cuyahoga County

by Karolyn Isenhardt

On Sunday, January 9 a standing-room only crowd gathered at the old Cuyahoga County courthouse to witness a moment for our new Cuyahoga County leadership as former U.S. Congressman Lou Stokes administered the oath of office to the first County Executive, Ed FitzGerald. Before his family and hundreds of supporters from across county, County Executive Ed FitzGerald promised to make the operations of the county transparent. He stated that he will strive for efficiency and plans to

hold employees accountable, regardless of who they know. He reminded everyone that we are all immigrants to the county and said that encouraging immigration will be key to the growth. FitzGerald spoke poignantly about fighting poverty and will focus on battling childhood poverty in our county through various measures including an expansion of early childhood education. A key message throughout was the need for us to end our petty rivalries and differences. He joked that county residents can't even agree on

how to say "Cuyahoga." FitzGerald said that everyone in the county must begin working together to leverage our extraordinary assets. "It's time to stop competing against each other and start competing against the world," he said.

Prior to the oath the crowd enjoyed bagpipe music, a performance by the Cleveland Heights A Capella Choir and a moving rendition of the national anthem by William Clarence Marshall. Other elected officials who spoke include U.S. Congresswoman Marcia Fudge, Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson

and County Council President C. Ellen Connolly among others. Notably, in his remarks introducing FitzGerald, Congressman Stokes shared his personal history with the FitzGerald family. It seems he was a student of an aunt of FitzGerald's at Central High School. He fondly remembered her as an inspiration and how much he enjoyed her English classes so many years ago.

It was a good day to be a "Cuyahogan." No matter how you pronounce it.

Transportation Meets Public Art In Downtown Lakewood

by Melissa Garrett

The new shelter, benches and planters in front of the INA and Bailey Building near the intersection of Warren and Detroit are not your typical bus stop. Completed in November and funded by a grant from the Greater Cleveland RTA and the Federal Transit Administration and designed by City staff, the new Transit Waiting Environment (TWE) provides a place for bus patrons to more comfortably wait for

their ride.

TWE's are bus stops that have been upgraded to improve the pedestrian and rider experience and are typically located in areas with higher ridership. They include elements such as shelters, seating, planters, bike racks, improved pavement and public art. For more information on TWE's visit the GCRTA website at www.riderta.com and click on Planning & Development; Transit Waiting Environments.



Local Artist Joe DeLuca during the installation

Holiday Refuse And Recycling Collection Schedule

by Melissa Garrett

Due to the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday, there will be no refuse or recycling collected on Monday, January 17, 2011. Residents whose refuse is normally collected on Monday will have collection on Tuesday. Residents whose refuse is normally collected on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday should have their refuse and recyclables available for collection on their regular day, and it will be collected either on that day or the day after. Residents whose refuse is normally collected on Friday will have collection on Friday.

Residents are reminded that refuse and recycling should not be placed on the curb or tree lawn until after 6:00 p.m. on the night before your collection day and should be available for collection by 6:30 a.m. on the collection day.

In addition, all Lakewood City offices and the Lakewood Municipal Court will be closed for the holiday.

For further information, contact the Lakewood Division of Refuse & Recycling at (216) 252-4322.



Pictured is Lakewood Artist Sheila Weil during the installation in November

"The bus stop has a "nature in the city" theme, said Artist Joseph DeLuca. "The four panels on the front of the bus stop show the same tree going through the seasons. The mosaic planters add to that idea with a Spring/Summer, Fall, and Winter planter. We are looking forward to springtime when they actually get planted--the project will then be complete."

In the spring of 2010, the City hosted a competition where artists were asked to propose enhancements to the stop. A jury of downtown business owners, designers and representatives from the arts community selected the winning entry. Lakewood artists Sheila Weil and Joseph DeLuca were selected to provide an array seasonally themed tree graphics and colored glass for the shelter panels as well as three tile mosaic planters. The grant fully funded the project and a great new amenity was added to the downtown at no cost to the City.

"We loved working with the city on this, said Artist Sheila Weil. "Everyone really came together to solve problems and make it work. Lakewood is a fantastic city that we are proud to live in. Having functional beauty spread throughout the city adds character and enriches everyone's lives. We want to make art that brightens people's day, and we hope that the bus stop project is one that will take people pause for a minute and smile. Fantastic job by everyone involved, and much thanks to RTA for providing the grant that made it happen"

Special thanks to the following members of the Art Completion Jury for their invaluable assistance with the project: Analia Dimit (Dimit Architects), Cindy Einhouse (Beck Center for the Arts), Ruth Koenigsmark(LIA), Aref Shafik (The Design Firm), David Stein (Plantation Home) and Danielle Willis (Greater Cleveland RTA).

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Lakewood Politics

Introducing Lakewood’s New Leadership

continued from page 1

Art Gould of LOBC then took the podium to thank everyone that had made their success possible. He thanked several members of council and the administration for working with them, all the people who donated money so they could purchase the hoop, and also Councilman Summers who helped them order the hoop by doing so from Summers Rubber. Mr. Gould also told a few anecdotes about some very thankful kids.

Moving back to agenda items, Councilman Summers read a report reviewing all the budget items on the agenda. Among the many items discussed were ordinances that would raise water and sewer rates, pay for street and sewer repairs, and update, fix or replace, sidewalks, traffic signs and/or signals. After Summers’ report, council began the long process of passing each budget item.

After passing all the budget items, Councilwoman Monique Smith (At-Large) gave a report from the Rules & Ordinances Committee regarding three ordinances. The first would include the terms “gender identity or expression” and “sexual orientation” in the definitions of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances. This, in effect, would replace the term “sex” with “gender.” The second prohibits intimidation

based on someones gender identity or expression and the last prevents discrimination or intimidation in housing based on gender identity or expression. Councilwoman Smith reported that her Committee recommended adoption of all three ordinances, and Council accepted their recommendations, passing them unanimously.

Councilman Butler thanked Councilwoman Antonio for being the original one to bring these issues forward and allowing him to co-sponsor the ordinances. Councilwoman Antonio wanted to also thank Director Jean Yousefi for her help putting the language together for the ordinances and the legal department for noticing that some of the definitions were missing. Councilman Tom Bullock (Ward II) also wanted to thank Antonio for her work on the ordinances and said he was glad to support them. He pointed out how fitting the timing was, as President Obama was scheduled to sign the repeal of “don’t ask don’t tell” the next day. Noting that Lakewood’s current contracting practices prohibit discrimination do to sex, race and religion, Councilman Bullock asked if gender identity and expression could also be added to those as well. He was answered with a simple “yes,” without any details.

Next Councilman Butler dis-

cussed the Council seats that would need to be filled in the New Year. He went through and explained the entire process they went through, collecting applicants, having them answer questionnaires, and finally, interviewing them. He discussed the great pool of applicants that council had to choose from and how difficult it was for them to come to a decision. Councilman Bullock said he found himself wishing there were more openings available due to the number of highly qualified applicants. Although there was not initial agreement on who would be picked,

New Leadership At Fire Department Too

continued from page 1

more effective and efficient.

As Assistant Fire Chief, Dargay will be responsible for the command and control of his shift. He will attend, whenever practical, all fires, major emergencies and alarms while on duty and assume command. He will also be responsible for making recommendations to the Fire Chief Gilman for more effective utilization of manpower and equipment. He will also assist the Chief in the administrative and personnel activities of the Division.

after long discussions, council came to a unanimous decision as to who would take the open seats. Ryan Nowlin was chosen to replace Nickie Antonio in her At-Large seat, and Shawn Juris was selected to finish Mike Summers’ term in Ward III, when he becomes Mayor. As Antonio and Summers will not be in office when Nowlin and Juris take their seats they abstained from the entire process from beginning to end.

The last topic on the agenda was a communication from Councilman

continued on page 6

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Lakewood City Council

Possible Salary Raises For The Mayor And Council

by Christopher Bindel

At the December 20th Council meeting, Councilman Kevin Butler (Ward I) introduced a proposed ordinance that was bound to cause quite a stir. The ordinance he introduced would raise the salary of the mayor from about \$75,000 dollars to \$100,000 dollars a year and that of all members of council from \$7,000 dollars to \$11,000 dollars a year, with the option of up to \$3,300 dollars of medical coverage.

After introducing the items, Councilman Butler wanted to make a few things very clear. The first was that he introduced the legislation alone. That being said, he did so completely based on the recommendations of the Civil Service Commissions. Secondly, although he agrees with the recommendations, they are just a starting point. There is still lots of discussion to be had by members of council. Next, he wanted to make it very clear that he, nor anyone else on council, would be voting to raise there own salary. The City Charter strictly lays out the rules in this situation. The new salary would not take effect until the term of the office holder who voted for it would expire. Therefore, the only way any of the members of Council could receive the new salary would be if they were reelected. Which, if the electorate is unhappy with them passing it, they can simply vote them out.

Councilman Butler continued, carefully, to explain why he supported these recommendations. To start, the salary for the office of mayor has not been raised since 1991, minus occasional increases based on social security rates. In 1991 it was set at \$65,000 dollars and right now it sits at about \$75,000 dollars. The salary for council on the other hand has not been raised since 1978.

The Civil Service Commission has made the same recommendation several times, and Council has never passed them. Butler said he understands that it is never a good time politically, and that it always looks like Council is trying to raise their salary, or enrich the mayor. But, he said, that is just simply not the case. Instead, he sees it as a step to ensuring equitable candidates. Although he understands that there is a difference in public and private sectors, and that part of the reason for taking such a position is to serve one's community, he says you still want good candidates to come forward. When you want people to possibly leave a job to run a 500 employee company, you do not want them to decide not to do so because of the level of impact on their livelihood.

Councilman Butler then asked for comments from others Council members. Councilwoman Mary Louise Madigan (Ward IV) said that she could see the physical reactions of those in the audience and just wanted to encourage them to attend the committee meetings and voice their concerns and opinions there, so they can be heard and take part in the process. Council-

man Brian Powers (At-Large) thanked Councilman Butler for bringing the issue forward in ordinance form and encouraged everyone on Council to keep an open mind and to not to entrench themselves into a position before hearing everyone's thoughts on the matter. He made a point to say that he himself did not have any opinion on the matter yet.

Two members of the public stood up to speak on the issues. The first was a member of the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce communicating the Chamber's support of Butler and the ordinance he introduced. The second person was an Avon resident that is the chair representative of an administrative union in Lakewood. He asked Council how they could in good conscience raise the salaries of Council and the Mayor in a time when the economy is so bad and so many others are not getting raises, including him, and those he represents. He said the 73 employees of the city he represents took a 0% increase this last year and could not understand how they could vote on a nearly 43% increase for Council members. He just did not think it was right.

Councilman Butler asked the man to clarify that they took no raise for 2010. The man said that was correct. Butler then asked if that was true for 2011. The man said no, that they would get a 1% raise in 2011, and 2% in 2012. Butler thanked him and his union for their good faith and cooperation during negotiations. He then asked the man

how much of a percentage raise they have received since 1978, as that is the last time Council has received a raise. Butler gave an example comparison of wages for the Assistant Building Commissioner and Council member. In 1978 the Assistant Building Commissioner was making between \$12,500-17,500 dollars a year, while Council members were making \$7,000 dollars a year. The Assistant Building Commissioner now makes between \$46,000-65,000 dollars a year while Council members still make \$7,000 dollars a year. Butler continued, saying that it is difficult to ask someone to do the job of a Councilperson, sometimes working 20 hours a week on top of their day job, for \$7,000 dollars a year. Then ask them to not take a raise for 30 years. That is what Council has just done and Butler said he believes it is not equitable. He did clarify though that he is not entrenched, and that there is flexibility and much discussion to still be had on the matter.

The Mayor FitzGerald then made a few comments on the matter as well. He said that this is the fourth Civil Service Commission, with different members over several years. Each Commission has come up with the same recommendation for these positions. They look at what would make sense for the position and what the market can handle. They have consistently come up with the same thing. He also said that he believes he is the 43rd highest paid employee in Lakewood's city government. Not that he necessarily believes he should be the highest paid person in the gov-

ernment, but, he said, if the CEO is the 43rd highest paid, he believes there is something wrong. The CEO of a \$100 million dollar corporation should not make \$75,000 dollars. Because of the salary, and the fact that he has 3 kids in private schools and one off to college in the next year, Mayor FitzGerald said he was never going to run for another term. He was going to look for a higher paying job, whatever it was. FitzGerald also wanted to clarify that his predecessor was double dipping, and his predecessor had no dependents and her predecessor supplemented his his income with a law practice, which is why there has not been any urgency to this issue. However, if the city wants to continue to attract good candidates for mayor, he believes, the salary is going to need to be raised.

Talking about the Council raises, FitzGerald said when he was on Council they ruffly figured out the pay as \$1.15 an hour, for the work that they do. He closed his remarks saying he has seen it go through Council three times and each time members chicken out because they think it is a bad time politically. Repeating Councilman Butler's words, he said, it will always be a bad time politically, and hopes that doesn't stop them this time.

The topic of the salary raises was briefly discussed again at the January 3, 2011 Council meeting but the real discussion on the matter was not to occur until the Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for the night of Monday, January 10th.

Introducing Lakewood's New Leadership

continued from page 5

Butler regarding two items. The first was the Civil Service Commission's recommendation of pay raises for Council members and the Mayor. The second was a proposed ordinance to make those recommendations the new salaries. The recommendations given were, for the Mayor, pay to be raised from about \$75,000 to \$100,000 dollars a year and for council members pay to be raised from \$7,000 to \$11,000 dollars a year, with an additional option of health care, not to exceed \$3,300 dollars.

Since there was a great deal of discussion on this issue, and a lot of information given, the details of this item have been separated out into an article of there own. Please refer to that article on page 5 for the full details given at the meeting.

After the long discussion on the issue of salaries, Council voted to send the ordinance to the Committee of the Whole for further discussion.

At the end of the agenda, Councilman Bullock said a few kind words about the Mayor before his departure to the county government. Councilman Butler also thanked the Mayor for his service and said he always loved turning the floor over to him before a citizen got enraged, because he always



Lakewood Municipal Judge Pat Carroll administers the oath of office to Mike Summers as his wife, Wendy, holds the family bible as their daughter Barbara looks on.

knew how to explain how the City operates. He also said a few words kind words to Nickie Antonio before she heads off to the Statehouse. Moving down the line Councilman Summers said he loved Anotnio's passion and her work toward social justice. He said he could thank Mayor FitzGerald for a variety of things, but that he really want to thank him for his help during the transition, e.g., opening up his administration meetings to him so he has an idea of what to expect in the coming year. Councilman Powers than said that when he came to Council he knew three people and now all

three of them are headed to higher office. He said he has known Nickie for a while and enjoyed working with her on Council. To the Mayor he said that even though he is a little older, he thanked him for being a bit of a mentor and that he learned a lot from him over the last few years. Councilwoman Madigan wished all three luck as they move onto their higher offices and said she would miss the current makeup of council, because everything worked so well. The communication has been so easy between Council and Administra-

continued on page 21



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Lakewood Public Library Events

All Events and Programs Are Free And Open To The Public

Tuesday, January 11

CLEVELAND’S GOLDEN AGE OF PRINT: Sketches
With memories as sharp as a stiff Lake Erie breeze, the frontline witnesses of Cleveland history reflect on the things they did to get the story. Featuring interviews with legendary reporter Doris O’Donnell, the author of Front Page Girl, this series of short documentaries chronicles a bygone era with ink-stained anecdotes from O’Donnell’s friends, colleagues and collaborators. Originally produced by Storytellers Media Group in conjunction with the Cleveland Police Historical Society & Museum, as part of the Emmy Award winning PBS series, Doris O’Donnell’s Cleveland, these episodes are now available on DVD and will be available for sale at each screening.
From Carl Stokes and Ralph Perk to mobster Shonder Birns and county coroner Sam Gerber, Doris O’Donnell had deep sources that made her one of the best.
7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Saturday, January 15

THE LAKEWOOD PUBLIC CINEMA: Great Balls of Fire (1989)
Directed by Jim McBride Rated PG-13
The mostly true story of Jerry Lee Lewis comes to life in this raucous tall tale from the early days of Rock ’n’ Roll. Witness the rise and fall of a piano-pounding genius who proved to be too wild for the Devil’s music. With wall-to-wall music and Winona Ryder, baby, you can’t go wrong!
6:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Tuesday, January 18

MEET THE AUTHOR: James Jessen Badal
From the bloody carnage of the Torso Murders to the quiet disappearance of a young girl, James Jessen Badal has a gift for turning true crimes from Cleveland’s past into thoughtful literature. With a commitment to exhaustive research, Badal uncovers new clues, unfollowed leads and unreported details that others have missed. Then, with a novelists’ eye for detail, he brings his players to life with fully-rounded personalities, quirks, fashions and other incriminating traits. Several books will be available for sale and signing at the event.
7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Saturday, January 22

FIVE STAR FILMS: Spellbound (1945)
Directed by Alfred Hitchcock Not Rated
In this psycho-thriller, Ingrid Bergman, psychiatrist at an upscale institution, has serious doubts about Gregory Peck, a new doctor with a reputation that precedes him. He seems too young to have achieved so much recognition. Is he really the man he says he is or a sinister stranger?
6:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Sunday, January 23

SUNDAY WITH THE FRIENDS: Solo Marimba
Spend your afternoon with a single instrument that will fill the Auditorium with warm, inspiring sound. The marimba is a wooden instrument struck by mallets. When played by a master like Paul Stranahan, it’s something else entirely.
2:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Tuesday, January 25

HEALTH AND BEAUTY: Active Release Technique
Dr. Allison Norris, a certified practitioner of this patented soft tissue technique, suggests wearing some comfortable clothes if you plan on participating in the demonstration.
7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

BOOK GROUPS:

Thursday, January 13

BOOKED FOR MURDER BOOK CLUB: New York City
China Trade by S.J. Rozan New York City’s Chinatown, an exotic world-within-a-world, provides the setting for an intriguing mystery filled with mysteries. Investigator Lydia Chin begins by searching for a rare set of porcelains stolen from the Chinatown Museum and ends up discovering an unlikely relationship between the ruthless gangs that run the neighborhood and black market art. Chin’s traditional Chinese family thinks her line of work isn’t suitable for a woman but readers will agree that she is one tough cookie.
7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Meeting Room

Tuesday, January 18

KNIT & LIT BOOK CLUB
Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China by Jung Chang Lynda Tuennerman hosts a social club for multitaskers—a combination book club and stitchery group. She’s looking for readers who can enjoy intense discussion of modern classics while relaxing with their latest stitching project. Come share your passion for great literature and show off your knitting, crocheting, counted cross-stitch, embroidery and quilting works-in-progress. At each meeting, the group decides what will be

read next. Call (216) 226-8275, ext. 127 or visit www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.com/bookclubs to learn more.
7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Meeting Room

Thursday, January 20

BUSINESS BOOK TALK with Tim Zaun and Friends
LINCHPIN: Are You Indispensable? by Seth Godin
Change agent and master marketer, Seth Godin, champions the need to stand out, exert emotional labor and be viewed as indispensable in any organization.
7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Meeting Room

LEARNING LAB CLASSES:

Reservations for computer instruction classes begin the first of each month.
To register, please stop in or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 127. We ask that all students come to class with a working knowledge of the mouse. If you need help, visit the Technology Center and ask the staff to set you up on our Mouse Training Program. It’s fun, easy and essential to becoming computer literate. All classes take place in the Main Library Learning Lab on the 2nd floor.
UPCOMING JANUARY CLASSES: (Class sign-ups begin on Sunday, January, 2)
Thursday, January 13: JOB HUNTING WORKSHOP 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Saturday, January 15: WORD PROCESSING BASICS @ 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday, January 18: SPREADSHEET BASICS @ 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, January 22: WEB SEARCHING BASICS @ 3:00 p.m.
Saturday, January 29: E-MAIL BASICS @ 3:00 p.m.

CHILDRENS & YOUTH SERVICES: AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS:

HOMEWORK ER: For students in kindergarten through eighth grade
Need a little extra help with your homework or just want a cool place to work? Come to the Homework Room for help and resources. No need to register. *Homework ER will be closed for school holidays and vacations.*
Tuesday, September 7 – Thursday, May 26
Monday – Thursday, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., in Main Library Children’s and Youth Services
Monday – Thursday, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the Madison Branch

IT’S PUZZLING!

Ready to challenge your brain after school? Check out the Library’s puzzle station. A variety of puzzles will be available, and correctly completed puzzles will be entered into a monthly prize drawing.
Tuesday, September 7 – Friday, May 27
Monday – Friday, 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., in Main Library Children’s and Youth Services and at the Madison Branch

NAMELESS BOOK CLUB: For students in third, fourth, and fifth grades
Meet monthly after school for lively discussions of novels and fun activities. We provide the books and participants provide the name of the club. All students are required to bring a Library card so they can check out the fun. To register, please stop in or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 140.
Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room
Third Grade: January 12, Fifth grade: January 26

WRITE TIME: For students in sixth to twelfth grade
This is a weekly drop-in writing circle. Bring something you’re working on, or just come ready to write—be it short stories or a chapter of your new book. This may be the most inspiring hour of your week. No need to register.
Winter Season: January 13 - February 17 (Open Mike” final on February 24)
Thursdays at 4:00 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room

C.O.M.I.C.S. (Create Original Manuscripts Illustrated Completely Series):
For students in sixth through twelfth grade
Do you like to tell stories? Can you visualize your tales and want to get them on paper? Sign up to create your own graphic novel and tell a fantastic story! We will supply the tools, you supply the ideas. To register, please stop in or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 140.
Tuesdays, January 11 – February 15 from 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room
Grand Finale Presentation: Tuesday, February 22 at 4:00 p.m.

EVENING PROGRAMS:

STORYBOOK CHALLENGE: For the whole family
Inspired by the classic game show Hollywood Squares, this weekly battle of wits will test your knowledge of books, nursery rhymes and fairy tales. Can you beat the Library Staff at their own game? **To register, please stop in or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 140.**
Choose One Preliminary Round: January 11, January 18, January 25 or February 8
Final Round: February 15

Lakewood Library

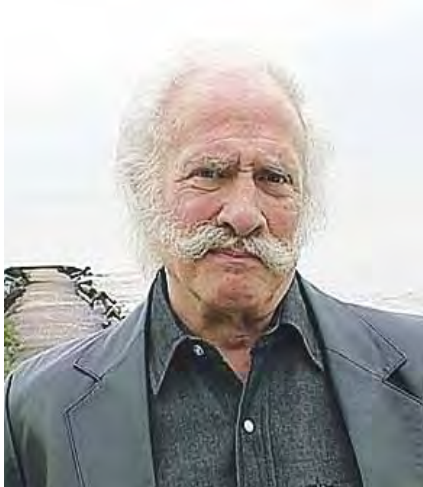
Meet The Author:

James Jessen Badal Revisits Cleveland’s Unsolved Mysteries

by Joan Rubenking

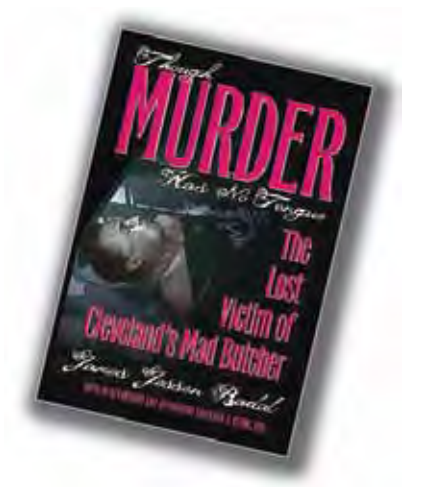
The tantalizing nature of unsolved crimes makes them an obsession for many writers and a wide audience. What piece of evidence was missed? What drives a person to commit such heinous acts? Can cases this cold ever be solved? At Lakewood Public Library on Tuesday, January 18, in the Main Auditorium, at 7 p.m., author James Jessen Badal will discuss his work investigating two of Cleveland’s most notorious mysteries: the disappearance of Beverly Potts in 1951, and the Torso Murders of Kingsbury Run in the 1930s.

Badal, himself a Clevelander, is an assistant professor of English and Journalism at Cuyahoga Community College. He is the author of “Twilight of Innocence: the Disappearance of Beverly Potts” and of three books on the Torso Murders: “In the Wake of the Butcher: Cleveland’s Torso Murders,” “The Fourteenth Victim,” and his latest, “Though Murder has No Tongue: the Lost Victim of Cleveland’s Mad Butcher.” While Badal’s research is meticulous, he manages to



keep a focus on the human faces of the victims, interviewing their surviving relatives and those of the investigators whose lives became enmeshed with these cases.

While there is no ‘crime scene’ in the Potts case, since Beverly’s body has never been found, Badal takes a careful look back on the events of that summer evening, and details the sensational newspaper coverage of her disappearance. “Twilight of Innocence” reveals the frustration of the police and the public with a search that led to one



dead end after another. “In the Wake of the Butcher “ is the definitive, book-length examination of those killings which frightened our entire city. Badal has sifted through exhaustive police and autopsy reports, even gaining access to the extensive records of the Torso Murders’ lead police investigator. The maps, crime scene and morgue photographs (some graphic), and newspaper pictures all chill the reader and illuminate Cleveland in the Great

Depression. Badal’s philosophy is to let the case evidence speak for itself. Although he stated in a recent (August 16, 2010) interview with the Plain Dealer about the Torso Murders that he thinks “someday we may be able to say with virtual certainty who the Butcher was,” he leaves it to his readers to decide which suspect might be the killer. Sadly, in the Potts case, there may never be closure. There are just too few real leads, and precious little evidence. These true hometown crimes, fascinating and disturbing, are also compelling in the hands of James Jessen Badal. Come join the discussion and learn the theories with the author in person on January 18, at Lakewood Public Library. Copies of Badal’s books will be available for sale and signing. This event is generously funded by Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture and the Friends of Lakewood Public Library.

Secrets Of The Solo Marimba

by Ben Burdick

The marimba is a simple instrument—that’s how Paul Stranahan fools you! Those who come to the Lakewood Public Library Main Auditorium on January 23 at 2:00 p.m. might expect to hear nothing more than the sound of mallets striking seasoned wood with warm and pleasant plinks and plunks, but Stranahan has grander plans. As a member of several bands and the master of many instruments and styles, the Library’s guest already enjoys regular collaborations with some of the area’s most versatile artists. This is his chance to stand apart. Because the Lakewood Public Library Main Auditorium is small and cozy, with a rich sound that reaches the back of the room undistorted, acoustic performers are allowed intimate contact with the audience not found in most local bars. That’s good because Stranahan can’t afford to waste a single note as he builds complex musical landscapes of rhythm and tone all by his lonesome. Without other musicians on hand to fill out the sound, he will be free to follow his improvisational

genius wherever it may lead him, but he will also be solely responsible for holding the audience’s attention with nothing more than his skills and some fancy pieces of wood. A look at the marimbist’s musical influences provides tantalizing clues as to what the concert might sound like. As a child, Stranahan’s parents were both in the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus. Mama wanted him to study classical piano so he picked up the drums. He rocked his elementary school music room with the sounds of Led Zeppelin and quickly moved on to the likes of King Crimson and Frank Zappa. Today, he fills the jazz part of his brain with heroes ranging from John Zorn to Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Bill Bruford, John Scofield and the Claudia Quintet with Tim Berne. We can’t wait to hear how this all comes out! This concert is free and open to all, thanks to the Friends of Lakewood Public Library and Cuyahoga Arts and Culture. Visit lakewoodpubliclibrary.com/friends to learn about more lazy Sunday afternoon events.

All For Prom, And Prom For All!

by Arlie Matera

The Lakewood Public Library is gearing up for its second annual “Everything But Your Prince” event, a program committed to making prom a reality for all girls, not just those with princess-worthy budgets. On March 25th the Main Library Multipurpose Room will be transformed into a prom “boutique” filled with gently-used prom dresses, shoes, and accessories in an assortment of styles and sizes—all for free! We are currently seeking donations of dresses, shoes, jewelry, and purses. If you’d like to donate, please bring your formal wear to the Children and Youth Services Department by Thursday, March 24th, 2011. Start the New Year off on the right foot—clean out your closet, and make a girl’s prom dreams come true!

The Little Library That Could

by Benjamin King

Did you know that the Lakewood Public Library has a branch on Madison Ave? We are located across from Mahall’s bowling alley, and directly west of Madison Park. The Madison Branch offers a cozy, traditional library atmosphere, plenty of parking space, and very short wait lines for checking out. The Madison Branch has always prided itself on offering a large selection of books and audio-visual items, and keeping with the spirit of the New Year, we look forward to offering an ever expanding selection of new DVD’s, CD’s, audio books, and graphic novels. Our new Teen section has a special place in the children’s room, and in this New Year we will continue to increase the size and scope of this collection. In addition to the Teen collection, the Madison Branch Children’s department offers a brand new print collection for new readers including picture books and our new beginner reader collection which is specifically

designed for young readers who are just discovering books. Our children’s section doesn’t end at books and DVDs though. We offer a number of children’s programs from infant’s up to high school students. Our Weekends with Wee Ones offers a great opportunity for parents and their infants to experience books and song in a relaxed atmosphere. During the winter months, Madison Branch offers an afterschool program, Bright Days, which offers activities for school-aged children. For children having trouble completing their homework, we also offer homework help after school to children from first grade through eighth. The Madison Branch has been serving the literary needs of Lakewood’s east end residents for more than 80 years and will continue to do so into the future. So stop in and see us, and while you’re here take time to visit the Learning Garden directly behind our library.

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Lakewood Schools

Matthew Markling To Lead Board In 2011

by Christine Gordillo

The Lakewood Board of Education kicked off the new year with the election of new officers to lead it in 2011. In an organizational meeting held on Monday, January 3, before the body's first regular meeting of 2011, the Board elected Matthew John Markling as its President and John Kamkutis as its Vice President. Treasurer Rick Berdine administered the oath of office to both gentlemen directly following the respective votes.

Prior to the nomination and election of the new officers, outgoing President Betsy Shaughnessy reflected on her year as president in 2010. Shaughnessy called the passage of the levy in May with the support of 60% of voters the highlight of the year. "Our strength is dependent on strong community partnerships," she said. She also called serving as president an honor and said she is "grateful to voters" for the "gift" of being able to continue to serve on the Board. Shaughnessy is serving her fifth term in office.

Markling, who called it, "An honor to represent Lakewood City Schools," will present his formal comments as the new president at a future meeting. He briefly told Board members and the audience that he knows there will be challenges ahead and, "Tough decisions that affect employees and families," will have to be made. He continued to say that he has, "Confidence we will work as a team," to

address those challenges. Markling is serving his first term in office. Kamkutis is also serving his first term.

The next regular Board meeting will be Tuesday, Jan. 18, due to the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. The regular meetings of the Board of Education are held the first and third Monday of each month with the exception of: the meetings to be held on the following Tuesdays due to a conflict with holidays and the meetings in July and December, in which months only one meeting will be scheduled, on Monday, July 11, and Monday, December 5, respectively.

This year, the Board plans on holding its meetings in a variety of district buildings in order to allow greater access for the community. Please check the district web site at www.lakewood-cityschools.org for meeting places.



Treasurer Rick Berdine administers the oath of office to newly elected Board President Matthew John Markling.

First Class Of Ranger Scholar Athletes Honored

by Christine Gordillo

More than 200 Lakewood High student-athletes were standing a little taller with pride before the Winter Break as they received the newly instituted Ranger Scholar Athlete Award for their academic achievement during the fall sport season.

The first recipients of the Ranger Scholar Athlete Award were honored at a ceremony on December 16, where the student-athletes received a t-shirt com-

memorating their accomplishment. Of the 313 fall athletes, 203 qualified for the Ranger Scholar award, or 65% of all those who played a fall sport. A student must receive a 3.0 GPA or better to qualify as a Ranger Scholar Athlete.

The award was instituted as part of a resolution passed by the Board of Education in the summer on the Continuing Improvement of Lakewood Athletic Department and Recreation Department Program. Part of the resolution included enhancing efforts to promote academic achievement.

"Studies show that students who participate in extra-curricular activities such as sports perform better in school. We want to acknowledge and encourage those students who are working hard in both the classroom

and on the sports field," said LHS Athletic Director Bob Thayer.

The t-shirt the students received reinforces the qualities desired and goals for all student-athletes LHS. The back of the shirt reads,

*"Lakewood Student-Athletes Are:
Committed & Dedicated
Disciplined & Accountable
Mentally Tough
Lakewood Student-Athletes Will:
Maximize Their Potential
Develop Life-long Skills for Success
Be a Source of Community Pride*

The t-shirts were generously provided by donations from the Lakewood Alumni Foundation and the Lakewood Athletic Boosters. Athletes who qualify in the winter and spring seasons will be named Ranger Scholar Athletes.

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A large group of students, mostly young men, are posed in several rows on a stage. They are all wearing white t-shirts with a logo. In the background, there is a large yellow banner with text and a logo.

Lakewood Rangers
CORE VALUES

LAKESWOOD STUDENT-ATHLETES ARE:
Committed & Dedicated
Disciplined & Accountable
Mentally Tough

LAKESWOOD STUDENT-ATHLETES WILL:
Maximize Their Potential
Develop Life-Long Skills for Success
Be a Source of Community Pride

Above:
More than 200 fall season athletes were honored as Ranger Scholar Athletes for their outstanding achievement in the classroom.

Left:
One of the new Ranger Scholars shows off the t-shirt given to the awardees.

Join the Discussion at: www.lakewoodobserver.com

Lakewood Schools

Waiting For Superman

by Meg Ostrowski

On Monday, January 3 at their annual Organizational Meeting, the newly elected President of the School Board, Mr. Markling, stated that he would deliver formal comments at a future meeting. However, he took a moment to express his sense of honor in serving the Lakewood City Schools and to compliment his colleagues. In anticipation of the Superintendent’s Report, in which Dr. Joseph P. Madak would share some thoughts on the recent documentary about public education, *Waiting for Superman*, Mr. Markling said that we were fortunate to have a cast of “superheroes” of our own. Most notably he acknowledged “The Wonder Twins,” Treasurer, Rick Berdine and Superintendent, Dr. Joseph P. Madak, “The Dark Knight, Batman,” Board Member, Ed Favre who Mr. Markling suggested had stepped out of the meeting to transform himself, and “Wonder Woman, for her boundless energy,” Mrs. Linda Beebe who is currently serving her seventh term on the board.

The regular board meeting that followed, was highlighted by Dr. Madak’s defense of public education in response to the documentary. Like many recent reviews, Dr. Madak brought to our attention the over simplified conclusion of the movie,

that charter schools are the answer to a failing public school system. Dr. Madak went on to explain that several important issues are minimized or not addressed in the documentary. The film does not acknowledge the overwhelming impact that poverty and other challenges at home have on student performance. Study after study confirms that there is a strong direct correlation between the two. *Waiting for Superman* suggests that teachers’ unions and a lack of accountability are the problem. But Finland, which has a highly unionized system with little diversity, is featured as a

public education success story. While charter schools can offer specialized experiences or an improvement over the educational opportunities available in some struggling districts, the Credo Study conducted at Stanford University summarizes that only 17% of the time do charter schools perform better than the public option. 46% of the time the results are the same, and 37% of the time the outcome is worse.

All that being said, Dr. Madak outlined the Lakewood City Schools’ commitment and formula to success. Quality education relies on hiring and retaining outstanding teachers, offer-

ing a high quality curriculum, funding ongoing professional development, providing safe school environments and maintaining strong relationships with parents and the community.

Fortunately Lakewood’s public schools are far from failing. Despite the many challenges of our diverse community and an anticipated reduction in funding from the State of Ohio, Lakewood City Schools are well positioned to continue providing an excellent education.

Now if only we were able to keep all buildings in a single bond...

Fourth And Fifth Graders Jumping For Heart Health

by Christine Gordillo

Lakewood elementary school 4th and 5th graders will be jumping at the chance to help fight heart disease on Saturday, January 22. That’s the day of Lakewood City Schools 13th annual Jump Rope For Heart event, held from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. in the East Gym of Lakewood High School.

Students will jump rope to raise funds for the American Heart Association, which funds cardiovascular disease research and public and professional education programs. Over the

last decade, Lakewood students have raised nearly \$100,000 for the American Heart Association.

Making a special appearance to cheer the students on this year will be Slider, mascot of the Cleveland Indians.

Jump Rope For Heart teaches students how exercise benefits the heart and shows students that volunteering can be fun and beneficial to the whole community. They learn how they can make a difference by providing important community service and having

a great time at this fun-filled family event.

Money raised by the event will go to fund potentially lifesaving research and educational and community programs. Please help our students help others. When a student asks you to be a sponsor, support Jump Rope For Heart with whatever you can afford to give. If you would like to help more, call the American Heart Association at 1-800-AHA-USA1 (1-800-242-8721).

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For an appointment, call 216-227-1330.



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14701 Detroit Avenue, Suite 400, Lakewood, Ohio 44107

Lakewood Cares

H2O Starts 2011 With New Assistant Coordinator And MLK Day Of Service

by Celia Dorsch

The City of Lakewood's "Help to Others" youth volunteer program is pleased to announce that Emmie Hutchison has been hired as the new Assistant Coordinator of H2O. Through a unique partnership with Lakewood Schools, the City's Division of Youth has offered year-round volunteer opportunities for middle and high school students since 1993. As part of her responsibilities, Mrs. Hutchison will manage the City's H2O Office at Lakewood High School. She will also assist with after school H2O programs at Garfield and Harding Middle Schools, Lakewood Catholic Academy, and H2O Summer Service Camp. Last year a total of more than 500 students participated in H2O service events.

Emmie Hutchison brings a diverse background to her new position as Assistant Coordinator of H2O. She has a Bachelor's degree from Miami University's Western College Interdisciplinary Program which taught her to think critically and act collaboratively. Mrs. Hutchison is passionate about forming and strengthening community. She has lived in Lakewood for over sixteen years and loves raising her family here. She, and her husband, Dutch Evans, have four children. Three are currently enrolled in Lakewood Schools, with the youngest still at home. Emmie has devoted much of her outside time to community-building through the Lakewood Family Room and numerous school activities and organizations.

Many people will recognize Emmie Hutchison as a familiar face from her past employment throughout Lakewood. She gained valuable retail experience at locally owned Phoenix



Emmie Hutchison, the new Assistant Coordinator of H2O.

Coffee and Lion and Blue. And most recently, she spent seven, "Wonderful years as a para-professional youth services librarian at Lakewood Public Library's main branch." One of her favorite activities at the library was designing programs for middle school students, a definite plus for H2O's middle school program and Summer Service Camp.

H2O is excited about the new perspective and wonderful experience

that Emmie Hutchison will bring as Lakewood's service learning program continues to evolve and expand.

CELEBRATING SERVICE

On Monday, January 17th, H2O is hosting its 2nd Annual Day of Service in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King was a tremendous advocate of serving others. H2O hopes to encourage interested Lakewood high school age residents to spend a portion of Martin Luther King Day helping at one of the following sites:

- * Crestmont Nursing Home – making craft projects and socializing with residents
- * Lakewood Public Library - preparing materials for storytime
- * LakewoodAlive – making valentines for U.S. Soldiers serving overseas
- * Lakewood childcare centers - assisting with lessons and playtime
- * Ronald McDonald House – helping with miscellaneous house needs

* Hope Lodge – making decorations to celebrate Black History Month

* North Coast Health Ministry – collecting personal hygiene items (see details below)

Interested students need to sign up by Friday, January 14th. Registration is first come/first serve. Lakewood High students can sign up in the H2O Office outside the L-Room. Private high school residents of Lakewood may also sign up by calling Celia Dorsch at 529-6045 or Emmie Hutchison at 529-4173.

H2O "Help to Others" to collect toiletries for North Coast Health Ministry patients

North Coast Health Ministry (NCHM) is a free clinic serving the low-income uninsured on Greater Cleveland's West Side. Located in Lakewood, NCHM has been a bridge to better health for people in our community with no other route to health care since 1986. Many necessary hygiene items that contribute to good health are expensive luxuries NCHM patients cannot afford. Will you help H2O assist our NCHM neighbors with a donation of personal care items? Suggested donations:

- * Toothbrushes
- * Toothpaste
- * Soap
- * Shampoo/conditioner (travel-size is o.k.)
- * Lotion
- * Deodorant

H2O members will be collecting door-to-door between 10am and noon on Monday, January 17th. They plan to cover the neighborhood west of Lakewood Park between Lake Ave. and Edgewater Dr., as far as Summit Ave. Interested residents can also drop off items the week of January 10 – 17 at the following locations:

- * Lakewood Division of Youth – 12900 Madison Ave.
- * The H2O Office at Lakewood High School – near the L-Room off Bunts Ave.
- * The Root Café, Lakewood – 15118 Detroit Ave.

This project is being conducted as part of H2O's Day of Service in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



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Monetary donations also accepted. Please make check payable to: Lakewood SDA Church. Please note donation is for Little One's Ministry. Please mail to below address, attention Treasurer

Donations Accepted

First Thursday every month 5:00pm – 7:00pm
Lakewood Seventh-Day Adventist Church
1382 Arthur Avenue, Lakewood (behind Taco Bell)

Questions? Please contact Laura at 216-406-5620 after 5:00pm

Recipients are directed, by Lakewood Christian Service Center, to Lakewood SDA Church



Lakewood Cares

Ministerial Musings:

Time for Those Resolutions

by Rev. Dr. John Tamilio III, Ph.D.

I am very sorry for my recent extended absence. I was finishing the dissertation for my Ph.D. and was under a colossal deadline. My thanks to those of you who wrote and called asking for me to come back; it feels so good to be wanted.

Well, the New Year is here. Actually, as I write these musings, it is not quite here yet, but it is on the horizon, and not the “distant” one. For many people, resolutions conjure up images of working out more often, eating healthier foods, quitting smoking, developing a new hobby, or spiritual discipline.

While I was getting dressed this morning, the Today Show was on television. The feature story that I half-listened to was about baby boomers heading into retirement. They listed, by percentages, what retirees were hoping to do as they approached their golden years. Ten percent of those surveyed wanted to deepen their spiritual life.

This is not the case for boomers alone. Many of us, whether we attend church regularly or not, want to deepen our spiritual life. So, as we enter the New Year, what are some of the practices that we can adopt to deepen our faith?

PRAYER. When I was in Boston for my Ph.D. defense this month, I went to a seminary located near my parents’ house to do some studying. On the bulletin board was a posting from the school’s student association encouraging the entire seminary community to pray three times a day.

What if we did the same? How about a morning prayer asking God to present you with an opportunity to serve Christ that day in a way you would not expect? How about an afternoon prayer for someone near and dear to your heart? How about an evening prayer? Not, “Now I lay me down to sleep,” per se, but, “Thank you God for all the blessings you have poured into my life today.”

SCRIPTURE. On January 1, many people go to a bookstore to buy a Bible that is divided into 365 readings. They want to read the Bible in one year. They



start with the Garden of Eden and follow Israel out of Egyptian captivity, but by the time they hit Leviticus and Numbers, they put their new Bibles on the shelf, never to crack them open again.

Instead of setting ourselves up to fail, what if we tackle the daily Lctionary readings or subscribe to daily e-devotionals published by denominations such as the United Church of Christ (ucc.org), whose National Offices are located right here in Cleveland? There are many ways to read Scripture that are feasible and nourishing. The idea is simply to engage the Scriptures each day and let them engage us so that we can hear God’s still-speaking voice.

I could offer more ideas, but let’s pause there. Prayer and Scripture. These, along with attending church regularly and reading the works of people such as Barbara Brown Taylor, Henri Nouwen, and Kathleen Norris, will help us journey through 2011 with a substantive God-consciousness. Let us resolve to do so together for this will form, inform, and transform everything we do as God’s people.

Happy New Year!

The Rev. Dr. John Tamilio III, Ph.D., is the Senior Pastor of Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ in the Tremont neighborhood of Cleveland. He lives in Lakewood with his wife and their three children.

Lakewood Family Collaborative And Partners Bring Job Search Services To Residents

by J.T. Neuffer

If you are a job seeker needing help with your search...Tri-C Career Development and Transition Services can assist you!

Since its inception in January 2010, Tri-C’s Career Development and Transition Services department has served over 1500 unemployed and underemployed community members across Cuyahoga County and beyond with free job search services. These services range from individual coaching to a regularly scheduled series of group workshops offered at a variety of Tri-C locations or in the community. Our services are being funded through grants from the Cleveland Foundation and The Walmart Foundation Brighter Futures Project led by The League for Innovation in the Community College.

The unemployment rate in Cuyahoga County is staggering at 9% while the City of Lakewood has a modest 8.1% according to the most recent Bureau of Labor Statistics Report. While the unemployment rate has seen minor improvements over the past year there are many people still out of work. As a result, our mission is to help you develop the skills necessary to be successful in your job search and inform you of the tools available to increase your employment opportunities. Therefore, we are bringing our services to Lakewood Family Collaborative members and other Lakewood residents through a series of job search preparation workshops held at Lakewood

Public Library every Tuesday during the month of February from 9:30am – 12:30pm. Workshop topics include: Resumes That Get Results, Developing Your Job Search Plan, Networking... Get with it, and Ace the Interview. In addition, we will be offering free career coaching sessions on Fridays in February. Job Seekers will be given 30 minute coaching sessions with a professional career coach from 1pm-4pm. Appointments are required for the coaching, but not for the workshops.

Our team of highly trained professionals who serve as facilitators and career specialists for the Career Development and Transition Services include members with extensive business experience in Human Resources Management, Training & Development and Staffing & Recruiting. The proven collective expertise of all involved ensures that those served have access to the highest level of support in the areas of Career Development and Job Search Preparation.

If you need immediate job search assistance, please call 1-866-933-5180 and follow the menu prompts. Your call will be routed to a Career Transition Specialist. We look forward to meeting and working with you in February or sooner.

To make an appointment for a coaching session on Friday at the Lakewood Library contact the Lakewood Family Collaborative at 216-529-6868, or email lakewoodfamilycollab@gmail.com.

OUT OF WORK?
LOOKING FOR A NEW
CAREER DIRECTION?

JOB SEEKER TUESDAYS in FEBRUARY
9:30AM – 12:30PM
Lakewood Public Library, Main Branch

PERSONAL COACHING on FRIDAYS
1:00PM – 4:00PM
Lakewood Public Library, Main Branch
By appointment only.

The Lakewood Family Collaborative along with Cuyahoga Community College, Career Development and Transition Services presents **four free workshops**—helping job seekers with skills they need on their journey to gaining employment or a new career.

FEBRUARY 1ST – RESUMES THAT GETS RESULTS
Understand the purpose of a resume, how to develop an effective resume and review the general guidelines and parts of a “resume that WILL get results.”

FEBRUARY 8TH – DEVELOPING YOUR JOB SEARCH PLAN
Explore the importance of having a Job Search Plan. Learn about the general guidelines and key parts for an effective Job Search Plan.

FEBRUARY 15TH – NETWORKING...GET WITH IT
Learn how to “Use the Grapevine” to get your message out – to get referrals and gain insight into your target market.

FEBRUARY 22ND – ACE THAT INTERVIEW
Practice your interviewing and receive valuable feedback. Basic Guidelines, Traditional Questions, Behavioral Based Questions and Telephone Interviews.

TO REGISTER: Contact the Lakewood Family Collaborative at 216-529-6868 or email lakewoodfamilycollab@gmail.com. Space may be limited. Registration suggested but not required. Workshops are free. **Appointments are required for Personal Coaching.**

Cuyahoga Community College

THE LAKEWOOD FAMILY COLLABORATIVE

AARP Tax-Aide Site
Has Moved

The Lakewood Senior Center, 16024 Madison has replaced the Lakewood Main Library as the AARP Tax-Aide Site. The Tax-Aide program is staffed by volunteers who assist taxpayers free of charge with low and moderate income with special attention to those age 60 and older. Tax help is by appointment Monday and Tuesday afternoons 12 PM to 3:30 PM. February 1 through April 15. To make an appointment please call 216-521-1515

The volunteers do taxes elsewhere in Lakewood at the library’s Madison Branch, phone 216-228-7428 and at Barton Center, phone 216-221-3400.

Join the Discussion at: www.lakewoodobserver.com

Wellness Watch

North Coast Health Ministry To Offer Saturday Women’s Health Day In February

by Jeanine Gergel

North Coast Health Ministry (NCHM) will offer a Women’s Health Day on Saturday, February 12, 2011, during which onsite mammography, breast health education, and clinical breast exams will be offered to low-income uninsured women.

“Numerous studies have shown that women are significantly less likely to have had a recent mammogram if they lack health insurance,” says Lee E. Elmore, NCHM executive director. “We have had Women’s Health Days in our clinic on regularly scheduled weekdays for several years. Offering the service on a Saturday will allow us to serve those women who cannot get here during the week due to work or family conflicts. Our goal is to ensure that all women who need breast health screenings and preventive care have access to care, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.”

Multiple studies have shown that low-income, uninsured women



The Mammo Van provides on-site mammography at NCHM on Women’s Health Days

are more likely to be diagnosed with advanced stages of breast cancer, are less likely to receive standard treatment, experience delays in initiating and completing treatment, and experience lower survival rates than those with health insurance.

The NCHM Saturday women’s

Patients will be seen by appointment only. Women wishing to make an appointment need to register as North Coast Health Ministry patients first. Qualifying patients are those who are uninsured, fall below 250 percent of the federal poverty level, and live within NCHM’s service area of western Cuyahoga and eastern Lorain counties. Those wishing to register and schedule an appointment should call 216-228-7878.

About North Coast Health Ministry

North Coast Health Ministry is a faith-based free clinic serving the low-income uninsured on Greater Cleveland’s West Side for the past 25 years. With the support of approximately 150 volunteer physicians, nurses and other caregivers, NCHM is able to provide primary health care, specialty referrals, prescription assistance, and health education to the medically underserved. Founded in 1986, North Coast Health Ministry is a bridge to better health for our medically underserved neighbors in need.

Lakewood Family Trains For A Cure

by Holly Coughlin

Some people do it just to get off the couch and improve their health. Some people do it because their lives have been touched by a blood cancer and they want to make a difference. And, some people do it for the camaraderie and the fun of being with others. For whatever reason, when you join Team in Training it gets us all closer to a world without cancer.

Four members of the Tabor family from Lakewood have come together to honor the memory of an amazing family friend by participating in the 2011 Cleveland Marathon. Andy, his wife Kris, and their two daughters, Hajnal Eppeley and Lexi Tabor, will be preparing for the marathon as members of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society’s (LLS) Team In Training (TNT) program, receiving four months of training. In return for the personalized coaching and a supportive group of teammates, they raise money for criti-



We train for Andi and others fighting cancer

cal blood cancer research. The Tabors have also recruited many other friends to join the cause to cure cancer. Take a look at the “Team Tabor” web-site at <http://pages.teamintraining.org/noh/cleveland/teamtabor>.

Since the first Team In Training Event Andy did in 2007, when his close friend Andi Szabolcs was first diagnosed with Leukemia, the Tabors have done several events and have raised over \$16,000. They also train in honor of Andy’s mother, who is currently being treated for Leukemia. TNT Participants have the option of running or walking a full or half marathon, cycling a 100-mile century ride, completing a triathlon, or taking a hike adventure. In addition to weekly training sessions under the guidance of a certified coach, TNT offers clinics on nutrition, equipment, injury prevention and safety. Participants are also given tools to help them fundraise. LLS arranges airfare and lodging to send participants to the event of their choice.

Teams are forming now for the summer season, which includes the Rock’n Roll San Diego Marathon, America’s Most Beautiful Bike Ride in Lake Tahoe, Nevada, and the Greater Cleveland Triathlon. For additional TNT information, call the Northern Ohio Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

at 216-910-1245 or visit: www.teamintraining.org/noh.

Informal, 30-minute meetings are being held to discuss details and answer questions. Meetings include:

Tuesday, January 18th at 6:30 p.m. at North Olmsted Public Library, 27402 Lorain Rd.

Wednesday, January 26th at 6:30pm at Strongsville Public Library, 18700 Westwood Dr.

Saturday, January 29th at 10:00am at Independence Public Library, 6361 Selig Blvd. and Tuesday, February 1st at 6:30pm at Fairview Park Library, 21255 Lorain Rd.

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society® (LLS) is the world’s largest voluntary health agency dedicated to blood cancer. The LLS mission: Cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin’s disease and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families. LLS funds lifesaving blood cancer research around the world and provides free information and support services.

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Wellness Watch

Challenge Yourself Swimmingly!

by Paula Reed

Live Well Lakewood and Lakewood Recreation Department are partnering to improve your health. Live Well Lakewood's popular Wellness Challenge this year gives you the option of pulling on your bathing suit before lacing up your walking shoes as the Swim Challenge and the Walking Challenge will run consecutively. So you have the choice of doing one or the other, or hopefully both! Complete the Swim Challenge and you'll earn a t-shirt along with boosting your fitness.

To participate in the Swim Challenge, all you have to do is swim or

water walk an average of three times a week, either for 30 minutes or 20 laps each session, from January 17th through March 25th. If you miss a day one week, you can make it up another week. Pool staff will keep track of your progress, and even provide some motivation if necessary! Registration is free. The only cost is a pool pass of \$20/month, discounted \$5 for participants of the Swim Challenge.

Want to take your Challenge up a notch? Work in some Power Water Aerobics classes, which count as 1.5 swims. Taught by the energetic (and fun) Ann Schwarz, the classes are

adapted for all skill levels. If you would like to try a class, or can't commit to an entire session, the class accepts drop-ins. Drop-in fees are \$6 (resident) or \$8 (non-resident) per class, and payable to the pool manager-on-duty. Classes are Mondays and Wednesdays, 8:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.; Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Two sessions run through the Challenge, January 17 - February 7 and February 14 - March 21.

The Swim Challenge begins on January 17th with a pre-Challenge assessment, 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. in the Lakewood High School Pool lobby. Our team of nurses will check your height and weight to figure your BMI, get measurements to calculate your

waist/hip ratio, and check your blood pressure. Can't make it at that time? You get a second chance on Saturday, January 22nd from noon to 1:00.

Adult Swim hours are: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 6:00 a.m. - 7:30 a.m.; Tuesday, Thursday, 7:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.; Saturday, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. You can also take advantage of Open Swim hours on Friday, 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. and Sunday, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Register for the Swim Challenge, Power Water Aerobics and buy your pool pass through the Lakewood Rec Department online at www.lakewoodrecreation.com, by phone at 216-529-4081, or in person at 1456 Warren Rd. Come on in, the water's fine!

Set Incremental Wellness Goals For 2011

by Rachel Anzalone

The most common New Years Resolutions made relate to Health and Wellness. It's fantastic to have long term goals, but it's important to remember there are baby steps to take along the way. Forget the baby steps and you may

find yourself frustrated, overwhelmed or feeling like you're just not getting where you want to be. Break down your bigger goals into daily, weekly and monthly objectives that will help you reach your overall goals. If your long term goal is to lose 30 pounds, your first objective might be to eat one salad every day for a month. This incremental goal will help get you to your end objective of losing weight. Once an incremental goal has become part of your lifestyle you can focus on the next. Taking small steps each day, week or month will help ensure the long term success you're looking for!

Recreation Commission Has Open Seats

by Erin Fach

The Lakewood Community Recreation and Education Commission is accepting letters of interest to fill two open seats on the Commission. The Community Recreation and Education Commission is the governing body of all athletic and education programs sponsored by the Community Recreation and Education Department of the Board of Education.

The 7 member board meets approximately 10 to 12 times per year on the last Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm at the Board of Education.

The Commission works with Recreation staff in the formulation of rules, regulations, schedules, and such other matters as may be necessary to program operation.

Submit your letter of interest and qualifications to the Lakewood Recreation Department, 1456 Warren Road, Lakewood, Ohio 44107 to the attention of Erin Fach, Commissioner, by February 15, 2011. Lakewood Residents only.



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Black Bean Sweet Potato Chili

by Dr Meg Gerba Perry

269 calories, 6 g fat, 10 g protein, 45 g carbohydrate, 11 g fiber (serves 6)

- 2 medium-large sweet potatoes or yams
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2-3 garlic cloves
- 1 medium red bell pepper, diced
- 2 15-oz cans black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 28-oz can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1-2 small fresh hot chilies, minced or 1 4-oz can chopped mild green chilies
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- salt to taste
- fresh cilantro for garnish (optional)

Bake sweet potatoes at 350 degrees until slightly firm, but not soft. When cool, peel and dice into ¾ inch cubes. Set aside. Heat oil in soup pot or Dutch oven. Add garlic and onion and sauté over medium heat until golden brown. Add remaining ingredients and heat. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes. Add diced sweet potatoes and continue to simmer until vegetables are tender, 10-15 minutes. Add salt to taste. Taste improves if allowed to stand for 1-2 hours before serving. Reheat and serve with chopped cilantro for garnish.

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Lakewood's Art

The Boyz Are Back In Town!

by Fran Storch

In a new partnership with PlayhouseSquare, the Beck Center for the Arts is proud to present an encore production of the smash hit *Altar Boyz* at the Hanna Theatre, January 13-30, 2011. Beck produced the regional premiere of this musical comedy here in the summer of 2008 to rave reviews. *Altar Boyz* is a sharp, pop-music parody with irreverent humor that tells the holy inspiring story of five small-town boys trying to save the world one screaming fan at a time.

This encore production is again directed by Beck Center Artistic Director Scott Spence and features four of the five original "boyz" who return to dance and sing their hearts out to save the souls of the sinful – including Equity actor Josh Rhett Noble as Matthew, Dan Grgic as Luke, Ryan Jagru as Juan, and Connor O'Brien as Abraham. New to the AB cast is Matthew Ryan Thompson who plays Mark, the sensitive one. Noble, O'Brien and Thompson were most recently seen in Beck's holiday production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.



Heavenly heartthrobs save the souls of the sinful one song at a time. Original photo by Stephen R. Campanella

"We are excited that PlayhouseSquare recognizes the quality of our work and is providing the Beck Center with an opportunity to reach a wider audience," commented Cindy Einhouse, president & CEO of the Beck Center. "*Altar Boyz* enjoyed a terrific

run at the Beck Center, and we are pleased to bring this fantastic show back to Northeast Ohio."

PlayhouseSquare has increased its own programming in the theater spaces for the new season, scheduling 179 performances, up from 42 last season. A portion of this programming increase is the result of reaching out to local groups such as the Beck Center, Cleveland Public Theatre, and Last Call Cleveland to produce their work at PlayhouseSquare for the first time. "Cleveland has such a wealth of great

performing arts talent," said Gina Vernaci, PlayhouseSquare's vice president of Theatricals. "As the community's performing arts center, it makes sense for us to offer on our stages an entertaining mix of the best of Cleveland's locally produced work alongside intimate touring shows."

Altar Boyz tickets can be purchased at www.playhousesquare.org, by calling 216.241.6000, or at the PlayhouseSquare Ticket Office. For discounts of groups of 15 or more, call 216.664.6050. Some restrictions may apply. The Hanna Theatre is located in downtown Cleveland on East 14th Street.

Beck Center's production of *Altar Boyz* is presented through special arrangement with R&H Theatricals and is sponsored through the generous support of Cox Communications, the Ohio Arts Council, and Cuyahoga Arts and Culture.

Beck Center for the Arts is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization that offers professional theater productions, arts education programming in dance, music, theater, visual arts, early childhood, and creative arts therapies for special needs students, and gallery exhibits featuring regional artists.

PlayhouseSquare is a not-for-profit performing arts center whose mission is presenting and producing a wide variety of quality performing arts, advancing arts education and creating a destination that is a superior location for entertainment, business and housing, thereby strengthening the economic vitality of the region.

Ugandan Children's Choir Performs In Lakewood

by Jim Ebbenga

UNICEF and UNAIDS approximate that 50 million orphans live in sub-Saharan Africa, one-quarter of whom have lost their parents to AIDS. 2.5 million of those children live in Uganda.

Watoto is a holistic care program that was initiated as a response to this overwhelming number of orphaned children and vulnerable women in Uganda, whose lives have been ravaged by war, poverty and disease. Its goal is to raise the children as leaders in their chosen sphere of life so that they in turn will rebuild their nation. The Watoto program involves physical and medical care, education, trauma counseling and spiritual discipleship.

Children who live in Watoto Children's villages have the opportunity to join choirs that travel the globe to increase awareness of the plight of orphaned children in Africa. Each of the children in the choir has suffered

the loss of their parents either through war or disease. This experience gives the children exposure to other cultures broadening their worldview. It also gives them confidence and boldness to rise up out of their own situations of sadness and despair.

Accompanied by a team of adults, the choir presents Watoto's vision and mission through their stories, music and dance. Watoto choirs act as ambassadors to raise awareness about the plight of the orphaned and vulnerable children of Africa. Watoto Children's Choirs have travelled internationally since 1994, performing in Europe, Asia, and North and South America.

Liberation United Church of Christ is proud to present the Watoto Children's Choir in a performance of a unique blend of native African rhythms, contemporary gospel and ethnic dance. The free concert was held on Friday, January 7, 2011.

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Opinion

The New Age Of Bank Robbery

by Steve Fecser

A good old-fashioned bank robbery evokes images of a gun-toting masked robber, stick-up note, getaway car and clandestine murky hideout. Tabloids and film have memorialized this interpretation for decades and, to an extent, will probably continue to do so, but a new script has been written and has been playing at a bank near you. There is an ironic twist in the storyline, however: Banks are now robbing people--their customers!--in ways Dillinger would never have envisioned. In this new age of ever-increasing technological advancement, computers and plastic are the preferred weaponry of commercial banking gangsters and the bloodshed is red ink for banking customers.

Enter stage left, Fifth Third Bank, et al. The amounts of money Fifth Third has allegedly fleeced from its customers via improperly assessed overdraft fees would make Bonnie and Clyde look like pikers and make Nigerian scammers foam with lust. If you are, or were, a Fifth Third customer, you are probably aware of a pending class action suit against them. The lawsuit alleges that the bank improperly assessed overdraft fees for insufficient funds by "re-sequencing" transactions in order to maximize the number of overdraft fees. Although Fifth Third denies these claims, they have agreed to pony up \$9.5 million into a settlement fund.

This "re-sequencing" of transactions is indeed a curious concept and should provoke further examination. So, what's all this business about "re-sequencing" anyway? It appears that "re-sequencing" is a clever devious tactic intentionally designed to increase overdraft fee revenue. It works by recording charges and purchases on ATM or debit cards NOT as they chronologically occur, but so that the largest charge or purchase is the first one paid. Moreover, deposits are put in line after withdrawals to effectively increase the potential for an overdraft to occur. According to the lawsuit, Fifth Third computers used this so-called "batch-processing" to change the sequence of

transactions from different days and within the same day, charging a number of improper overdraft fees."The result of this re-sequencing is that account balances can be manipulated to exhaust the available balance more quickly and in fewer transactions than if the transactions were processed in chronological order," the lawsuit says.

Although "high-low" check sequencing is, or was, standard operating procedure at banks like Wells Fargo, Bank of America, and a host of other national banks, Fifth Third has taken it to the next level by charging overdraft fees on overdraft fees. Their policy is/was, that if an account had a negative balance (due to an overdraft), the account could be charged an additional fee for each successive period that it remained below zero. These fees were triggered for each additional day that the account was overdrawn. The

class action suit alleges that these fees violate Federal and State law, as well as the contractual relationship the bank has with its customers. The complaint further alleges that Fifth Third manipulated debit transaction posting to cause overdraft fees even when there were sufficient funds to pay for a purchase. Additionally, it is asserted that Fifth Third failed to disclose fees that would be charged at the point of sale (POS) and used deceptive disclosures in its contract with customers to hide its true overdraft policies.

Anyone who has or had an account with Fifth Third Bank linked to a debit, ATM, or check card that incurred at least one overdraft fee from a debit card or ATM transaction between 10/21/2004 and 07/01/2010 is eligible to participate in the class action settlement. Cash payments to the members will be up to 3 times the overdraft

fees paid during a continuous 45-day period. You can submit a claim online and view the detailed notice at www.OverdraftSettlement.com or call 1-888-235-7491 for further information, instructions and options. The claim deadline is May 2, 2011.

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois is overseeing this class action, known as *Schulte, et al. v. Fifth Third Bank*. The Court will hold a hearing on March 16, 2011 to consider whether to approve the settlement, along with attorney's fees, costs and expenses.

It's time to take a stand against this calculated premeditated thievery. Hold them accountable; make them pay! If Dillinger were around today, would he still be robbing banks? Or would he be working for them? Think about it...

Note: The author is a former Fifth Third checking account holder.

Attorneys Dann & Douglass To File Suit For The Continual Filing Of Frivolous Foreclosures

by Katherine Bulava

Several wronged homeowners have come together with the help of attorneys Marc Dann and James Douglass in order to file a class action lawsuit against law firm Lerner, Sampson & Rothfuss (LS&R). The suit alleges that LS&R routinely files un-provable foreclosure suits through the use of manufactured and incomplete documentation. The case was filed on January 4, 2011.

Tamara and Phillip Turner and two other plaintiffs all had foreclosure suits filed against them by LS&R. On behalf of various clients, the suits were dismissed after the court found LS&R's clients did not have standing to file the suits. Despite the final victories, the Turners and two other plaintiffs all were forced to hire lawyers to defend themselves, incurring substantial legal fees. The plaintiffs and others who were sued by LS&R, representing lenders, also suffered significant emotional distress, and

at least one formally moved out of their home even though the foreclosure complaints were eventually dismissed.

Dann, Douglass and these homeowners believe there are hundreds, if not thousands, of other Ohioans, who lack the ability to secure counsel, that have vacated and lost their homes or have been forced to file for bankruptcy because a frivolous foreclosure has been filed against them.

"We found out that Lerner Sampson & Rothfuss has filed an average of 4,500 foreclosures a year for the last five years in Cuyahoga County alone," said Douglass. "How often do they get away with filing an illegitimate foreclosure because the homeowner cannot or does not know to defend his or herself?"

In the cases filed against the Turners and the two other plaintiffs, LS&R falsely claimed its client was the holder of the mortgage promissory note, which is a prerequisite to being able to file a foreclosure. Dann and Douglass uncovered that it is common LS&R practice to create and execute documentation on behalf of Mortgage Electronic Filing Systems, Inc. (MERS) to make it appear that their client is in possession of the needed mortgage promissory note.

LS&R employee Shellie Hill admitted, in a deposition taken by Douglass, that she signed documents as Assistant and Vice President of MERS though she is actually a LS&R employee with no real employment responsibilities to MERS and had never spoken to or received direction from anyone at MERS.

"We would never have known that Lerner, Sampson & Rothfuss didn't have a right to try to foreclose on our home if we had not had good legal counsel," said Phillip

Turner. "We were already packing to move in with family when Jim (Douglass), who I know from the community, offered to take a look at our case."

The lawsuit will ask that the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas declare that LS&R is in violation of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, has slandered the creditworthiness of individuals it has frivolously filed foreclosures against and has defamed these individuals. The lawsuit further seeks to recover actual economic and noneconomic damages caused by LS&R's unfair, deceptive and unconscionable practices.

"The State of Ohio and Cleveland, in particular, has suffered tremendous economic and social consequences due to the foreclosure crisis that swept the nation, starting in 2006," said Dann. "Foreclosure mills like LS&R contribute greatly to the needless destruction of our community and of individual lives."

Lakewood Shopper Service

by Helen Brinich

I was surprised to read in a recent Lakewood Observer that there are two Lakewood residents who are happy with, and appreciative of the RTA Shoppers' Shuttle. There may be a few other satisfied riders also, but there aren't many. A trip to the grocery store takes about 3 hours, counting the time it takes to complete the loop and the 1 1/2 hours between trips. A second stop, at the library, bank or whatever, will add 1 1/2 hours to the outing. Not many people are happy about spending 4 1/2 hours to complete two errands. This assumption is validated by the fact that very few people ride the shuttle. I rode it two times. The first time there was a total of 4 people, counting

myself, who rode from the library, east to Winton Place. There was the same count the second time.

I can't believe that RTA will continue a service which is used only by people who are happy to have a means of killing time. It is no substitute for the Circulator which enabled so many Lakewoodites to shop, meet appointments, get to work, to school, to entertainment, etc. In short, to live a normal independent life. The Circulator had a large enough ridership to generate significant revenue, which the Shopper Shuttle lacks. A successful enterprise was terminated and has been replaced by an unsuccessful one, to the detriment of the City of Lakewood.



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Facts Not Opinion

Jail Sucks - Don't Go

by Casey Ryan
There is nothing romantic about being in jail.

Contrary to the twanging and snarled defiance of country songs about prison or the claims of life enrichment learned in 8 by 10 cells purported by some authors...jail sucks. The air is suffocating, the food nauseating. And the people in there are, if not the dregs of society, certainly not the pillars, either. They are petty and not-so petty criminals, felons perhaps, thieves, or just plain thugs. They are there because they broke the law – they bought, sold, or somehow ingested some sort of illegal drug; they beat someone up, possibly a loved one or family member; they were speeding, swerving, or not stopping; they were looking for or offering something forbidden (sex for money); or, often, they got drunk and did something stupid, like drive or become “disorderly” in public. They may be there for the first or fourth or fourteenth time.

But you don't want to be there with them.

My own experience began on a Friday night. I went to a bar to see a friend's band. Had a great time – they're a really good band. Normally if I go out for a couple drinks, I go to a local place within walking distance and throw a game of darts or watch a game, but my friend's band doesn't play nearby, so I drove a short distance to see them. This, of course, necessitates driving back which, after a few drinks, is not a good idea. On the way home I took a turn a little too wide to avoid an oncoming car and could not recover. Up on the sidewalk and into a phone pole, dead on – thank God for air bags. Totaled the car but walked away with nary a scratch. The police who were summoned, however, smelled the alcohol and booked me, Danno.

The case is still pending, and the main facts and details are all here, but some are not. I have been down this road before, but this is the first to involve an accident. So the penalties could be severe, both in and out of court.

After being booked, fingerprinted, and photographed, I was now one of the aforementioned “them” that you don't want to be one of. Being a Friday night

in Cleveland, there were lots of fellow miscreants in the holding cells with me. I had a cell to myself for a while, and a plasticized mattress (no blanket) on a narrow, wall-mounted bunk, but was soon joined by a quiet young black man who had been arrested for being in an after-hours place. According to him, he was one of several people arrested “just for being there, man...,” although the police had found a couple bags of weed and one gun among the crowd. He was soon moved out and replaced by a middle-aged white guy who had been picked up for soliciting prostitution. He was adamant he had never said a word to the girl – an undercover cop – but that his friend, who was driving the car they were in, had done all the talking. They were both “sting” victims, since the “hooker” had been posing as a woman with car troubles who became interested in more than car repair once young men offered assistance.

Nonetheless, there they were.
A friend who once spent significant time in federal prison – and turned his life around there – once said that in all his time in jail or prison, he never once met a guilty man. All claim innocence.

I made no such claim, nor did I admit guilt.

Men were moved in and out over the course of the weekend. Some were transferred to other facilities or districts, as far as we could tell; none were released outright. On Sunday a few drunken and disorderly Browns fans from that afternoon's game were brought in. They were drunk, loud, boisterous, and somewhat amusing. They, too, largely claimed innocence. “We were just standing there talking, man, and the cop told us to move along, and we said okay, and we started walking, but they arrested us anyway, man!”

And contrary to popular belief, we were not given that one phone call. Despite the calendar turning rapidly to 2011, no one was allowed use of that modern day invention known as a cell phone, not even once in some sort of supervised fashion. All our belongings except the clothes we were wearing were taken, including belts and shoelaces so we would not strangle or hang our-

selves or others. For the entire weekend we were all effectively cut off from the rest of the world. The guards, or CO's (Corrections Officer), just told everyone who asked, “No phone calls, man!” It was late Sunday afternoon before we were finally allowed, in groups of four, to go to a holding cell equipped with two wall-mounted, 1980's-era phones to let family, friends, or employers know what had become of us. Even then, we were not allowed to use our confiscated cell phones to look up phone numbers in the memory, and were told there were no directories available. So one had to dial a number from memory. Hopefully a 216 or 440 area code, since the phone seemed incapable of dialing 330 numbers. We were told to instruct the people we contacted to call a specified number to learn our court date or other fate – there was no way to make a follow-up call.

We were, however, given the chance to shower. A few took the offer, most declined, including myself. I hoped to be out soon, somehow, and decided to wait to use my own shower, unsupervised by Cleveland's finest.

Early Monday, a bunch of us were moved into a holding area in the Justice Center near the actual courtrooms. We were led in handcuffed pairs through an eerily quiet Justice Center lobby before dawn to a large room with only one locked door, with (not enough) bunks on the walls, one (open) toilet, and thick windows overlooking the slowly lightening November cityscape outside. Eventually our cases were called and we were led into court, where there was usually some sort of preliminary disposition of each case. In my case, I was advised to plead no contest (I did), given a court date and told to seek counsel.

Along with a few others, I was then moved to a “workhouse” facility in Warrensville Heights, since Cleveland's downtown jail was overflowing. We were handcuffed together in pairs again and put in a windowless, lightless van partitioned off inside to prevent more than three people from sharing space or talking together. When we got there, our possessions that had been brought with us were filed away and we were given orange prison jumpsuits. Incarceration

was in one large room, again with bunks on the walls and in rows in the middle of the room with a few scattered chairs and tables, not unlike, I suppose, a military barracks, but with guards instead of drill sergeants. With one TV (no cable) and several card games, it was not exactly Alcatraz, but this was a place for lesser offenders. Semi-private but monitored showers and toilets. Phones were available, but practically useless – still no cell-phone use of any kind, and the only directory available was for eastern suburbs and outdated. In addition, the one person I spoke with could barely understand me through the static of the connection.

Despite all this, I was released Monday night. Friends on the Police Force had got word to my girlfriend, who got the wheels turning and eventually, with my mother's help, got me out. They were told I had been released when I had actually been in court Monday morning, in the very same building; told a few hours later I had been released when I had, in fact, been transferred to the workhouse; and misled and misinformed continually in ways only government bureaucracies can execute so flawlessly and shamelessly. The legal difficulties are bad enough, but you never, ever want to be released from jail to a girlfriend or spouse and your mother who have had to deal with such agencies. A very low form of embarrassment, trust me.

Now there is still hell to pay. My girlfriend said she is just “going through the motions” for now, and our future depends on what happens and my response, both legally and personally. That is a yet-unwritten story.

There is no moral offered here by me, as I am unfit for such weighty matters. Only a suggestion – don't drink and drive. Find a cab, a designated driver, walk, whatever. It is a message heard over and over to the point of being ignored. But don't. The consequences of mixing alcohol and driving are real and very unpleasant. And though you may get away with it dozens of times, it only takes being caught once – or worse, injuring someone in an accident – to really screw up your's and other's lives.

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Pulse Of The City

Proverbs...New Year's Wisdom, For The Pathways Of Life...

by Gary Rice

If there's one thing that I believe we all hope for, particularly in a new year, it would be wisdom. Most of us have probably either done or said something that we wished we hadn't.

But this year...this year will be different, of course! We will attain and practice wisdom, right? Uh huh. Still, hope springs eternal, does it not?

By the way, as a sidebar, what about those "resolutions" of yours? As we begin the new year, just how are they going for you? Got 'em all typed up and placed on your refrigerator? Got all those receipts of yours all together for your tax accountant? What's wrong? Can't quite get yourself together? Don't cry. You're not alone. Those "New Year's Blues" hit lots of people. You know, I'm just thinking about those reports of all those alleged wintertime depression-inducing conditions ranging from sunlight deprivation to cabin fever. Happy thoughts, indeed?

Of course, here in Lakewood, we are probably better off than our neighbors in the southern and eastern parts of Cuyahoga County, where the "Snow Belt" reigns supreme. We often measure our own snowfall in inches, while those other suburbanites may end up wondering which snowdrift their cars are buried under! Let's face it, we've got a few dark and blustery months ahead of us until it's daffodil time again. More or less, each season spans about 90 days, and of course they never quite fit into those neatly wrapped seasonal packages, do they? Fall weather sometimes previews wintertime, and winter weather can extend well into springtime. Funny thing though... around here, I never seem to remember fall weather intruding too much into winter's schedule. (Although this year our fall's been pretty nice, has it not?)

To get through those dark days ahead, some of us may turn on more lights, while others will cuddle up next to a roaring fire. Some strong hearts will hit the slopes with their skis and snowboards, while others might take a zip or two down the Metropark's toboggan slides. By now, the snow removal contracts have been signed and the snow blowers are all reconditioned and ready. The question is, are



we?

We really do need wisdom to see us through, but where, exactly, can we find it? I, for one, failed to find it on the shelves before Christmas, or for that matter at any of the after-holiday sales either, so where CAN we find it?

Well, we might start with the Bible. No kidding. There's one great book in the Bible (among others) dedicated to wisdom. It's called the Book of Proverbs. From way back then until now, the word "proverbs" has come to mean "wise sayings." The "Book of Proverbs" was a collection of wise sayings attributed to King Solomon of Israel and perhaps others, many years before the time of Christ. Whatever your faith tradition, perusing this book will provide amazing insight into the practicalities of life. Of course, while proverbs often convey great truths, there are also times that common sense has to come into play. In fact, the Book of Proverbs even seems to allow for that aspect! Proverbs can even be contradictory too, as applied to differing situations, I suppose.

Let's take a look at just a few of these ancient biblical sayings. I won't quote them verbatim, or go by chapter and verse, because of the vagaries of translations in the Bible's many different versions. Still, even with all of those versions, it's just amazing to me how the essence of these writings has never been lost. One of my favorites would be the one that makes the point about a man being known for his

actions. (Note: although those "proverbs" were mostly addressed to males back then, they certainly would seem to apply more universally these days.) Then there's the one stating that a rich man's wealth is his only strength, and a poor man's poverty his only curse. There's another one that says an empty barn is clean, but no money comes from an empty barn either! Another proverb says that we all face a wide and pleasant road ending in death (the implication being that roads less wide and pleasant are sometimes the better ones to travel?). There's also one about the rich man having many "friends," and another one that warns about the evils of pride. Other proverbs speak of the necessity of child discipline. Some

of those are not without present-day controversy too, as that "spare the rod" proverb has sometimes unfortunately been interpreted to justify draconian juvenile disciplinary situations.

There are other wise admonitions about speaking for the needful and making sure they are offered justice, as well as the value of having a good wife. Others speak of the importance of not plotting evil. There are literally hundreds of wise proverbs in that book that we can learn and profit from, again framing their context with good old common sense.

In addition to the many proverbs found in the Good Book, I've also collected a pile of those "wise sayings" over the years from other sources. Here are just a few of them:

There's no education in life like adversity. (Disraeli)

You cannot push anyone up a ladder unless he is willing to climb himself. (Andrew Carnegie)

Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been. (Mark Twain)

Be as you wish to seem. (Socrates)

Finally, here's one more common sense proverb for you, again from the Great Book:

"The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going." Prov. 14:15.

Let us please, then, look well to our "going" in this new year. Wisdom would indeed demand no less.

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Lakewood Living

A Political Geek’s Guide To Government

by Stan Austin

Part of the American tradition of the New Year’s Holiday is the swearing in ceremonies of those who won election in November officially taking office in January. News photos of new governors vie for your attention along side pictures of football games and the fireworks in Sydney, Australia.

We didn’t have a local election this past Fall in Lakewood. But, we still had a swearing in ceremony in the Council Chambers on Sunday, January 2, 2011. The setting was a Special Council Meeting. The ceremony was classic Lakewood – freshly scrubbed new office holders to be, proud spouses holding Bibles, beaming kids, proud parents, a robed Judge, and a card table in the back with a peculiar assortment of cupcakes and cookies.

If we didn’t have an election why, then, why the new officeholders?

Successful campaigns, promotions to higher office created vacancies. Much of this has been chronicled over the past several months in Observer articles. Also, moving the players around has been a favorite pastime among the politically cognoscenti over coffee at The Root and bela dubby.

So, what are the actual mechanics of filling a vacancy? Why is it important that we know?

To help us answer the first question we need a guide. Our geek guide to government will be Nora Hurley, Lakewood’s Law Director.

In the case of a vacancy in the position of Mayor, the Charter provides for a line of succession. The first is the Law Director, second is the Finance Direc-



Ryan P. Nowlin gets sworn into Nickie Antonio’s At-Large Council seat by Judge Patrick Carroll as his wife Meghan holds the bible.

tor, third is Public Works Director, and fourth is the Council President. If all four decline then Council picks a replacement.

According to Hurley, the news media actually performed the first screening of potential successors around August. Interviewers approached those four with microphone in hand and asked if they wanted to be Mayor. They all stated that they didn’t want the job. Based on those assertions, Council President Kevin Butler publicly announced the application process to fill a possible vacancy in the Mayor’s position as well as any council vacancies. Council then held open meetings and made public applicants’ resumes over the course of several months in an interview process

for filling the expected vacancies.

By the third week of December, everything was in place. Elections were won! Vacancies were thereby created! By the dozens, Lakewoodites applied for the position of Mayor and Council! Council selected people for those positions!

Problem was, according to Hurley, was that according to letters of resignation, there weren’t any vacancies until December 31,2010 at the stroke of midnight.

In the meantime, Law Director Hurley had attended to one essential detail that was never mentioned in the Charter, crucial nevertheless. She had to obtain letters of declination from those four listed in the line of succession. And, each letter had to be provided in the sequential order of that line of succession. After all, as she pointed out, “The next person in line can’t decline something to which the preceding person has not yet declined.” And, with an attention to detail that is essential in uncharted waters, she had each of the four sign in front of two witnesses.

Finally, (remember those cook-

ies and cupcakes waiting?) it came time for Council to officially appoint a Mayor and two Council Members.

Council President Butler asked Law Director Hurley if she in fact did have the letters of declination. Hurley replied yes she did.

Council then moved to appoint Mike Summers as Mayor of Lakewood.

Butler then asked if Hurley had letters of resignation for the vacated Ward Three and At Large Council seats. Hurley replied that she did.

Council then moved to appoint Shawn Juris to the Ward Three seat and Ryan Nowlin to the At Large seat.

Now, why is all this detail (fascinating to government geeks) really important? It’s essential that we know that due processes have been followed in all our government actions. The transparency of public bodies and strict attention to the Charter requirements are essential for government to be legitimate. Those of us in Cuyahoga County are ever so aware of that requirement.

Now--- time to celebrate our new officeholders with those cookies and cupcakes!

State Representative Nickie Antonio



Lakewood’s new State Representative Nickie Antonio gets sworn in at The Beck Center, as her partner Jean, holds “The Woman’s Bible” while their daughters look on.



Shawn Juris takes the oath of office to fill the Ward 3 Council seat recently vacated by our new mayor. Shawn’s wife Susana holds the Bible

Lakewood Living

Matthew Markling Earns High Marks In Labor And Employment Law

by Chris Cape

Less than one percent of Ohio attorneys have earned the prestigious distinction of being renowned as an Ohio State Bar Association Certified Specialist in Labor and Employment Law, and Lakewood School Board President Matthew John Markling is now among that exclusive group.

The Ohio State Bar Association "specialization program" is a voluntary certification process that requires a commitment to excellence and is accredited by the Ohio Supreme Court Commission on Certification of Attorneys as Specialists. Of the approximately 43,841 licensed attorneys in the State of Ohio, Markling is now included among the less than one percent of Ohio attorneys who have successfully taken and passed a rigorous written examination in the specialty field of Labor and Employment, demonstrated a high level of substantial involvement in the Labor and Employment Law specialty area, fulfilled ongoing education requirements, and received favorable evaluations from other attorneys and judges familiar with their legal work.

Lakewood resident Thomas Giffels is very familiar with Markling's legal experience as the two attorneys have worked together on various labor and employment matters facing Ohio school districts. In response to Markling's legal work and professional reputation, Giffels said, "Matt is a real professional and is well-regarded for his legal abilities throughout the State of Ohio. He knows labor and employ-



ment law - inside and out - and counsels some of Ohio's very best school districts and school organizations on all aspects of labor and employment law."

Labor and employment law is the practice of law dealing with the relationships among employers, employees and their labor organizations, except workers' compensation. It includes all aspects of labor relations (private and public sectors), occupational safety and health, employment discrimination, wages and hours, employee benefits, and employment-related torts and contracts. The practice also includes all forms of labor and employment litigation, arbitration, mediation, negotiations, and other forms of alter-

native dispute resolution before all federal, state, and local courts, agencies, and private tribunals.

In his professional representation of school boards at the collective bargaining table, Markling has a solid reputation for being both zealous and collaborative during labor and employment negotiations. By way of example, Ohio Federation of Teachers Field AFL-CIO Services Coordinator Kim Luther and Markling recently worked together to reach true consensus in an Ohio school district. "It was a pleasure and an honor to work with all parties involved and also refreshing to know we could break through the party lines with Markling's collabora-

tive spirit," said Luther.

Markling brings that same collaborative spirit to the Lakewood School Board as demonstrated by his ability to focus leadership on the important goals and objectives facing the Lakewood City Schools. Accomplished attorney and veteran school board colleague Linda Beebe said, "In my experience with Matt as a fellow Lakewood School Board Member, Matt's diligence and attention to detail complement his knowledge of labor and employment law."

In addition to serving as President of the Lakewood School Board, Markling is a director with the statewide law firm of McGown & Markling Co., L.P.A., and serves as the Coordinating Director of both the Firm's Labor and Employment and Litigation practices. Markling is also General Counsel for the Ohio Educational Service Center Association, a veteran adjunct faculty member with the University of Akron School of Law, and recognized as one of The Best Lawyers in America® in the specialty of Education Law.

In response to achieving the certified specialist distinction, Markling said, "I acquired an appreciation for Labor and Employment Law from Ohio State University Professors James Brudney and Philip T.K. Daniel. And I am fortunate to have family, friends, and colleagues who continue to help me build a successful labor and employment law practice."

Introducing Lakewood's New Leadership

continued from page 6

tion and she looks forward to working with Summers as the new Mayor.

Mayor FitzGerald thanked everyone for the kind words and said that his time on Council and as Mayor in Lakewood working with all of them has helped him learn a lot. He said it is only because of these experiences that he thinks he will do well at the County.

Councilwoman Antonio then also thanked everyone for their kind words and thanked FitzGerald for his leadership. She appreciated the caliber of people he hired as well as the fact that he brought some strong female leaders into the government.

After a long round of compliments and thank-you's, the meeting came to a close and Council President Butler adjourned the meeting at 9:40 P.M.

On Sunday, January 2, 2011 a special Council meeting was held with the purpose of swearing in the new members of Lakewood's government. It began with Council President Butler delivering a communication outlining the process of Mayor Ed FitzGerald official resignation as Mayor and the declination of all the members in the line of succession, and ending with the act of Council naming Councilman Summers as the Council appointee to the Mayor seat. With that Council voted to appoint Mike Summers to the position of Mayor and the motion passed.

Next, Councilman Butler delivered another communication regarding the resignations of both Mike Summers and Nickie Antonio as Council

members. He then presented two resolutions, one naming Ryan Nowlin to Nickie Antonio's seat and the second naming Shawn Juris to Mike Summers seat. Council then voted and passed both resolutions unanimously.

Following the last vote, all three men were sworn into their office by Lakewood's Judge Carroll.

Council President Butler then adjourned the special meeting just before one in the afternoon.

The next day, January 3, was the first regularly scheduled Council meeting of 2011. This was also the first meeting that all the appointees would get to participate in their new roles. With a very sparse crowd in the auditorium, Council President Butler called the meeting to order at 7:36 P.M.

Due the start of the New Year, the agenda for the meeting consisted of the discussions of only three ordinances and a liquor permit. The first two ordinances were on their third reading, and due to pass if favorably recommended by the Public Safety Committee. The ordinances had to do with adjustments to the traffic ordinances that were passed in 2010. The first, moves a section from the "decriminalized parking

section," to "moving violations," as it is often used for those purposes. The second, was reinstating a section that was accidentally deleted. After Councilman Powers read a communication from the Public Safety Committee recommending passage of both ordinances, Council voted and did so.

The last ordinance discussed at the meeting was once again the ordinance calling for a raise in salary for the Mayor and all Council members. The item was being placed on second reading and Council voted to refer it back to the Committee of the Whole for further discussion. Councilman Powers made a statement saying that with all the "hub bub" out there about this ordinance he wanted to reiterate that no decisions or positions have been taken by Council. He wanted to make it very clear that there is still going to be a very in-depth conversation about it's potential to pass and if it is considered, what the numbers will look like.

Coming to the end of a very short agenda, and looking to get out as they were all at City Hall just the day before, Council President Butler adjourned the meeting at 7:57 P.M.



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Lakewood Living

Lakewood Business Women Team Up For “La Bella Italia”

by Dionne Daugenti

Nothing is better than a united front - in business, in family life, and amongst friends. When local Lakewood businesswoman Diana Maiola Cirino decided to expand her business, Italian Tours and Travel by Diana, her first instinct was to contact other privately owned businesses in the area to talk about the immense possibilities that exist for partnering on ventures which could benefit everyone

involved. Maiola and her Marketing Assistant, Dionne Daugenti, developed a strategy to connect with a variety of companies to talk about partnering on memorable trips to Italy, the Land of Sunshine and Olives.

One of the first companies to be contacted was Landfall American Express Travel. From the moment that Maiola and Daugenti met with Ann Huber, Landfall's President and Owner, the synergy was immediate. Meeting Ann was

like getting re-acquainted with an old friend. Both companies are located on the north side of Detroit in Downtown Lakewood and are involved in the travel industry; however they are not competitors. Instead, Italian Tours and Travel by Diana has a lifetime of experience in crafting unforgettable private tours for small groups and individuals to Maiola's ancestral Italy. Landfall's Huber brings her own 30 years of experience offering her clients high-quality, worry-free travel to several destinations worldwide. Maiola is a native of Lakewood and has spent most of her life maintaining residences on both sides of the Atlantic while at the same time maintaining involvement in a variety of Lakewood causes and activities. Huber has also been a very active Lakewood business operator - she is a member of the Downtown Lakewood Business Alliance and also the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce and Lakewood/Rocky River Rotary.

After a few meetings, it was inevitable the two ladies of Lakewood would partner on a tour of Italy and thereby promote it to their eager clients. To assist potential participants in their understanding of the cultural, artistic, architectural and historic wonders of Italy, Maiola and Huber are hosting an Evening in Italy at The Clifton Club, at 17884 Lake Road in Lakewood. The event is being held on Thursday the

20th of January, 2011 at 6:30pm. Cost of admission is \$20.00 per person. The ladies encourage all to attend in order to enjoy pasta and fine wines while learning about the culinary and cultural treasures of Italy. Please RSVP to Ann Huber at 216 521 7733 or Diana Maiola Cirino at 216 521 3700.

The partnership on this venture between Maiola and Huber is powerful. Both ladies are experts in different yet adjacent aspects of the travel industry. Their timing is perfect in an age when so many people rely on the internet to plan travel. Although sometimes helpful, the internet is often a gamble, not to mention exhausting. It also does not provide the traveler with the personal assistance a travel agent can provide. Many times, Hbuer and Maiola have found their rates are less than the internet's. Maiola and the agents at Landfall American Express Travel have many years experience. Huber states, "We have first-hand knowledge of many of the destinations. This enables us to assist our clients greatly in their decisions." These ladies at Landfall American Express Travel and Italy Tours by Diana have proven ability to offer a seamless journey with their personal and experienced approach. Combined, they offer over 50 years of knowledge and experience. Without agents such as them, you're on your own!



Christmas Tree

I see the ghosts of Christmas past,
Lying on their side,
Waiting in the cold dark snow,
To take their last sad ride;

The lights are gone, their limbs are bare,
And too the happy sound,
So there they huddle in the snow,
Their coats now turning brown;

I feel their sadness and their woe,
I know the reason why,
For I, like them, will to someday,
Get old and have to die;

But then reborn and with Our Lord,
Oh the glories I will see,
And maybe too in lights again,
This God made Christmas tree.

Bill Knittel
Lakewood's Poet Laureate

Cooperative Preschool Plans Open House

by Deanna Rasch

Parkview Playschool, Inc., a cooperative preschool in Lakewood, has scheduled an open house on Tuesday, January 25.

Offering educational services to three- and four-year-old children, Parkview's preschool program is unique.

“The difference between a co-op and a traditional preschool comes down to parental involvement,” says Parkview’s Director of fifteen years, Mrs. Patti Finau. “Cooperative preschools are successful because parents can observe and better understand their child’s development, joys and frustrations. Co-ops allow parents be an integral part of their child’s first school experience.”

The open house will enable interested parents to visit the school, meet the teachers and find out about enrollment.

For more information, contact Mrs. Patti Finau at 216-228-0996.

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