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THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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Volume 7, Issue 25, December 13, 2011

Lakewood City School District Treasurer Search Down To Three Quality Candidates

by Christine Gordillo

The Lakewood City School District Board of Education, which is seeking to replace its current treasurer, has narrowed its candidate field to three finalists: Teresa L. Emmerling, Treasurer, Massillon City Schools; Lewis E. Galante,

Treasurer, Perry Local Schools; and Timothy J. Penton, Treasurer, Whitehall City Schools. The Board will conduct second interviews with the three finalists on Thursday, Dec. 15.

The Board plans to have the new treasurer under contract by December 31, 2011.

The new treasurer will replace Richard Berdine, who in June announced his resignation as of December 31, 2012. The incoming treasurer, who begins work on August 1, 2012, will work closely with the current treasurer to ensure a smooth transition.

The University Of Akron Lakewood Wants To Be Your University

by Andrew Harant

After years of feeling like a college town, Lakewood is

getting a university. Classes at the brand-new University of Akron Lakewood begin on

January 9 in the recently refurbished Bailey Building at the intersection of Detroit Avenue and Warren Road.

With the final touches being added to the facility, such as splashes of Akron's blue and gold colors, signage, and computers, years of vision and planning have come to fruition. Community leaders, envisioning the economic impact of a university presence, sought an alternative mechanism for higher education within Lakewood. University leaders noted Lakewood's demonstrated support for education and the arts among many other assets. UA Lakewood Director and Lakewoodite Suzanne Metelko said in terms of higher education, "For years, money has flowed out of Lakewood. University of Akron is investing in Lakewood."

The investment in technology and state-of-the-art equipment is quite visible. Three classrooms and a conference room exhibit distance learning and video conferencing capabilities. The facility also features a community room, computer lab with 24 PCs, a testing lab and a student lounge. In addition to serving students, these spaces are available for businesses and community organizations to host meetings and events.

UA Lakewood hopes to reach out to Lakewood's organizations and institutions, as well as other colleges in the area. "We're not here to be a competitor; we're here to be a collaborator," said Metelko. UA Lakewood has already



photo by Jay Foran

From left to right: Strachan, Foran, and Quayle

Lakewood United Methodist Church Presents A Festive Christmas Concert

by Anne Palomaki

Several Lakewood High graduates and students will perform Christmas music for all to enjoy on Sunday, December 18 at 3:30 p.m. at Lakewood United Methodist Church located at 15700 Detroit Avenue. This concert is for everyone including families and children. No tickets are needed. There will be a free will offering taken.

Megan Denman, a LHS graduate who received a degree from The Conservatory at Baldwin Wallace and a master's degree from Univ. of Akron will be the organist. Jonathan Snyder, a LHS graduate and student at Temple University Conservatory will play the

oboe and English horn. Glenn Wilkerson, a student at Univ. of Akron will play the violin. Mary Beth Donahoe, a LHS graduate and student at Ohio Northern majoring in musical theater, and Katie Staskus, a LHS graduate and student at The Conservatory at Baldwin Wallace majoring in voice performance will sing Christmas music. Andy Peng, a student at LHS will play the violin. There will be an opportunity for everyone to join in singing favorite Christmas carols.

There is ample free parking west and north of the church. The church is handicap accessible with an elevator near the Summit Avenue door. All are welcome!

Sale On The Grounds



photo by Paula Reed

Chris and Mark Brinich pose with the papier-mache Santa Claus they just purchased at the Lakewood Historical Society Christmas Sale on the Grounds.

Local LSA Grads Key To National Champion Soccer Team

by Jay Foran

Three local boys who got their start in soccer thanks to the Lakewood Soccer Association (LSA) were key members of the Cleveland Internationals Soccer Club U12 boys Super-Y League team that won the prestigious North American Finals in Tampa, Florida December 2 – 6. Brennan Foran, David Quayle, and Daniel Strachan formed their early interest and passion for soccer through LSA's recreation and travel programs, before moving on to the Internationals premier program to further advance their skills and level of competition.

Lakewood residents Foran and Strachan attend Harding Middle School while Quayle resides in the nearby West Park area of Cleveland and attends Messiah Lutheran School in Fairview Park. Notably, the three former LSA players represent the largest single community contribution to the 18 member team. Other players on the team are from communities throughout Northeast Ohio including North Canton, Chagrin Falls, Westlake, Aurora and Erie, Pennsylvania.

The Internationals team clinched the championship with a 2-0 victory over the New Jersey Rangers, a team that had gone undefeated in the tour-

namment. The victory marked the Internationals' third shut-out of the finals after posting a 3-0 win over Ironbound Soccer Club of Newark, New Jersey and a 1-0 win over Fredericksburg Area Soccer Association of Virginia in earlier match play. Internationals also posted a 2-1 win over an "all star" West Pines, Florida team during the semi-finals, a win which went to overtime match play and penalty kicks for a final winning decision in favor of the Internationals.

The North American finals, featuring more than 130 boys' and girls' teams and nearly 2,500 players, was the culmination of the Super-Y League summer season, which included more than 700 teams from U-12 to U-17 competing in six regions across the U.S. and Canada. In July, the Internationals boys finished first in the Midwest Division with a 7-1-1 record, qualifying them for the finals in Tampa, Florida.

The 2011 Internationals Champion Super-Y team was coached by Louie Nanchoff, former Professional Soccer Player, and member of the U.S. National Team (including the U.S. Olympic team and World Cup Team), former University of Akron standout player and co-founder of the Internationals Soccer Club.

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Calendar Page

Dec. 14, Wednesday

Bike Lakewood Community Meeting
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Main Library, 15425 Detroit Avenue

Come discuss the newly released Bicycle Master Plan with your fellow Lakewood cyclists. Learn what Lakewood is doing to become more bike friendly city and share some of your own ideas too!

LHS Choral Winter Concert
7:30 PM

Civic Auditorium, 14100 Franklin Blvd.
Directed by Dr. Lisa Hanson, the concert will feature the Symphonic Mixed Choir, Symphonic Treble Choir, Concert Choir, Chamber Choir, and Vive L'Four. The concert will begin with the traditional candlelight processional in the house of the auditorium. Some of the songs to be featured include Rutter's Candlelight Carol, The Holly and the Ivy, In The Bleak Midwinter, Silver Bells, God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, and Walking in a Winter Wonderland.

Dec. 15, Thursday
Late Night Thursdays on Madison Avenue
12:00 PM - 9:00 PM

The holiday shopping season is upon us! To make it easier for people to buy local and support area businesses, many of the businesses along Madison Avenue will be open late on Thursdays! Tons of places to visit: Salons, shops, restaurants, art galleries and more!
More information can be found on the Madison Avenue Merchant's Association Facebook page, www.facebook.com/MAMALakewood

LHS Orchestras Winter Concert
7:30 PM
Civic Auditorium, 14100 Franklin Blvd.
Tickets: \$3, \$2 students & \$1 seniors

Dec. 16, Friday
Lakewood Charitable Assistance Corp (LCAC) Food Drive
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Lakewood Masonic Temple (15300 Detroit Ave)
The Lakewood Charitable Assistance Corporation will distribute 300 bags of food to families in need this holiday season. We need your help!
Sorting donated cans and boxes (inside)

Wine Tasting West Coast Cabs
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Mento, 15220 Madison Ave
5 of The Winemakers favorite cabs paired with a selection of delectable apps

Cleveland Craft Coalition Holiday Show
7:00 PM - 10:00 PM
Breakneck Gallery, 17020 Madison Avenue
Think outside the "big box" and shop local this holiday season! Check out the CCC Holiday Show! 20 artists offering something for everyone on your list, from accessories to jewelry to holiday items and more!

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat
7:30 PM
Beck Center for the Arts Mackey Main Stage
17801 Detroit Avenue
Back by popular demand! Many original cast members return for this encore presentation of last season's smash hit.Beck Center continues its holiday tradition of fine family entertainment with this humorous retelling of the biblical story of Joseph of Canaan. Center stage will be awash with a rainbow of colors in this rollicking musical, complete with a rousing children's chorus, an amazing light show, buoyant choreography, splashy costumes, and musical stylings that appeal to all tastes—from Marleyesque reggae to spurslapping country western to an Elvis channeling pharaoh. Tickets will sell fast for this holiday favorite - including a special New Year's Eve performance. Call for specific performance dates and times.

Dec. 17, Saturday
Lakewood Charitable Assistance Corp (LCAC) Food Drive packing food/ delivering
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Lakewood Masonic Temple (15300 Detroit Ave) back parking lot (outside)
The Lakewood Charitable Assistance Corporation will distribute 300 bags of food to families in need this holiday season. We need your help!
Bagging perishable foods and delivering to households throughout Lakewood. Outside, so dress warm and bring your biggest car.

Breakfast With Santa
9:00 AM - 12:00 AM
United Methodist Church in Lakewood
Children will enjoy a breakfast, games, and a craft with their families.
Children will get to meet Santa and his helper and receive a treat from Santa.
Adults: \$5
Children(3-8) : \$5
Under 3: FREE
Bring your camera to capture this special day
Children must be accompanied by any adult

Cleveland Craft Coalition Holiday Show
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Breakneck Gallery, 17020 Madison Avenue
Think outside the "big box" and shop local this holiday season! 20 artists will be selling their wares, everything from accessories to zombie socks. Something for everyone on your list!

Last Minute Market and Screw Factory Open Studio
10:00 AM - 6:00 PM
13000 Athens Ave, Lakewood, Ohio 44107
Cleveland Handmade Markets and The Screw Factory Artists, together with the gracious cooperation of the Lake Erie Building owners and staff, will once again enable, and even encourage, holiday shopping procrastination with the 4th annual Last Minute Mar-

ket & Screw Factory Open Studio.
The Last Minute Market is a wonderfully unique, one-day shopping destination with more than 65 artists and craftspeople from Cleveland and our talented friends from across the rust belt region. In addition, artists whose studios are in the building will open their doors to offer a peek at their workspace and an opportunity to purchase their work. Don't miss this Market! Nearly every form of art and craft will be represented.
The Umami Moto food truck will also be on hand to keep you fueled for shopping.

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat
2:30 PM
Beck Center for the Arts
Mackey Main Stage, 17801 Detroit Avenue

Back by popular demand! Many original cast members return for this encore presentation of last season's smash hit.Beck Center continues its holiday tradition of fine family entertainment with this humorous retelling of the biblical story of Joseph of Canaan. Center stage will be awash with a rainbow of colors in this rollicking musical, complete with a rousing children's chorus, an amazing light show, buoyant choreography, splashy costumes, and musical stylings that appeal to all tastes—from Marleyesque reggae to spurslapping country western to an Elvis channeling pharaoh. Tickets will sell fast for this holiday favorite - including a special New Year's Eve performance. Call for specific performance dates and times.

Dec. 26, Monday
Beginner's Yoga Classes
5:30 PM - 7:45 PM
1381 Bunts Road, 4th Floor
"The Inn" at Lakewood Senior Campus has two beginner's yoga class offerings every Monday!
Class times are 5:30-6:30pm & 6:45-7:45pm.
Classes are led by local yoga instructor, Marcia Hudgel, CYT, RYT
Classes are \$10 to drop in and every 4th class is free!

Dec. 29, Thursday
CCLAS Guest Bartender Fundraiser at Around the Corner
7:00 PM - Close

Around the Corner, 18616 Detroit Avenue
Once again, CCLAS is hosting a charity fundraiser event at one of Lakewood's favorite bars, Around the Corner.
Come join us and toast to a successful year for CCLAS and the Lakewood Animal Shelter - from the large capital improvement donation to the many spayed and neutered animals that found fur-ever homes! Board members and CCLAS supporters have volunteered their time to host the evening as guest bartender.
We'll be in the large back room - purrfect for celebrating the holidays with big groups of friends!
Email CCLASepts@gmail.com

Dec. 31, Saturday,
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat
7:30 PM
Beck Center for the Arts
Mackey Main Stage, 17801 Detroit Avenue

Back by popular demand! Many original cast members return for this encore presentation of last season's smash hit.Beck Center continues its holiday tradition of fine family entertainment with this humorous retelling of the biblical story of Joseph of Canaan. Center stage will be awash with a rainbow of colors in this rollicking musical, complete with a rousing children's chorus, an amazing light show, buoyant choreography, splashy costumes, and musical stylings that appeal to all tastes—from Marleyesque reggae to spurslapping country western to an Elvis channeling pharaoh. Tickets will sell fast for this holiday favorite - including a special New Year's Eve performance. Call for specific performance dates and times.

5th Annual Burning Monkey Festival And Cotillion Ball
6pm - 3am
Register on Facebook to get information



Many more listings at
www.lakewoodobserver.com



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West End Tavern presents:

“Saturday Bloody Mary Bar”

Create Your Own - 11 a.m.

Serving Breakfast/Lunch featuring our famous Gourmet Meatloaf Stack and Savory Pot Roast Voted Best Hamburger On The Northcoast!

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THE LAKWOOD OBSERVER

Your Independent Source for Lakewood News & Opinion

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The mission of the Lakewood Observer is to attract, articulate, and amplify civic intelligence and community good will in the city of Lakewood and beyond.

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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

Sunday, January 1
Sunday, January 15

Publish Date

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Tuesday, January 24

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Join the Discussion at: www.lakewoodobserver.com

Lakewood Health Care

Dr. Esselstyn And Wife, Ann, Teach Heart Disease Reversal At Live Well Lakewood Event

by Gary Pritts

On November 19, 2011, Dr. Caldwell “Es” Esselstyn, Jr. shared his research and experience with a capacity crowd of nearly 400 people at Lakewood Baptist Church on how to prevent and reverse heart disease with diet alone. Dr. Esselstyn, retired after a 35-year distinguished career as a surgeon and researcher at The Cleveland Clinic, has completed 20 years of compelling research on reversing heart disease. According to Dr. Esselstyn, heart disease is a “toothless, paper tiger.” Even patients with severe, advanced coronary artery disease can reverse their disease with diet alone, and even make themselves “heart attack proof.”

Dr. Esselstyn shared the science and research that show persuasively that the Western diet, rich in meat, dairy and added fats, is the primary cause of heart disease. He cited startling studies showing that virtually all Americans aged 20+ already have some degree of clogged arteries.

His treatment, backed by 20 years of his medical research, is the Heart Disease Reversal Diet. It eliminates the meat, dairy, and fat that clog and damage the arteries. In his words, “stop pouring gasoline on the fire.” He cautions that “moderation kills.” Traditional medical therapies that promote moderation in eating (and drugs, stents, and surgery) merely slow the progression of the disease which will

eventually kill 70% of the patients. The second pillar of the treatment is to repair the damage. Esselstyn explained the physiology of the arteries, in particular the inner lining, the “endothelium.” Green leafy vegetables, in particular, stimulate the endothelium to create the essential and amazing gas, nitric oxide (NO), which reduces friction, allows the arteries to expand and increases blood flow, reduces inflammation, decreases high blood pressure, and prevents additional clogging. Eating a plant-based diet with lots of green leafy vegetables is like “putting water on the fire.” He encouraged five servings a day. That’s right – five.

With this treatment, heart disease symptoms are reduced or eliminated in two to three weeks.

Esselstyn acknowledged that some call this treatment “extreme” or “radical.” On the other hand, according to the Center for Disease Control, heart disease kills one of every 4 Americans, is the leading cause of death, and costs the nation \$316 billion in health services, medications and lost productivity. Perhaps that is extreme for a disease which does not even exist in parts of the world that eat a plant-based diet.

Dr. Esselstyn introduced his wife, Ann Crile Esselstyn, the granddaughter of Dr. Crile, one of the Cleveland Clinic founders. She explained the “how to”

Esselstyn’s Heart Disease Reversal Diet:

Do Eat

- Vegetables – leafy green, root, red, green, purple, orange, yellow and all others except avocado
- Legumes – beans, peas and lentils of all varieties
- Whole Grains – bread, pasta, and other products that have no added fat
- All fruits

Do Not Eat

- Do not eat anything with a mother or a face (no meat, poultry, fish, or eggs)
- No dairy products
- No eggs, no egg whites
- No oil of any kind – not a drop. That means no olive oil.
- No nuts, no coconut, no avocado.

of the program -- offering cooking suggestions to incorporate kale, collard greens, beet greens, bok choy, romaine lettuce and other green leafy vegetables into daily menus; gave tips on reading food labels; recommended oatmeal varieties for breakfast; and encouraged all to take advantage of the heart healthy products offered by Nature’s Bin like no-oil hummus, nutritional yeast and Luna Burgers. She brought to life the bounty, richness, and delights of eating her husband’s proven, disease-reversing diet.

This event was sponsored by Live Well Lakewood, a grass-roots, community organization that promotes healthy, active living. Mayor Mike Summers, Lakewood Baptist Pastor Jonathan Glass-Riley, and Live Well Lakewood co-founder Paula Reed welcomed the crowd. Nature’s Bin distributed heart-healthy food samples. More info on Dr. Esselstyn and his treatment approach can be found on his website, www.heartattackproof.com. More info on Live Well Lakewood’s future events: www.livewelllakewood.org.



Dr. Esselstyn presents at Live Well Lakewood event .

Lakewood Volunteers Offer Inspiration

by Maggie Fraley

Kathy Haber and her husband, Ken Haber, recipients of the Key to the City at the Mayor’s Ball shared some thoughts with the LO on the importance of volunteering, as 2011 ends. These inspiring thoughts from two hard-working volunteers, who do so much more than just talk, can motivate us as we think about making our own New Year’s resolutions!

Kathy enthusiastically replied to our question about the importance of volunteering by saying:”Lakewood is the perfect example of how dedicated volunteers work together creating this wonderful community we share. When you have an army of volunteers coming together, great things are accomplished at no additional expense, these hours of service are invaluable to every organization. It’s not enough to live in a community, you need to participate in your community.”

Ken shared a favorite quote:”Vince Lombardo, Pro Football Hall of Fame Coach once said, ‘the achievements of an organization are the results of the combined efforts of each individual.’”

Lakewood has an enormous number of volunteering opportunities, why not plan to join the Habers and so many others and volunteer in 2012?

All proceeds to benefit the Heart Centers at Fairview, Lakewood and Lutheran Hospitals.

Saturday, February 11, 2012

Early Bird Raffles: Two \$1,000 winners

The first raffle will be drawn from entries received **by December 16, 2011.**

The second raffle will be drawn from entries received **by January 13, 2012.**

All early bird winners will be eligible for prizes to be drawn at the event.

Raffle tickets can be purchased for \$100 each or 3 for \$200.

For more information or to register, visit www.straightfromtheheartevent.org or call 216.476.7061.

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3 24-month lease: Mazda CX7 Arranged by Westside Automotive Group	19 5-day Golf Package for two to Orlando's Hyatt Grand Cypress
4 \$10,000 Cash	20 \$2,000 Cash
5 Harley-Davidson Motorcycle Arranged by Lake Erie Harley-Davidson	21 100 assorted wines
6 European Mediterranean Cruise for two, from Barcelona, Spain	22 \$1,500 Landscaping Makeover Donated by Davey Tree
7 \$5,000 Cash	23 \$1,500 Cash
8 7-night all-inclusive trip for two to Cancun, Mexico Donated by Dr. E. Dean Nukta	24 Weekend Getaway for two to New York City
9 Fur jacket Arranged by Fur Allure	25 3-night trip for two to Las Vegas
10 7-day trip for two to Waikiki, Hawaii	26 \$1,500 Cash
11 18k White Gold Diamond Earrings Arranged by Rivchun Jewelers	27 Treadmill and Workout Essentials
12 \$3,000 Cash	28 \$1,000 Cash
13 7-night Canadian Cruise for two, from New York	29 \$1,000 Travel Voucher
14 Tourmaline and Diamond Ring Arranged by Rivchun Jewelers	30 Weekend Getaway for two to Chicago
15 7-night Caribbean Cruise for two	31 \$1,000 Cash
16 5-day trip for two to California Wine Country	32 46-inch HDTV Television
	33 \$1,000 Cash
	34 Apple iPad
	35 Nook E-Reader & iPod
	36 \$1,000 Cash
	37 Laptop Computer
	38 \$1,000 Cash
	39 Sony Blu-Ray
	40 Canon PowerShot Digital Camera

* Cash options available for 2, 3, 5 at 75% of prize value. All trips arranged by Independence Travel. All electronics arranged by CompSource.

Join the Discussion at: www.lakewoodobserver.com

Lakewood City News

Council Rejects Liquor License Transfer In Light Of Prosecution

by Christopher Bindel

The December 5, 2011 Council meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Council President Mary Louise Madigan. She then gave the floor to Councilman Tom Bullock (Ward II) to discuss the first item on the agenda.

Councilman Bullock read a report from the Public Works Committee regarding an ordinance he introduced that would more clearly regulate the proper use of composting. He said that his goal with this ordinance was to responsibly expand the use of composting by making the rules clear to help prevent issues down the road. The ordinance lays out best practices of composting and makes it easier to enforce the guidelines laid out. Bullock also said that expanding composting in Lakewood would not only be good for those who use the composted materials to improve their gardens, but would also decrease the waste Lakewood has to haul away. Compost consists mostly of yard and kitchen waste which is "wet waste." Wet waste comprises the majority of the weight in our garbage. By taking that waste out the City can

save a lot of money and resources.

A substitute version of the ordinance was submitted to replace the one originally on the docket. The changes in the substitute version include naming the Director of Public Works or their designee as responsible for enforcement, requiring all compost bins be accessible from three sides and that the bins are not allowed in front or side yards or within five feet of any property line. After Bullock clarified these changes, Council passed the ordinance.

Moving on to the next item, Councilman Bullock asked Council to consider an ordinance that would update the definitions of restaurants under our zoning code. In addition to the definitions he also would like to improve, update and add categories for food and beverage services. Bullock said he wanted to capture in some of the definitions "the distinguishing feature of some restaurants of significant reliance on automobile traffic to and

from the business." Council referred the ordinance to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Next Law Director Kevin Butler asked Council to pass a resolution rescinding their approval of a liquor license transfer application made by the Evans Investment Group I, for the UPM gas station at the corner of Baxterly and Madison. Council originally approved of the application for the transfer at the November 7, 2011 meeting, however, since that meeting additional information about the party taking control of the license has come to light. Police Chief Malley did not go into much detail but reported to Council that there is an active investigation into an employee of the establishment for selling illegal controlled substances out of the business.

Council passed the resolution unanimously.

Police Chief Malley then asked Council to pass a resolution that would allow the City to accept \$37,000 dollars

from Cuyahoga County. The money would be used to contract for services that would create an interface that would make integration of information possible between Lakewood's HTE and the County's CRIS information systems. This would allow information sharing and make both the city and the county more efficient.

Council referred the resolution to the Public Safety Committee for consideration.

Coming to the end of the agenda items, and with no one from the public to speak, Council President Madigan adjourned the meeting at 8:11 P.M.

Council meetings are held every first and third Monday of the month at 7:30 P.M. in the City Hall Auditorium. The next regularly scheduled council meeting will be held on December 19, 2011. For a copy of the agenda or for any other information regarding the Lakewood City Council, you can find it at onelakewood.com/citygovern_council.html.

Lakewood Chamber Of Commerce Announces 4th Grade Essay Contest Winner

by Valerie Mechenbier

The Lakewood Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that Morgan Harper, a 4th grade student at Hayes Elementary School, is the 2011 "Why I Love Lakewood" Essay Contest winner. Over 110 essays were submitted by 4th graders from the Lakewood City Schools and Lakewood Catholic Academy. A panel of seven judges used a rubric to assess the originality, organization, descriptive language, and grammar (including punctuation and spelling) of the essays, and the judges selected Morgan's as best overall. Morgan is "proud to say I live in a community that really is a melting pot" and loves the "awesome library and great schools" plus the clubs and activities that bring people of so many ethnic and religious backgrounds together.

Morgan has been awarded a cash prize of \$100. She was an honored guest in the Light Up Lakewood parade

before taking the stage with Santa Claus, Buddy the Elf, and Suzanne Metelko to "flip the switch" to turn on the lights in downtown Lakewood during the Light Up Lakewood festivities.



CEO and President of the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce, Patty Ryan, introduces Morgan Harper at Light Up Lakewood.

Why I Love Lakewood

By Morgan Harper

This past summer I had the opportunity to observe my sister's Advanced English project. The assignment was to read the book, A Walk Across America, and then do some walks of their own...across Lakewood. I had the chance to go with my sister on a few of her walks and I learned so many things about Lakewood that made me realize how great this city really is. So many old buildings, so many unique houses of all different sizes and shapes, so many little shops I never knew existed. But the best part of Lakewood to me is the people. My mom described Lakewood as a melting pot. I wanted to know what that meant so I did a Google search. A melting pot is a place where people of all cultures, races and religions blend together. As I looked around Lakewood I saw so many different people. Some black, some white, some Arab-American. Being a bi-racial girl, I am proud to say I live in a community that really is a melting pot. There are so many churches with so many different beliefs, so many restaurants with all different kinds of foods from all over the world. There are so many clubs and activities that bring all these groups together, and an awesome library and great schools that support these ideas and programs. I am so proud to be a part of this community and to say that I am growing up in Lakewood.

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PLUS Receive 1 bottle of wine 1/2 off with the purchase of the Holiday Feature Menu. Limit one bottle per group or table. No exceptions. (Available Monday thru Thursday)

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AROUND THE CORNER

Booking Holiday Parties NOW!

Sundays - Enjoy our a la carte & delicious Brunch
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Lakewood Observations

William A. Young Jr. Named President And CEO Of St. John Medical Center

by Patrick J.Garmone

Ronald W. Dees, Chairman of the Board of Directors for St. John Medical Center, which is co-owned by the Sisters of Charity Health System and University Hospitals, has announced the appointment of William A. Young Jr. as President and CEO of St. John Medical Center. Mr. Young will begin his new role by December 31, 2011.

As President and CEO, Young will oversee the daily operations and lead the medical center's growth and service expansion plans as it continues to meet the needs of the west side community. Specifically, he will manage the medical center's five-year, \$100-million strategic plan, which includes hospital renovations and adding specialty services and programs. Over the past year, several strategic initiatives were implemented such as opening the University Hospitals Neurological Institute at SJMC; expanding and relocating the Pain Management Center; installing digital mammography as well as adding a state-of-the-art special procedures room. In a few weeks, SJMC will open a Breast Health Center. Early next year, the campus will welcome a satellite location of the University Hospitals Seidman Cancer Center, as well as the completion of a renovated entrance and front lobby.

"Mr. Young brings to St. John Medical Center more than 25 years of experience in the health care indus-



try," said Thomas F. Zenty III, Chief Executive Officer, UH. "His wealth of leadership ability has demonstrated outstanding strategic planning that has produced exemplary results throughout his career. Young will be a tremendous asset to St. John Medical Center, and will strengthen its position as the health care leader on Cleveland's west side."

Prior to his appointment as President and CEO of SJMC, Young spent more than five years as Chief Operating Officer for South Pointe and Marymount hospitals.

"We are pleased that Mr. Young will serve in this critical leadership role for St. John Medical Center," said Sister Judith Ann Karam, CSA, President and CEO, Sisters of Charity Health System. "With proven leadership and operational skills, Mr. Young will be integral to ensuring the growth and expansion of St. John Medical Center," Karam said. She added, "With his extensive

background and dedication to Catholic health care, I am confident he will continue to fulfill our faith-based mission, support the provision of high quality patient-centered care in service to the community and prepare the medical center for the future of health care."

"I am honored to accept the position as President and CEO of St. John Medical Center," said Young. "The medical center has an outstanding reputation and a strong future. I look forward to working with its first-rate and dedicated team of physicians, employees and volunteers to further solidify its leadership position on Cleveland's west side, and provide the surrounding communities with the high-quality, technologically advanced health care it deserves."

About St. John Medical Center

Co-owned by the Sisters of Charity Health System and University Hospitals, St. John Medical Center is a Catholic health care provider. The medical center is recognized for outstanding centers of excellence such as Emergency Services, Orthopedics, Pain Management, Women's and Children's Services and Cardiovascular Services, as well as unique services such as its Kidney Stone Center, Holistic Birthing Center and Balance Center. Recognized by several national organizations as one of the country's best community hospitals, the medical center continues

to expand its role as a leading provider of health care in northeastern Ohio.

About the Sisters of Charity Health System

The Sisters of Charity Health System was established in 1982 as the parent corporation for the sponsored ministries of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine in Ohio and South Carolina. The Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine, since founding in 1851, continue a faith-based legacy of high-quality, compassionate care in partnership with its co-ministers, who are the heart and hands of the ministry.

The Sisters of Charity Health System solely owns four Catholic hospitals: St. Vincent Charity Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio; Mercy Medical Center in Canton, Ohio; and Providence Hospital and Providence Northeast in Columbia, South Carolina. In a 50/50 joint venture with University Hospitals of Cleveland, the Sisters of Charity Health System also co-owns St. John Medical Center in Westlake, Ohio.

The Sisters of Charity Health System also oversees three grant-making foundations located in Cleveland and Canton, Ohio, and Columbia, South Carolina. Each foundation sponsors significant community initiatives and collaborations that address causes and consequences of poverty. More information is available at www.sistersofcharityhealth.org.



L-R: Colleen Zelonis, CNM, MSN; Susan Dornan, CNM, MS; Colleen Brezine, CNM, MSN; Sharon Johnson, CNM, MS; Maureen Stein-Vavro, CNM, MSN

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Midwifery Associates
In partnership with St. John Medical Center

Lakewood Public Library

Congratulations Area Spellers!

by Kathryn Tatnall

Lakewood Public Library would like to congratulate the winners of the third annual Spelling Bee Championship. This year we had twenty students compete in two different categories. The winners in the 4th and 5th grade competition included: Drew Sheldon as the first place winner, Zeartus Perry Jr. as the second place winner, and Rebecca Bjelopera as the third place winner. There were eleven students who competed for these top three spots.

The top three winners in the 6th through 8th grade competition included: Maura Therber as the first place winner, Jenan Alkhdour as the second place winner, and Cassie Cisco who placed third out of a group of nine finalists. Each student competed in a preliminary round of written and oral spelling challenges to earn the right to spell in the final championship. Congratulations to all who competed this year! We look forward to challenging you again next year.



Congratulations to the 4th and 5th grade winners of the 2011 Lakewood Public Library Spelling Bee: Rebecca Bjeloper, Zeartus Perry Jr. and Drew Sheldon.



Congratulations to the 6th to 8th grade winners of the 2011 Lakewood Public Library Spelling Bee: Cassie Cisco, Maura Therber, and Jenan Alkhdour.

Who's That Librarian?

- by Arlie Matera
- 1. Name/Position/Department:** Marilyn Mulloy, Supervisor, Customer and Automation Services
 - 2. Birthplace:** St.Luke Hospital, Cleveland, Ohio
 - 3.** Tell us something interesting about you: I traveled quite a bit when I was younger because I worked for United Airlines. I celebrated my 21st birthday in Paris and learned to ski in the Swiss Alps.
 - 4. How long have you worked at LPL?** It will be 25 years this December.



5. What's your favorite spot in the Library? I don't think I have just one favorite, but the Grand Reading Room is really, really nice.

LPL Schedules

compiled by Leana Donofrio-Milovan

Dec. 17 - Saturday
Lakewood Art House Cinema: "A Wonderful Night in Split"
Three lost souls spend New Year's Eve winding their way through the dark medieval streets of Split, Croatia. Navigating a new world only recently thrust from the old, each is seeking escape through deceit, drugs or sex. Featuring Coolio (yes, Coolio) as a U.S. Navy man on leave and Eastern European musical pop sensation Dino Dvornik, this is one of the most memorable films to come out of the new Eastern European cinema.
6:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium
Dec. 20 - Tuesday
Knit & Lit
Gail Eaton 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 project. Come share your passion for great literature and show off your knitting, crocheting, counted cross-stitch, embroidery and quilting works-in-progress. At the close of every meeting, the group decides which book will be read for next time. Visit www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/bookclubs for a complete list of the books being considered and find out which title you should read to be ready for the next discussion.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Meeting Room

Jan. 5 - Thursday
The Worlds of Maurice Sendak: Reception

Maurice Sendak is best known as the illustrator of more than 100 picture books, including *Where the Wild Things Are* and *In the Night Kitchen*. Sendak was born in Brooklyn in 1928, and his childhood was typically American in a number of ways. He still reminisces about childhood friends, family dramas, and the sights and smells of New York in the 1930s. Yet, while he was growing up, he also felt a powerful attraction to the worn, black-and-white photographs of his European relatives: "When my mother and father came to America, which was just a few years before World War I, their family sent photographs. They were all murdered in concentration camps and I knew that at an early age... To go through the family album and to see what I thought were these beautiful people who were dead, was unbelievable. All of that was a re-creation of a world I never knew. And I was fascinated with the shtetl world of the European Jew." The push and pull of New and Old Worlds in Sendak's memory makes his work playful and dynamic, but also haunting and complex. This exhibit explores those threads of Jewish family, geography, and culture in Sendak's life, and the way he imaginatively weaves them into his picture books.

7:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Gallery

Jan. 7 - Saturday
Film Neo Noir: "The Last Seduction"

Linda Fiorentino plays evil with such relish that we may have to award her a prize for being the most fatal of femmes. Barbara Stanwyck and Jane Greer, you've met your match! And so will several fall guys whom she uses to get what she wants... After duping her husband, Bill Pullman, into pulling off a \$700,000 drug deal, Fiorentino steals the money and disappears. Then Peter Berg makes the mistake of trying to pick her up in a small town bar. What'll happen to the next guy?

6:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Jan. 8 - Sunday
Sunday with the Friends: Jim Volk Guitar

His masterful yet whimsical performances have spellbound audiences for decades. With a fiery hybrid style of guitar picking that has drawn comparisons to Kottke, Keagy and Hedges, Jim Volk romps through the history of music, from 16th century classical to '70s metal with a few deft flicks of the wrist

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

Children And Youth Events At Lakewood Public Library

compiled by Arlie Matera
Family Weekend Wonders

Make the library a part of your family weekend time with programs featuring stories, activities, music and crafts. These free programs are offered every weekend throughout the year at both the Main Library and Madison Branch. No registration is needed. Check out our website (www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/youth) for times and upcoming themes.

Main Library Activity Room and Madison Branch Auditorium

Weekends With Wee Ones

For families with children under 2 years old
Spend a part of your family weekend time clapping your hands, tapping your feet, singing nursery rhymes and, of course, sharing books. Programs are offered every weekend throughout the year, and there is no need to register in advance.
Madison Branch Children and Youth Services

Saturday at 11:30 a.m. and Sunday at 3:30 p.m.

6. What are you reading right now? The Wedding Quilt by Jennifer Chiaverini.

7. If you were stranded on a deserted island, what three books would you want in your backpack? Kane & Abel by Jeffery Archer, Quilter's Academy Vol. 1 by Harriet Hargrave and my World Atlas.

8. Do you have a favorite childhood memory of the library? As a child I went to the Cleveland Public Library's Bookmobile at my elementary school. I

loved the smell of the books.

9. Suddenly you find yourself living the life of a book character. Who are you and why? I am Sarah in the Chiaverini books because she lives on a wonderful estate that hosts Quilt Camps and I would be able to feed my passion for quilting all day.

10. What might surprise us about your work at LPL? I doubt it would surprise anyone. It must be obvious that I love what I do. This is a wonderful place to work.

Lakewood Public Library

In A Nutshell: The Worlds Of Maurice Sendak

by Andrea Fisher

Let the wild rumpus start! Join us Thursday, January 5 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Second Floor Gallery, as we celebrate the opening of In a Nutshell: The Worlds of Maurice Sendak. Lakewood Public Library is one of only 35 North American libraries to be awarded this travelling exhibition by the American Library Association.

Best known for Where the Wild Things Are and In the Night Kitchen, Maurice Sendak has illustrated more than 100 books. Growing up in Brooklyn during the 1930s, Sendak’s childhood was typically American. However as the son of Polish immigrants, he was fascinated with old photos of his relatives who died during the Holocaust. This collision of the Old and New Worlds of his Jewish upbringing is revealed in his classic children’s books and is explored throughout the exhibit.

Rabbi Alan Lettowsky will give the opening remarks at the reception, discussing Jewish expression in the work of Maurice Sendak. Lettowsky currently serves as the part-time rabbi at The West Temple, and also teaches Modern Hebrew and Jewish History at Kent



State University.

For the reception, Lakewood-native Max Mueller will play his original musical score of Where the Wild Things Are. Mueller is currently the director of a music education project called Music on the Verge based in Los Angeles. The project aims to foster in young people a love of creating music, while also building confidence and encouraging collaboration.

The exhibit will be on display from December 28th through February 24th in the Main Library Second Floor Gallery. The opening reception marks the first of five events being held in conjunction with the exhibit. To find out more about the other events, go to www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/calendar/ or check out the current Fall and Winter Program Guide. Also, look for future events in the next issue of The Lakewood Observer.

In a Nutshell was organized by the Rosenbach Museum & Library, Philadelphia, and developed by Nextbook, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Jewish literature,

culture, and ideas, and the American Library Association Public Programs Office. The national tour of the exhibit has been made possible by grants from the Charles H. Revson Foundation, the Righteous Persons Foundation, the David Berg Foundation, and an anonymous donor, with additional support from Tablet Magazine: A New Read on Jewish Life. The exhibit was curated by Patrick Rodgers of the Rosenbach Museum & Library. The local contributors to this special exhibit and the accompanying programs are The Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage, CityMusic Cleveland and The Friends of the Lakewood Public Library.

Experience A Musical World Tour With Jim Volk

by Morgan Maseth

Anyone looking to enjoy a phenomenal music performance needs only to visit the Library to find just that. Master guitarist, Jim Volk, will be bringing his guitar playing talents to the Lakewood Public Library.

Volk is a seasoned performer whose solo release, “Blue Wheels...and Other Guitar Favorites,” has drawn much critical acclaim and earned awards nationwide. Not one to stick with simply one style of music, Volk draws from traditional and contemporary styles from around the world. The result is a musical journey that takes you through time. His fiery hybrid style, reminiscent of Kottke, Keaggy and Hedges, has the ability to spellbind audiences of all age groups and backgrounds. With nearly 45 years of music making, 30 years of performing and 20 years of teaching, it is no surprise that with just a few deft flicks of the wrist, his guitar playing has the ability to bring an exciting, fresh energy to old favorites. When not performing, Volk shares his talents by conducting guitar clinics as well as individual classes and workshops.

Do not miss out on Volk’s captivating guitar performance. This Sunday with the Friends concert will take place on Sunday, January 8 at 2 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium. As always, Sunday with the Friends is free and open to the public.

Martha Speaks, So Listen!

by Marge Foley

You may know “Martha Speaks” as the animated children’s program on PBS KIDS, but did you know that Martha’s adventures originated in a book? Author and illustrator Susan Meddaugh penned the initial story about a talking pooch in 1992. Hilarious situations arise when ten-year-old Helen feeds her dog Martha some alphabet soup that travels to Martha’s brain instead of her stomach, resulting in her ability to speak.

Sometimes chatting for hours, “Martha Calling” finds the talkative pup on the phone. One day Martha wins a call-in radio contest. Her prize vacation may be ruined by a ‘no dogs allowed’ policy at the hotel. The controversy concludes cleverly as the captivating canine convinces the crowd that companionship beats the kennel.

In “Perfectly Martha,” the title hound becomes suspicious of the methods used at a dog training school. Martha investigates and turns the tables on the dog trainer, which provides a laugh out loud ending.

“Martha and Skits,” “Martha Walks the Dog,” and “Martha Blah Blah” deliver additional problems with fun solutions. Meddaugh’s amusing illustrations compliment the antics and may make you want to reach inside the book to pet this lovable tail-wagger. All of the above mentioned titles are available at the Lakewood Public Library for you to check out and enjoy with your children.

The library also has “Martha Speaks” Beginner Reader titles (for students in kindergarten and first grade) that are based on the characters created by Susan Meddaugh.

SPEND CHRISTMAS DOWNTOWN AT TRINITY CATHEDRAL

CHRISTMAS EVE
Saturday, December 24

5 p.m.
Family Eucharist and Pageant

10:30 p.m.
Prelude
Music for choir, organ and trumpet

11 p.m.
Choral Eucharist
The Very Rev. Tracey Lind, preaching at all services

CHRISTMAS DAY
Sunday, December 25

10 a.m.
Eucharist with Carols
The Very Rev. Tracey Lind, preaching

NEW YEAR'S EVE
Saturday, December 31

3 p.m. and 5 p.m.
Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival
A Cleveland Christmas tradition, the festival is a multi-sensory Elizabethan Christmas experience.

NEW YEAR'S DAY
Sunday, January 1

10 a.m.
Holy Eucharist

5 p.m.
Solemn Sung Eucharist

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Lakewood Schools

Coach's Story About Helping Refugees Touches Many

by Christine Gordillo

Luma Mufleh enthralled an overflow crowd at Garfield Middle School on December 6 as she told her tale of her journey from being a privileged child in Jordan to becoming the inspirational leader of a soccer team, the Fugees, which is made up of refugee boys from war-torn countries. Mufleh's bond with her players eventually drove her to create a business to employ refugee family members, run a tutoring center and develop the first academy for refugees in the country.

Mufleh came to Lakewood as part of the Community Conversations series sponsored by Facing History & Ourselves and the Allstate Foundation. Facing History helps teachers develop curriculum that teaches students about making the right choices in the face of discrimination and intolerance. Lakewood High has been teaching Facing History courses for years and because of the close connection the school has had with the organization, LHS' Race & Diversity Club, led by teacher Joe Lobo, was asked to be a co-host of the event.

The audience learned how Mufleh, who lives outside of Atlanta, struggled for years to find a purpose following her graduation from Smith College until she came upon a rag-tag bunch of boys playing soccer on a make-shift scruffy field with a beat-up ball and no



A group of students gathers around Mufleh, a Jordanian-born American, following her inspiring speech about finding her way as an Arab woman in America and finding her purpose helping refugee children and their families.

shoes. As a former player and coach, something drew her to these boys, and after a number of times joining them in their games, she decided to form a team – the Fugees. The team gave the boys, from places such as Sudan, the Congo, Afghanistan and Bosnia, a place to feel safe and to learn to cope with a new and totally different world.

After a while, Mufleh realized that

the boys “had become my extended family” and she knew she could no longer just be their coach but needed to help find ways for them and their families to succeed in America. She created a cleaning company, Fresh Start, that would employ and pay a fair wage to the players' family members as cleaners. Her latest venture is to start a food truck company where family members

will serve as the chefs.

Since that first team Mufleh put together in 2004, the Fugees concept has grown into Fugees Family, an organization that includes four soccer teams, a tutoring program, the first academy for refugee boys and girls in the country, an academic camp, a tutoring center and more. Fugees Family organization recently celebrated its first college graduate this past May.

Mufleh's lessons of acceptance, love, perseverance and emphasis on education with her players resonated with many in the audience, which included many students from Lakewood High, Garfield and other surrounding community schools. During a question-and-answer session following Mufleh's speech, many students lined up at the microphone to ask Mufleh's thoughts on everything from how it felt to become a U.S. citizen to why she didn't decide to go back to Jordan to help out her native country, to which she answered: “I know my limits ... I would not be able as a woman to do there what I have here.”

Her inspirational story of helping those with the least resources in her community was a lesson to all in the audience and one that can easily be applied to us here in Lakewood.

To find out more about Fugees Family, go to www.fugeesfamily.org.

LHS Student Second In State In Cyber Safety Contest

by Christine Gordillo

Lakewood High School sophomore Matt Kerrigan may have a bright future in cyber security. Kerrigan recently competed in the national Cyber Foundation's competition sponsored by U.S. Cyber Challenge (USCC) and finished 18th in the nation and second in Ohio out of more than 2,000 students nationwide.

USCC's Foundations contest included 2,034 students from 169 schools, 32 states and three U.S. territories. The online competition, conducted in collaboration with the SANS Institute, features a series of quizzes in the most important foundational fields of cyber security: networking, operating systems, and system administration. The top scoring students in each school and state will earn recognition and awards for their achievements. Those with an interest and aptitude may go on to pursue a career in cyber security and help fill the critical gap in the national cyber workforce.

Cyber Foundation's participants are provided with on-line tutorials and video education materials on the three foundational fields, after which they take quizzes that allow them to demonstrate mastery. Each topic has a separate set of materials and a separate test. The quizzes were given in late October and November.

Kerrigan, who says he gets his technology savvy from being around his dad's computer business all his life, will receive an engraved trophy for placing 2nd in Ohio and an engraved award for placing 1st at LHS.



Matt Kerrigan finished second in the state of Ohio in the U.S. Cyber Challenge

Seven other LHS students received honorable mention in the contest for placing in the top 500 nationally: Ian Malin (83rd), Kenneth Grubaugh (113th), Christian Ulsenheimer-Welki (218th), Nabih Metri (269th), Albi Mema (303rd), Zach Gilchrist (313th) and Irfan Khan (430th).

The mission of the U.S. Cyber Challenge (USCC), a division of the Center for Internet Security, is to identify, recruit and place the next generation of cyber security professionals. USCC's goal is to find 10,000 of America's best and brightest to fill the ranks of cyber security professionals where their skills can be of the greatest value to the nation.

This was the first time LHS participated in this competition. After seeing the reaction of the students,

Terese Chevalier said she will definitely have students participate again next year. Chevalier teaches the Networking/Cisco program in the West-Shore Career Technical District.

“It was a great learning experience and gave our students a chance to compete nationally,” she said.

For Kerrigan's part, he's looking

forward to trying the contest again in the spring when it's offered. “I know I can do better on that third quiz,” he said. Kerrigan, who said he became interested in Internet security and hacking in middle school, appreciates that the contest gives him “a safe environment where you can prove your skills in (cyber security).”

Markling Named One Of The Best Education Lawyers In America Again

by Sterling Halterman

Lakewood School Board President Matthew John Markling has once again been selected by his legal peers as one of The Best Lawyers in America® in the specialty of Education Law. For over a quarter of a century, Best Lawyers® has been regarded – by both the profession and the public – as the definitive guide to legal excellence in the United States.

In response to Markling's recognition of education law excellence, Lakewood City School District Superintendent Jeffery W. Patterson said, “We are excited to receive the news that Matt Markling has earned recognition as among the top school law attorneys. Matt's tireless efforts as President of the Lakewood City School District Board of Education and this latest professional award are indicative of his commitment to education.”

Markling is a founder of the law firm of McGown & Markling Co., L.P.A.; serves as General Counsel for the Ohio Educational Service Center Association; and practices school law

throughout the State of Ohio.

With respect to Markling's representation of Ohio school districts, Lakewood School Board Member Betsy Shaughnessy said, “I know that Matt has worked very hard to achieve this high level of professional recognition. He has continuously participated in activities designed to expand both his knowledge of the law and the application of the law in the real world situations faced by school districts. This is an accomplishment reflecting his dedication to serving school districts in this state and he is to be commended.”

Linda Beebe said, “I was pleased to learn that Matthew Markling is being honored as one of the best school law attorneys. Matt knows Ohio school law. Matt has earned these accolades through hard work and diligence.”

Earlier this year, Markling became the first and only Lakewood board member to be awarded the lifetime distinction of “Master Board Member” by the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA).

Lakewood Schools

Emerson Club Looks For The Perfect Balance

by Christine Gordillo

Concentration, balance, perseverance, courage. These are just a few of the qualities you need to be a member of one of the more unique clubs in the



Fifth-grader Alyssa Belko gets some help from another club member as she tries to find the right balance that will allow her to ride solo.

Lakewood Schools: the Emerson Unicycle Club.

About 25 students meet each week after school to try to master this unusual skill. A visit to one of the practice sessions reveals that some have got it down pat while others are still snugly attached to the wall waiting for a spotter to help them along.

Coach Don Reis is joined by a number of parents and Emerson

teacher/adviser Meg Fox to help the club members who are just starting out to get their “legs” under them. It seems it’s all about balance.

“I tell the kids your arms are your best balance and that they have to find their ‘happy speed,’” or the place where their body is comfortable atop the slender bike and falls into balance, said Reis. It can take a beginner at least a hundred times before they get it just right.

You can bet there is quite a bit of falling when someone first starts out. But the kids seem to take it all in stride.

“The first couple of times are scary because you don’t know how it will feel to fall, but once you fall a few times, it’s OK,” said one student new to the club this year.

The club has a long history that started at the former Taft Elementary School when teacher Colleen Feighan got the wheel rolling 15 years ago. When Feighan was ready to step down, it was only natural that Reis, who was an assistant with the club at the time and had two children at Taft, would take over. Reis was not only familiar with the club, but was a top-notch unicyclist who had performed across the Midwest and East

Coast in parades and bowl games as part of the St. Helen’s Unicycle Drill Team that was based in Newbury Township, Ohio, when he was a kid. Reis knew he couldn’t turn down the opportunity to teach a sport he loved to eager young elementary students.

Feighan’s initial fund-raising efforts with the club helped stock it with the equipment, including four sky cycles (5-foot tall unicycles). Since then, donations from the Emerson PTO have helped the club manage to have a unicycle for everyone to practice with each week. Many club members learn to enjoy the activity so much that they end up asking parents for a unicycle of their very own to practice with at home. An average unicycle costs about \$90, according to Reis.

After honing their skills all year long in their weekly hour-long practices, the club gets to showcase its members’ talent during the Fourth of July Parade, in which the club rides each year and has won past awards as “Best Cycle” in the parade.

At least one club member understands that what Emerson has in the unicycle club is something special: “It’s good to have the opportunity to ride



Adviser Megan Fox helps a student gingerly try and go it alone.



These two veterans already have the hang of it and enjoy a spin around the gym.

a unicycle because most elementary schools don’t have one,” said fifth-grader Alyssa Belko. “I know it will be a lifelong skill.”

Winter Youth Programming At The Lakewood Y

by Mark Edwards

Looking for something for your child to do at the YMCA this winter? Check out our Winter I 2011/2012 programs and events for more details on how your child can get involved and have fun with the YMCA of Greater Cleveland.

Youth Basketball League

League games begin the week of January 9th and will group participating children by the following age groups: 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11, and 12-14. Registration deadline is Sunday, January 8th, 2012. There will be a \$5 late registration fee if after 1/8. Games will start on Saturdays at 9am on January 14th, with the youngest age group and proceed according to age. The league is for members of the YMCA Lakewood, West Shore, and West Park. All games will be held in the Lakewood gymnasium.

Cost will be \$40 for YMCA members and \$80 for YMCA program members. We group participants based on age and skill level. Coach/Parent requests will be taken, but not guaranteed as we need to ensure team parity. We are actively looking for volunteers for the positions of: Head Coach, Assistant Coach, and Parent Helper (organize snacks/drinks for each game). You do not need to be a member of the Y to be a volunteer, but you are required to submit to a background check.

*There is a \$5 jersey charge for participants without a YMCA basketball jersey. Schedules will be e-mailed out and posted on the YMCA website by Wednesday 1/11. There will be a coaches’ meeting Tuesday 1/12 at 6:15pm in the Lakewood Child Care Room. There will also be a Parents meeting Thursday 1/14 in the Lakewood Child Care Room. Meeting times for each age group will be sent via e-mail. The league communicates via e-mail and by posting information on the YMCA web pages under youth sports/leagues.

Also, there is a Girls Only, “Power In Pink” league for girls ages 5-7. This gives young girls the chance to play against other girls their age.

Additionally, there is also a competitive 9-11 year old and 12-14 co-ed league for advanced players, that allows for coaches to sign up entire teams for \$450 per

team, with a max of 10 kids per team. There is a traditional YMCA recreational league for ages 9-11 as well as the competitive league.

YMCA Winter Sports Camp

Winter Sports Camp will be during the weeks of 12/21-12/23, 12/27-12/30 and 1/2-1/3. The camps will be a version of our “fun camps,” with a different sport/focus each day with a wide array of sports-related activities, including swimming every day!

The first camp on 12/21-12/23 is \$50/Member and \$65/Program Member. The second camp on 12/27-12/30 is \$68/Member and \$80/Program Member. The final camp on 1/2-1/3 is \$35/Member and \$45/Program Member.

Early Drop off is no earlier than 8am and Late Pick up is No Later than 5pm. Maximum Campers for each camp is 36 kids. The camp is for children ages 6-12. Registration begins Monday 11/21. Parents will need to pack a lunch, swim suit, and a water bottle.

Breakfast With Santa

At United Methodist Church in Lakewood
Come join us on Saturday, December 17th from 9am-11am for Breakfast with Santa. Children will enjoy a breakfast, games, and a craft with their families. Children will get to meet Santa and his helper and receive a treat from Santa. There is a \$5 fee for Children ages 3-8 and Adults. Children under the age of 3 are free.

Bring your camera to capture this special day. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Register at the Lakewood YMCA by December 12th
Stop by your neighborhood YMCA of Greater Cleveland branch location today. For more event and program information, contact the Lakewood Family YMCA Program Director Mark Edwards at 216-521-8400 or via email at medwards@clevelandymca.org. You can also visit our web site at www.clevelandymca.org

Lakewood Schools

“Even One Person Would Have Made A Difference” Youth Panelists Speak Out

by John Kompier and Liam Gamez,
Harding Middle School

Have you ever wondered about bullying? Earlier this fall, on October 20, there was a town hall meeting at WVIZ in Cleveland focusing on this subject. There was a live studio audience and a panel of students who had been bullied, plus Jill Rembrandt, the Associate Director of the Anti-Defamation League and Steve Dettelbach from the Ohio Defending Children Initiative. Lakewood Schools had been invited to participate. We (Liam and John, Harding Middle School 7th and 6th graders) were with three students from Lakewood High School, and our teacher, Mr. Spooner. Students from Garfield Middle School also attended.

The people introducing the panel explained that bullying is counter-productive and unacceptable, however, it has gotten worse in past years with expanding technology. Now bullying doesn't stop when the school day ends. You can be bullied through comments and texts and once they are out there, they won't go away (which is especially the case with the Internet).

There were four teenagers on the panel:

The first to be recognized was Alex, an openly gay teenager who had been teased and called names in school and tried to take his own life when he was a freshman. He is a winner of the Maltz Museum's "Stop the Hate" Youth Speak Out essay contest. He brought up the topic of the role that the bystander plays in bullying. He said it would have been nice and would have made a big difference, if just one person had stuck up for him. He pointed out that there are often bystanders who witness bullying but don't do anything. He said that when you are being called a name or bullied in the middle of a group and no-one else comes to your defense and everyone watches, it makes it feel as if the person doing the bullying is speaking for everyone, and they all feel that way about you. Suddenly there are a lot of bullies.

Trey, a senior from Solon High School, was the second student that spoke. He had a history of being bullied, so he formed a group that travels to schools and inquires about bullying, saying things like, "What do you hear?" "What strategies do you use?" and advising students, "Look out for your peers" and especially, "Look out for those who don't have peers, or friends." Trey is a football player for his school and he made the point that bullying shouldn't be acceptable from any group, even "jocks" and that it makes a big difference if you don't tolerate bullying in any group that you are a part of. He described the difference he has been able to make with fellow football players, who in some cases went from being "jock" bullies to protectors of those who have been bullied.

The last of the students to be recognized were sisters, Allah and Sarah

Mohammed. They said that at school they got called names like "terrorist," because of their Arabic background and dress. Their method for dealing with this was to ask the name-caller questions like, "Why am I a terrorist?" and "What did I do that made you call me that?" They said that instead of bystanders just watching or joining in, they got caught up in the questions to see if the name-caller had anything else to say. They made the name-caller have to think and see them as individual people instead of stereotypes, and then there was nothing else to say. They don't get called names much anymore, they said, but if they do, they are able to laugh it off.

An interesting topic that the panel brought up by a teacher who is the leader of the Unity Club at Valley Forge High School in Parma. She made the point that most bullies have had their own bullies, earlier in their lives or at home and that bullying behavior is the behavior of a hurt person who has something wrong with him or her. You should always stand up for yourself or somebody else, to let everyone know that there is something wrong with bullying behavior. It is not about the victim having anything "wrong" with them. According to the panel, the number one reason why people don't stand up for others is that they are afraid they will be the next target. Jill Rembrandt talked about changing this situation: She told the story of how there had been someone sitting alone in the cafeteria, who was being picked on, and having food thrown at him, and then a whole table of people got up from where they were sitting to go sit with him. The idea presented was that the more people who refuse to tolerate being treated like this, and refuse to tolerate others being treated like this, the more other people will see it, and the less it will happen.

Then it was time for questions.

The questions were sent by email or text, and they also recognized students and teachers in the audience who wished to ask questions. One question that didn't get answered in a very satisfactory way was, "What happens when you tell a teacher and the bullying doesn't stop, or gets worse because the bully knows that a teacher has been told and it doesn't make any difference, and the bully becomes more punishing, or bullies more people, including the person who reported it?" The panelists implied that the teacher or the school HAS to do something, but you could tell that the student questioner was speaking from experience and had been left feeling unsupported. Another person asked, "What if you don't want to be called a 'snitch'?" The answer was to report bullying anonymously or privately. This answer too seemed to leave the questioner feeling frustrated, causing listeners to wonder whether this strategy would work or not, especially since it seemed to contradict what was

said earlier about standing up for the person being bullied at the time.

One thing that was clear is that there wasn't enough time to answer all of the questions or go into the kind of details that might need to be gone into to figure out all of these situations.

There were two things we criticized about the town hall meeting when we discussed writing this article. One was that it would have been helpful to have a former bully on the panel to talk about why they did what they did, and two, they kept saying that bullying "isn't just punching and fighting," and spent a long time talking about Internet bullying, but never got around to addressing what to do if it is punching and fighting.

Overall, it was a good and informative meeting, and we were pleased to have been asked to go representing our school. We started talking about sharing what we had learned with other students and schools in Lakewood on our way home.

The panelists wanted to make sure that every participant could boil down their main points. Here they are: 1.) Don't be a bully, which includes not being a bystander who does nothing or laughs or joins in. 2.) Report bullying when you see it. When it's cyber-bullying, report it and save the text,

comment, etc for evidence.

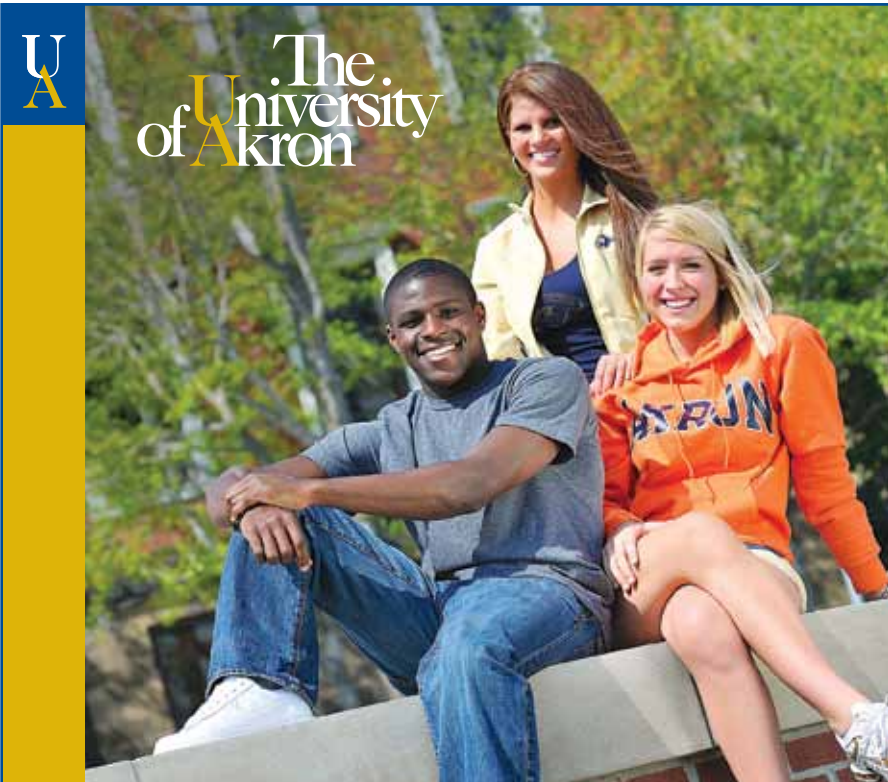
They had more important advice for both bullies and people getting bullied: If you are being bullied, you are not alone. It will get better if you talk to someone about it.

If you are teasing someone, or worse; take a second and think about what you're doing.

Their main purpose seemed to be to spread the word that bullying was unacceptable and that there was nothing about it that was part of a normal school experience; that bullies are bullies not because "that's how it is, some kids are tough" but because there is something wrong with them-- they have been hurt and spread hurt-- and it has to be stopped, inside the school, where there will be support. When you are at school, always remember to tell someone. They gave a website to learn more: stopbullying.gov.

If you have experience with bullying and stories about how you, your friends, parents or teachers handled it, please share them so students, teachers and families can get more ideas about what works.

Go to www.lakewoodobserver.com, click on Member Center on the left, sign in, and you can type or attach your story. Thank you.



Classes begin Jan. 9 in Lakewood

The University of Akron Lakewood wants to be your University.

At UALakewood, you can take classes from a major university in an advanced learning environment situated in the heart of Lakewood. We offer a variety of courses at times convenient for busy students of all ages. Located on the first floor of the historic Bailey Building in downtown Lakewood: 14725 Detroit Ave., Suite 108. Phone: 216-221-1141

UALakewood Open House, December 21, Noon - 7pm.

Bailey Building • Corner of Detroit & Warren Roads
p: 216-221-1141 • e: UAL@uakron.edu • lakewood.uakron.edu
The University of Akron is an Equal Education and Employment Institution.

Lakewood Is Art

The Electrifying Sounds Of Violins And Guitars Welcome Christmas A Second Year

by Scott Dockus

Returning after popular demand, Twin Engine retakes the stage for their annual “The Night in Bethlehem” performance.

If you witnessed the performance last year, no doubt you’ll want to see it again. This narrated story is set to an original score, written and arranged by Kent and Christopher Dockus from Twin Engine. This year’s show includes additional music, and new guest vocalist Nick Batton and bassist Max Duffy from the band Chil, and introduces Devon Caskey on Viola.

The show opens with an electrifying version of “O Holy Night” then goes on to a newly arranged rockin’ version of “Mary Did You Know?” We’re also proud to welcome the return of Karl Bunkelman as our guest narrator.

“The Night in Bethlehem” a delightful tale for the young and young at heart, is the story of Jesus’ birth. The story takes place after the birth, as a young boy named Samuel



Twin Engine is: Max Duffy, Kent Dockus, Christopher Dockus, Shawn Ziegler, Nick Batton and Devon Caskey.

anxiously awaits his time to talk with Joseph. He’s waited all day for Joseph to explain how this came to be, from the Angels to the Kings and how they all arrived in Bethlehem. But Samuel, a seven-year-old boy, is also excited to play his drum for the new baby Jesus...

The music of “The Night in Beth-

lehem” was inspired by the sounds of TSO, Tracy Silverman and other alternative rock/orchestra performers. The narrated story was inspired by a simple love for Christmas and its meaning. The Dec. 18 show of “The Night in Bethlehem” concludes with more rockin’ non-secular Christmas music

from Twin Engine. The night promises to leave all in attendance filled with Christmas spirit.

For more information go to www.thenightinbethlehem.com

The Night in Bethlehem
Sunday, Dec. 18
7:00 p.m.
Hosted by Unity Spiritual Center in Westlake, OH
This is a FREE event, suggested Love offering.
Presented by Lapstrake Music.

Twin Engine is not the traditional Rock Band—sure, there are guitars, drums and dynamic vocals, but it’s our viper (electric violin) that helps round out this exciting package. Twin Engine has been together since 2007 and enjoys performing contemporary rock, classic rock and country music. Twin Engine has performed at the Ohio State Fair, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, and in North Olmsted, Lakeside, Akron, Kent, Lakewood... the list continues. www.tetheband.com.

Go! Go! Go! See Joseph At Beck Before It’s Gone, Gone, Gone!

by Fran Storch

Start a new holiday tradition with your family and friends – experience live theater at the Beck Center for the Arts this season. Beck presents an encore production of last year’s smash hit musical, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, on the Mackey Main Stage through December 31. Back by popular demand, the talented creative team and many original cast members are joined by some fresh new faces in this entertaining extravaganza which is guaranteed to delight audiences of all ages - from preschoolers to great-grandparents. You and your family will be mesmerized by the magical music, delightful dancing, and radiant rainbow of colors bursting to life on stage. Tickets are selling fast for this holiday favorite. Don’t wait



Joseph reunites with Jacob and Brothers in Beck Center’s production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat on the Mackey Main Stage through December 31.

and disappoint the little ones when the show sells out, order your tickets today.

Show times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2:30 p.m. Sundays. Special Saturday matinees will be held on December 10 and 17. Additional

weeknight performances are scheduled on Wednesday, December 28; Thursdays, December 22 and 29; and a special New Year’s Eve performance at 7:30 p.m. There are no performances on December 24 or 25.

Tickets are \$28 for adults, \$25 for seniors (65 and older), \$17 for students (with valid ID), and \$10 for children (12 and under). An additional \$3 service fee per ticket is applied at the time of purchase. Group discounts are available for parties of 13 or more. Also ask about special savings with our Flex Passes. Purchase tickets online at beckcenter.org or call Customer Service at 216.521.2540, ext. 10.

Beck Center is located at 17801 Detroit Avenue in Lakewood, just ten minutes west of downtown Cleveland. Free onsite parking is available.

A Creative Cure For Cabin Fever!

by Fran Storch

This winter, beat the blues, get out of the house and join us at the Beck Center for the Arts for some creative fun! Learn a new skill, develop a hidden talent and make lifelong friends at the Beck Center. We offer more than 200 classes for all ages and abilities in dance, music, theater, and visual arts – including Broadway “Glee” Club, Cut Paper Illustration, Kids-N-Tunes, Hip Hop, Suzuki Violin, Public Speaking, Tone & Stretch, and Family Clay Time-- to name just a few.

Join the thousands of students from across Northeast Ohio who participate in our excellent award-winning arts education programs – whether it’s a one-day workshop or full 18-week semester. Our outstanding faculty and



Preschoolers make music in Kids-N-Tunes at Beck Center.

staff look forward to welcoming you to the Beck Center in the New Year. Winter/spring classes begin the week of January 30. Classes fill up quickly so register early. A complete class schedule, course descriptions, and con-

venient online registration are available at beckcenter.org or call Beck Center Customer Service at 216.521.2540, ext. 10.

Private music lessons in all band and orchestral instruments are also available and registration is ongoing throughout the year. To learn more or to schedule private lessons, call the Music Office at 216.521.2540, ext. 37.

Located at 17801 Detroit Avenue in Lakewood, the Beck Center for the Arts (beckcenter.org) 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.

Lakewood Cares

Advent Conspiracy At CityEdge

by Kevin Rush

Every Christmas \$450,000,000,000 are spent in the United States alone. And every year it seems that we get more stressed and depressed during the holiday season. Is this really what Christmas is about? Spending lots of money and getting depressed? Or is there a different story? A better story?

What was the first Christmas story about? It is a rescue story of a God who so desperately loves his people that he enters in, not as a supreme ruler, but as a vulnerable baby in a manger. The first Christmas is the story of Emmanuel: "God with us." A God who loves us so much that he enters into our pain and saves us from darkness. By doing this he brings us peace and hope.

John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son..."

What if this Christmas we conspire, just a little, against the empire of consumerism and do what Jesus did. Enter into the lives of our family and friends to bear their pain and bring them hope.

At CityEdge, the Church I lead, we decided to worship fully this Christmas by spending less, giving more, and loving all. We call this the

Advent Conspiracy. We are asking our church to spend less this Christmas so they can give more to people who really need it. By doing this we believe we are guarding our hearts from the consumerism that can rob us of giving, and be generous to the people who really need it.

Notice I didn't say we asked people to not spend. Just spend less. No one liked the Grinch. No one wants their mom or dad to be Ebenezer Scrooge. Instead we ask people to tone it down a bit and scale back. This way they can have a little bit of extra money to give to something that helps alleviate the kind of suffering that breaks the heart of God-- like the water crisis. There are 1 billion people without clean water. To lead the way on giving more and loving all, we are giving 100% of our regular offering on December 18th to a non-profit called Charity Water.

This year instead of buying fruitcake, a shake weight, or various gift cards that their loved ones will forget about in a week, we are encouraging people to make gifts and memories. Chances are if you ask your grandpa, grandma, mom, or dad what their favorite Christmas gifts are, you will find it was something sentimental

that you made for them. Some keepsake or silly ornament that you made in grade school. Not the newest gadget or gizmo. We are challenging people to actually put some thought into their gifts. For example, my wife and I made a photobook of all of our Christmases growing up for our parents last year. When opening it my mom bawled like a baby. Another thing our family does to make memories is taking all of our siblings and their spouses out ice skating. Laughs are had and memories are made. I wouldn't change it for the world. Both of these help us give relationally and not buy into the consumer Christmas.

Another decision we made this year at CityEdge is to cancel our worship gathering on Christmas Morning. Instead we want our church and you to spend time relationally, worshipping God with your family and serving your neighbors. We have created an online Christmas Worship Experience that you can watch from the comfort of your own couch. It will be a 15-20 minute online worship gathering that will continuously be on loop for you, your friends, and your family to worship to. There will be an interactive chat and social network functionality built in to

share with your friends. It's going to be awesome!

Last Sunday at our worship gathering, we did something that dropped the jaws of almost everyone there. Since we saved some money from not renting Garfield Middle School on Christmas Day, we gave everyone at our gathering \$20 cash in an envelope. We asked them to give it to someone who needs it this Christmas. We encouraged them to enter into other people's stories, just like Jesus entered into ours. To bear each other's pain and bring joy.

Don't you think it is time for a revolution against the empire of consumerism? To conspire against the empty Christmases we've experienced in the past and to engage in one that is meaningful? One that makes a difference in the lives of our friends and families? One where we bear the struggles, and bring peace and joy like Jesus would? Let's get creative this Christmas and make it meaningful!

Learn more about CityEdge Christian Church and Advent Conspiracy at cityedge.org/adventconspiracy. And join us online on Christmas Day by going to www.cityedge.org/online. Join the conspiracy!

Gifts That Keep On Giving Available In Lakewood

by Jeff Weber

In November and December throughout the United States, including here in Lakewood, the Huntington's Disease Society of America (HDSA) sells amaryllis bulbs which bring joy and hope into homes, offices and stores on cold winter days. Proceeds help support the HDSA programs of research, education and family care.

The amaryllis bulb has long been considered to be one of the most spectacular species for indoor growing. These specially cultivated Dutch bulbs delight with their bright colors and their immense blossoms within 6-8 weeks of planting. Blossoms are bright red, deep pink/white, red/white striped or white. Priced at only ten dollars an amaryllis bulb kit consists of bulb, pot and planting soil. These kits come in colorful boxes in cases of sixteen for a

total of \$160 and are shipped directly to the buyer without extra shipping cost. Smaller orders of \$10 each can be purchased by special arrangement. The well-packaged bulbs make low-cost gifts that keep on giving during the holidays.

The Huntington's Disease Society of America NE Ohio Chapter is an integral part of the HDSA national non-profit organization headquartered in New York City. In Cleveland its NE Ohio Chapter partners with Case Western Reserve University, University Hospitals, Cleveland Clinic and MetroHealth Medical Center.

Huntington's Disease (HD) is an inherited degenerative brain disorder that results in progressive loss of control of both body and mind. As of yet there is no cure or effective treatment, which makes research vitally

important. The combination of emotional, cognitive and motor symptoms in Huntington's Disease contributes to an unusually high cost of care. To learn more about local HD activities

and to order these bulbs, please call, please call the amaryllis campaign office at (216) 226-6633 or the local chapter at (330) 998-6600.

Serving the City of Lakewood

Lakewood Seventh-Day Adventist Church
1382 Arthur Avenue, Lakewood, OH

First Saturday, of the month, Potluck begins 1:15pm
Potluck immediately follows service. Service begins at 11:00am. Bible Study begins at 10:00am
All are welcome any time

The SDA Community Service Center
Providing free gently used clothing, shoes, household items, & toys for over 50 years
Every Tuesday 9am-11am and Thursday 5pm-7pm, Phone: 216-221-5941 (please call ahead)
Item donations are accepted at the same place and time.

Little One's Ministry
Providing free diapers, wipes, & baby toiletries, to over 170 families for over 3 years
Recipients must obtain a voucher from the Lakewood Community Service Center
First Friday, of each month, 5pm-7pm, Phone: Laura at 216-406-5620 (after 5pm)
Monetary donations are appreciated. Please make check payable to Lakewood SDA Church
Please send to the above address, attention Treasurer, and note "For Little One's Ministry"





Cove United Methodist Church
open hearts, open minds
open doors

Join Us!
Worship & Youth Sunday School
9:00am

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24TH, 7PM:
Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service
(Cove UMC & Lakewood Christian Church)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25TH, 9AM:
Christmas Morning
Worship Service

A traditional Bible based ministry anchored in the love of God for ALL people.

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OPEN Tuesday & Saturday 1-4PM

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"Where God is Still Speaking"

CHRISTMAS EVE
Saturday, December 24, 2011

5 p.m. Family Worship
10:45 p.m. Music Prelude
11 p.m. Festival Worship

Corner of West Clifton Boulevard and Detroit Avenue, Lakewood
216-221-9555 • www.lcc-church.org

Wellness Watch

Winter Safety Tips For Seniors Citizens

by Annette Kelly

Falls, isolation, unhealthy eating habits, lack of exercise, and trouble getting around are just some issues seniors may be experiencing this holiday season. As a resource for adult children and other family members, Northwesterly Assisted Living would like to take the opportunity to share a few simple tips to help keep senior citizens safe this winter.

As the winter season approaches this year and we see mom and dad more often than usual, we need to be proactive and make sure our loved ones are getting through the season safely. Winter is typically the time-frame that seniors need more from family or friends because weather conditions don't allow them to be as independent as normal. Too often, it is the time that something drastic happens and a decline in health is noticed.

It is very important that we take the extra five or ten minutes out of our busy day while talking to our loved

ones to really make sure that they are doing well during the winter months. We all get swept away in our own hectic schedules and sometimes don't notice how mom and dad are doing on their own, but simple questions like asking what they had for dinner or if they've been out of the house recently can give clues that they are still doing well or that they need a little more assistance. While visiting, make sure that there is enough food in the fridge and those items are not expired. Check to be sure throw rugs are not a fall risk and always make sure a plan is in place in case of emergencies.

Whether it's just for the winter season or on a more permanent basis, asking for help is the smart thing to do. It's always better to be safe than sorry. We find that many families face dilemmas this time of the year simply because they have not prepared well enough for what might happen. Your local senior center, hospitals, churches and other organizations such as assisted living communities,

home health care agencies and even elder-law attorneys work together to help families and individuals prevent a crisis. If you are worried about a loved one's health care this winter season, you should contact a professional who will be able to provide you with resources that help you to figure out how to make a change.

Listed below are ideas of how you may be able to help a senior by making sure they are well taken care of this season.

Meals on Wheels-- Many cities and churches organize these programs to ensure seniors have a well-balanced diet and that it is easily accessible.

Life Line-- Life line is a type of alert system that allows seniors to call for help in a time of need. It works as a pendant and seniors can easily push a button for emergency response services.

City transportation services or RTA transportation services-- Often, seniors isolate themselves in the winter because they do not like driving

in such harsh conditions. If alternate transportation could be provided, seniors might be able to continue their daily routine with easier efforts.

Short Term Respite Stays-- Many independent, assisted and skilled nursing communities offer short term respite stays for a minimal fee which include meals, activities, transportation, housecleaning services and care services. This is a great way to introduce an alternate living arrangement to a senior who is resistant to the idea, without making a permanent decision.

Get neighbors involved-- Unfortunately we cannot be there for our loved ones at all times, but chances are mom and dad live close enough to somebody that can check in on them. Ask neighbors to pay a little more attention when you cannot be there.

If you are worried about a loved one and need more assistance, please call a professional who may be able to help you and go over different options available.

Spicing Up My Marriage By Cooking With My Husband

by Jana Christian

Despite my husband's fondness for fast food as a teen, he has never been anything but supportive about my healthy cooking (and my willingness to "dish" about our experiments on my blog at <http://writeonjana.com>).

He may tease about vegetables showing up in the strangest places (pancakes? cookies? taco meat?!), but he is thankful that my unwavering commitment to nutrient-rich "real" food has forced him to eat healthier.

When it comes to meal planning, shopping and food prep, I'm in charge. I'm home, I'm the one with the passion for health/nutrition (on a budget) and so I do it all. My dear husband's job is to entertain the kiddos while I cook (which is a blessing because, as I mentioned before, cooking with my children is one challenge I prefer to avoid on weeknights). And although he often cleans up after the meal, I ultimately have the free reign of the kitchen.

This actually works for me. Our house is small and wasn't built with a modern family in mind (I don't think

they needed to plug in the grain mill and the KitchenAid stand mixer at the same time back in 1890). So, despite the advice that Cooking Together Can Heat Up Your Marriage, the kitchen is off-limits when I am preparing a meal.

But meal planning on a budget is difficult... we haven't eaten out in quite a while and our boring daily meals leave us searching for satisfaction elsewhere (got a recipe for cookies?!). Because my primary concern is feeding the food allergic kids safely and healthfully, I have neither the time nor the energy to make something special (particularly if I know it will be rejected by the most discriminating palates at the table).

Sensing my frustration (and feeling some of his own), my husband stepped in with some great Mediterranean recipes and hundreds of links to online tutorials. And I am reminded, yet again, of why I love this man!!

To be honest, my first thought was not one of pure relief and enthusiasm... In fact, my side of the conversation went more like this:

"You have to be sure to put all the ingredients on the list at least one

week ahead of time because I stick to a very tight budget. And I only shop at specific stores once a month so make sure to give me that information well in advance. You know the kids won't eat this...what do you plan on feeding them? What do you mean you don't have to cook the garbanzo beans?"

Way to support an enthusiastic new cook, eh?! Well, in spite of my less than warm welcome into the kitchen he followed through on his desire to make falafel. And it was fabulous!


Despite my misgivings, it was surprisingly pleasant to spend time together working towards a common goal (even in the tight confines of our kitchen).

Helping me out in the kitchen gave my husband a new appreciation for how much work I do to prepare each meal. He also recognized how difficult it is to stay calm when a budding food critic turns his/her nose up at the meal when it is served.

I, in turn, realized that I must give my husband more "say" in what foods I make. Cooking for food allergies is tedious. As a result, I often overlook my husband's needs when I

cook bland, safe meals. Incorporating fun, ethnic dishes that we both love will take the sting out of our infrequent "date nights" and bring satiety back to our evening meals... and if we cook them together, it may put more "spice" back in our marriage as well!





Dr. Michael Russell
18624 Detroit Avenue
Lakewood
216-221-1788

www.russellchiro.net

Our 4-Week Nutrition Boot-Camp Starts January 9, 2012

Please be advised that participating in our 4-Week Nutrition Boot-Camp may result in the following side effects:

- Better digestion
- Clearer skin
- Better sleep
- Increased energy/vitality
- Improved weight management results
- Less bloating
- Shinier hair
- Clearer thinking


Call today to reserve your space! **216.221.1788**

Our patients have plenty to say about this program!

"My clothes fit better around my waist and hips. I have more energy and mental clarity" **Colleen F.**

"Immediately more energy, less brain fog...less anxious and irritable...sleeping restful!" **Maureen B.**

"My cravings are gone, I have lots of energy, and I've lost a few pounds!" **Helene P.**



Information Seminar Dates: Dec. 5 @ 6:30 and Dec. 28, @ 6:30

Wellness Watch

Love Your Liver

by Rachel Anzalone

No, I'm not referring to eating liver and onions, although if you're looking to up your iron intake, it's not a bad way to go. I'm talking about loving YOUR liver. Cleanse it, nourish it, LOVE it! Here's why your liver so important that it deserves your undivided attention.

Your liver performs a number of vital functions in your body. Not only does it process almost everything you ingest, breathe and absorb through your skin, but it also produces enzymes and hormones, and is critical to your immune system health. Your liver is the final filter in your body's detoxification system. Like the oil filter in your car, it cleans out toxins that could be harmful to your health in any number of ways.

While you can change the oil filter on your car, you can't swap out your liver every 3,000 miles, can you? What you can do is make sure you keep your liver clean and functioning well by supporting it with the foods you eat and supplementing with liver cleansing herbs.

Make sure you're eating lots of raw veggies especially those of the cruciferous variety. This includes

artichokes, brussels sprouts, cabbage, bok choy, broccoli, kale, and kohlrabi, along with horseradish, wasabi and a handful of others. Beets are not cruciferous but are loaded with antioxidants that will support the liver and help with detoxification. Juicing these veggies packs a powerful liver-cleansing punch as it ups the concentration of antioxidants and phytochemicals and makes them super easy to digest and absorb.

The chlorophyll found in green veggies, including wheat grass, is said to be cleansing for the blood and might just give your liver a much needed rest.

You can also supplement by adding liquid chlorophyll to your water.

Milk-thistle extract is the liver supporting herb of choice. It has strong anti-oxidant properties and may help regenerate liver cells. Of course, avoiding fats, sugar and processed foods will minimize the toxins your liver has to work to eliminate.

While it's important to support the health of your liver day-to-day, it can also be beneficial to do an intensive liver cleansing once or twice per year to keep things working smoothly. When was the last time you cleaned your liver?

Nature's Bin Reports Pilot Study Finds Nutrient May Protect Against Dementia

by Mary Johnson

Nature's Bin, a full service natural foods market in Lakewood, reports a new pilot study that found the nutrient

astaxanthin—a powerful plant-based natural antioxidant—reduced the kind of harmful chemical buildup in red blood cells doctors say is common in those with dementia.

The report is part of the October, 2011, issue of Natural Insights for Well Being®, which Nature's Bin publishes free each month to inform the Lakewood community of the latest scientific discoveries in natural nutrition and healthy lifestyle. Also in the October issue, people with mild cognitive impairment who took green tea extract recalled words and pictures much better than a group that took dummy pills; people with high blood pressure who took olive leaf extract saw lower blood pressure and triglycerides—a measurement of total fat; women who got the most vitamins B1 or B2 were less likely to develop PMS than women who got the least; and nutrients eased menopausal symptoms in women undergoing breast cancer treatment, among other important findings.

"If you are a woman, an older person interested in healthy aging, or an athlete looking to improve performance, natural nutrition choices can help," said

Rhiannon Blahnik, Vitamin and Supplement Manager at Nature's Bin. "Our October issue cites new findings from well-respected scientific journals such as the "British Journal of Nutrition," the "American Journal of Clinical Nutrition," "Phytomedicine," and "The Journal of Physiology." Blahnik added, "The evidence continues to show that affordable natural dietary supplements are safe and effective in protecting health."

Natural Insights for Well Being® is free, and Nature's Bin invites all those who wish to gain more valuable nutrition knowledge to stop in and pick up the October issue.

About Nature's Bin

Nature's Bin, a full service natural and organic foods market located in Lakewood, Ohio, is operated by the nonprofit, Cornucopia, Inc. This natural foods market serves as a training site for a unique and successful program that provides vocational training leading to employment for people with disabilities.

Nature's Bin Pumpkin Salad

courtesy of Josie Duennes

1 medium pie pumpkin or 1 medium butternut squash peeled, seeded and cubed (about 3 cups)

1/2 cup pumpkin seeds, hulled

1/2 cup roasted sunflower seeds, hulled

1 cup dried cherries

3/4 cup sliced scallions (green onion)

1/2 cup oil (canola or other vegetable oil, not olive)

1/2 cup orange juice

1 tsp. cumin

1 tsp. sugar

salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 400F. Spread pumpkin on baking sheet and roast for 10-15 minutes until it browns around the edges and smells good. Let cool.

Meanwhile, soak the cherries in a little warm water for about 10 minutes just to soften slightly. Drain.

In a large bowl, combine the oil, orange juice, cumin and sugar and whisk to blend. Taste for seasoning and add salt and pepper to your taste.

Add the rest of the ingredients and toss gently.

Can be made several days ahead and refrigerated until needed.

Serves 4-6



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FOLLOW US ON 

Going Green

Unique Group Effort Installs Rain Garden

by Marianne Quasebarth Usiak and
Connie Bielawski

On November 16, a unique partnership of groups and individuals including the City of Lakewood, Lakewood Historical Society, Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District, citizens of Lakewood, and Lakewood Catholic Academy's Green Team all came together to install a rain garden on the east side of the Oldest Stone House in Lakewood Park. The site was chosen in partnership with the City of Lakewood, Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District, and Lakewood Historical Society, who wanted to have better drainage around the Oldest Stone House to better preserve the historical structure's foundation. After a lot of planning and leadership by Lakewood City Councilman Tom Bullcock, the garden was completed with the efforts of these groups.

What is a rain garden? Rain gardens are landscaped areas planted with native plants that enjoy growing in wet soil. The installation of a rain garden is a simple process involving a shovel and a bit of physical energy. A large area of land is not needed for a rain garden, making them ideal for Lakewood residents.

Why plant a rain garden? Rain gardens are not only a beautiful addition to the landscape, but they provide environmental benefits, such as decreasing stormwater runoff, helping alleviate problems associated with flooding and drainage, recharging ground water, and providing a habitat and food for wildlife, such as birds and butterflies. Rain gardens also have an economic value in that they minimize the need for watering and are easy to maintain. Since native plants are used in rain gardens, fertilizers and pesticides are not needed.

Native plants are used because they are adapted to our local weather and soil conditions. Native plants also have a relationship with native butter-



Green Team Volunteers from LCA show off their handiwork at Lakewood Park.

flies, birds and other animals. When choosing plants for your rain garden, consider the height of the plant, bloom time, and color. Use a variety of plants that bloom at different times to create a long flowering season that will provide food and habitat for wildlife all year long. Milkweed is an ideal native plant for rain gardens in that it prefers moist soil and is a food source for the monarch caterpillar and butterfly.

A special thanks to all involved to make this project a reality. Lakewood Catholic Academy's Green Team, an after school nature club composed of 3rd through 5th graders arrived first, with shovels ready to help with the garden. These students had not only already learned about rain gardens, but voted to help put one in for the community as part of their annual service project. Green Team students learn that wise use of the resources in the environment in which we live includes not only where you live or go to school, but also the community. That is why the Green Team completes service projects annually in all of these areas to better

understand that these areas do all connect and influence each other.

The Green Team has been learning about wise use of soil and water and how they interact. Local experts like Todd Houser, Jared Bartley, and education specialists from the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District, worked with the Green Team beginning at their annual meeting in September, where they were able to see displays of soil layers: topsoil, subsoil and weathered rock. The Green Team was able to identify these layers first-hand by making and eating (yes, eating!) the layers of soil from different types of edible ingre-

dients including pudding and worms! It was a fun and memorable lesson. A few months later the Green Team could actually see and touch these layers in the area dug by the City of Lakewood for the installation of the rain garden. Green Team members were eager to help transport, and spread by wheelbarrow, the special soil composed of sand and compost into the rain garden. And then they were able to plant the special water-loving native plants in the garden! The students had fun learning about water, soils, and helping the community. The Green Team Rocks! It will take a few years for the rain garden to become fully grown, but it certainly will be fun to watch it grow!

A hardy group of Lakewood residents finished the soil transport, planting and mulching.

Lakewood now joins some 22 other neighboring cities in having a rain garden. We hope you will visit ours in Lakewood Park.

If you are interested in having your very own rain garden, see Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District's website at: <http://www.cuyahogawcd.org/grantfunded-raingardens.htm>, where "A Rain Garden Manual for Homeowners," which includes instructions and a list of suitable native plants, can be downloaded.

For more information on LCA's Green Team, contact Marianne Quasebarth Usiak at greenteam@lakewoodcatholicacademy.com.

The University Of Akron Lakewood Wants To Be Your University

continued from page 1

created partnerships with the City of Lakewood, Lakewood City Schools, Lakewood Public Library, Lakewood Hospital, First Federal Lakewood, Virginia Marti College and LakewoodAlive. As a member of the Innovation Alliance, UA aligns and integrates its resources with Lorain County Community College and Stark State College, and Metelko states that "anyone with curriculum" is welcome to join them.

The initial class offerings will be focused on General Education and Nursing. This spring will feature several

distance learning classes and an on-site Intro to Ethics course. A workshop for middle and high school teachers will be offered in March. UA Lakewood plans to offer post-secondary options as well as workforce development programs. Metelko notes that the business community is excited about the proximity of such programs.

Registration open houses are being held on December 13 and 21 from noon to 7:00 p.m. For more information, check out the UA Lakewood website (lakewood.uakron.edu).



A hardy group of volunteers.

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Going Green

San Francisco's Take On Safe City Riding

by Erika Durham

Happy winter to all of you cyclists and readers out there! I just got back from a quick trip out to San Francisco to soak up some warm west coast sun to hold me over through the next few months of wind, snow, sleet, and frigid cold riding Cleveland is going to offer up. Although the trip was recreational in nature, I had a significant opportunity to take notes on how a bigger city handles its growing cycling population. My discoveries were exciting and motivating, and gave me many new ideas for pushing Lakewood in that same direction.

First of all, as I'm sure you're aware, San Francisco has a slightly different terrain than Lakewood does. If you've ever ridden up any of the hills coming out of the valley, just imagine half of your commute made up of that steep of an incline. The other half, of course, is a terrifying coast down incredibly steep hills with busy intersections every 500 feet or so. Now that's not to say all of San Francisco is like that, but it's definitely part of the equation.

What's so great about that city, and so inspiring, is the sheer amount of people on bikes. And they're doing it safely...partly because they're being mindful as a group, and partly because the city's infrastructure has allowed for that to happen. Drivers and cyclists are respectful to one another, and there seems to be a peacefulness to travel that we don't often enjoy back at home.

For instance, after a long day of walking basically the length of the city, we opted for a pedicab ride back to our hotel, to alleviate the aching of our tired legs and to get a closer look at the



photo by Erika Durham

biking experience. Not only did Bill, our pedicab rider, respect all traffic laws, but the cyclists around him did too, passing with courtesy and moving safely along a very busy and very wide street. What really put it over the top were a few quick interactions between Bill and a city bus driver. Both vehicles transporting clients and in need of the same space had a respectful conversation of hand signals that ended with a smile and everyone moving along in a coordinated fashion that left us all safe and happy. No honked horns, no middle fingers, no yelling or attempts to drive us off the road. Imagine that... bus drivers and cyclists getting along... The possibilities for improvement are seemingly endless now!

San Francisco also has a bike coalition that is 20,000 members strong, and they make their presence visible in many ways. Obviously riding their bikes is one way they show themselves,

but they're also active in the city's planning commissions, and have a strong voice that is listened to and respected. Because of their efforts, there are bike lanes and/or sharrows on almost every street, there are yellow signs reading either "SHARE THE ROAD," or, my personal favorite, "BIKES ALLOWED USE OF FULL LANE." Also, on one of their most heavily-traveled roads for auto commuters, all intersections where the bike lane temporarily merges with traffic are marked clearly, and the speed limit is dropped to 10 MPH. And people are paying attention on both sides of the equation.

I also don't recall seeing any cyclists without lights on their bikes for night riding. If anything, some displays seemed almost over the top, but I guess it never hurts to be overly cautious. The city was overflowing with bike parking as well, with many different designs of racks, some on sidewalks, some taking



up former automobile street parking, and one memorable rack that had bikes locked standing straight up on their back wheels-- one solution to the issue of blocked sidewalks.

There were negatives visible throughout the city too, many bike wheels and seats (oddly enough) had been stolen off of bikes parked on various streets, and the cycling community still faces issues with major thoroughfares in order to make them safer for bike and auto commuters alike. I realize San Francisco is not perfect, but I think we can learn a lot from the progress they have made, and apply that to Lakewood's continuous improvement.

And speaking of Lakewood's cycling future, the time has about come for us Lakewood Bikers to make our voices heard! The community meeting for the BikeLakewood re-launch and discussion of Lakewood's new Bike Master Plan is taking place on Wednesday, December 14 at the Lakewood Public Library at 7:00 p.m. Come and give your two (or ten) cents for improvement in our great city.

Lakewoodites On "Two Wheels"

Living Green Plus Plenty Of Exercise

Dear Erika,

Thank you for your wonderful column!

I want to relate my biking story. In December of 2009 two events changed the course of my life. The first was a visit to my doctor. I had just turned 40, was out of shape, overweight and feeling lousy. He told me to change my diet and get some exercise (in particu-

lar he said 30 minutes of elevated heart rate). I said that's great but I don't have the time to exercise due to a busy work and home life. A few days later my old pickup truck broke down and it wasn't worth the repairs it needed. I gave it to Click n' Clack, the Tappet brothers.

So, starting the first of the year 2010 I began making my commute on my wife's little mountain bike. It's just over 6

miles from our house on Arthur to where I work in Westlake and it takes about a half an hour... with an elevated heart rate to boot! What started as a stop-gap until I got some funds for a new old truck slowly turned into a change of perspective and lifestyle. In conjunction with a modest change in diet, I saw the extra pounds melt right off and within 6 months I was back to my high school weight of

185 down from 210. My BMI went down from 29 to 18. In April of 2010 I bought my own bike from Spin Bike Shop (great guys), a Kona Smoke, which is a solid, if modest, commuter bike. I love it.

We're still a one-car family and we'll stay that way. We probably save a couple grand each year without the car payment, insurance, gas, repairs, etc. I stay fit for free. I've run a few 5ks and 10ks and a Warrior Dash. My nagging back aches and sore feet and balky knees are largely trouble-free now. Additionally, my mood improved (some friends might debate that, but I think it has).

On top of all that, I really enjoy the ride. The sights and sounds and experiences of riding a bike just can't be had inside a shiny metal box. Even though I feel like a lone gazelle surrounded by lions out there riding my commute, I wouldn't trade places with any of them.

This is my case for riding a bike, especially if you were like me-- out of shape and short on funds.

Thanks again for great column! Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,
Rob Holland

Lakewoodites On "Two Wheels"

Bike Racks

by Jan Dregalla

After reading Erika's article in the last LO, I remembered some pics I wanted to get to the "bicycle folks." I had the good fortune to be in Portland, Oregon this summer. They are an arts and health-friendly location that made me feel right at home.

We hiked in the Columbia River Gorge area north of Portland for some breathtaking mountain and waterfall viewing. I climbed 3 miles straight up, (with the help of switch-backs) and back down again. Phew! We climbed in several places and everywhere were these beautiful bike racks donated by the Portland Wheel-

man that I assume is a bike club in the area, although I didn't check that out. The bike rack was in front of this beautiful view of the Columbia River Gorge.

I was impressed that bicyclists were so encouraged and very present in the area because it was a long and hilly ride from the cities. I'm sending these pics as an example of what another city/state is doing. I wish I could send the mountains too, but I can see these in front of our lake also.

Every other public and private place had some kind of bike rack available. They were of the more generic varieties, yet very useful.



A fun bike rack and sculpture by Margherita Leon called, "In the Tree Tops," 1991, discovered at a Portland shopping center.

Lakewood Opinion

Every “One” Counts

by Meg Ostrowski

On November 29th the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections released the official results of the November 8th General Election. A particularly close race for the third seat on the Lakewood City Schools Board of Education remained so. Emma Petrie-Barcelona finished with 3,846 votes, just 81 ahead of fourth place finisher, Kristine Pagsuyoin.

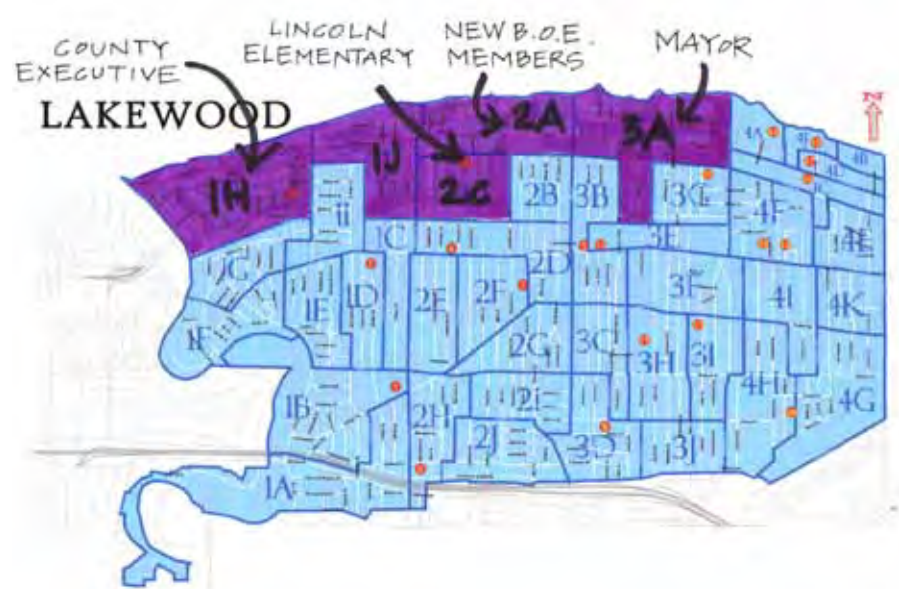
The unofficial count based on Election Day results had left Pagsuyoin trailing behind Barcelona by 70 votes, a margin too narrow to declare a winner. Despite maintaining a lead in the neighborhood of 150 votes throughout most of the night, just past the stroke of midnight Barcelona surged ahead when Ward One precincts were reported as a block, after posting no results all evening. Although no one was comfortable counting their chickens before they were hatched, many were initially dumbfounded after Pagsuyoin’s hard-working citywide campaign effort and her lead over Barcelona with absentee voters, which is often a good predictor of Election Day results.

The official results, including 534 provisional ballots, were just 16 votes (one tenth of one percent) from triggering an automatic recount. This left the Pagsuyoin

campaign with a choice to pursue and pay for a recount or concede. In the weeks between Election Day and the release of the official results, her committee accepted pledges from supporters for a recount in an effort to be prepared for either option. After consulting with professionals, considering the opinions and pocketbooks of her supporters, Pagsuyoin decided not to pursue a recount stating, “I think that the most positive step I can take now is to end this journey and continue to advocate for our students and the ideals that so many of us share. Although I will not be serving as a member of the current school board I am dedicated to the goals that I set forth in my campaign.”

I couldn’t help wondering where the votes that put Barcelona over the top came from, why our Mayor and County Executive were endorsing school board candidates, including Barcelona, and how their influence would impact the outcome of the election. Some answers may be found in the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections Reports and the map accompanying this article.

While most school board candidates remained consistent with their percentages of the Absentee and Elec-



Pagsuyoin came in ahead of Barcelona in 24 of 41 precincts and tied in another, but significant leads in northern precincts boosted Barcelona onto the Board. From West to East; 1H (64), 1J (47), 2A (116), 2C (33), 3A (90)

tion Day votes, Barcelona soared on Election Day. Many attribute this to the paper clips used to attach her campaign literature to that of the clear winners in this race, incumbent Linda Beebe who will begin her 29th year on the Board in January and Chairman of Lakewood’s Planning Commission, Tom Einhouse. This literature trio was delivered to voters just days before the election. Prior to this effort, neither Beebe nor Einhouse had publicly expressed their preference for Barcelona, even when asked directly at candidate forums. One Lakewood resident suggested that years from now we will refer to this campaign season as “The Year of the Paper Clip.”

Local political junkies noted Linda Beebe’s 3.6% Election Day dive, an anomaly and statistical “red flag” nearly equal to Barcelona’s 3.7% surge, that some feel should be investigated. Maybe some answers lie in the recently announced Cuyahoga County initiative to regionalize educational services (<http://executive.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/120111-NYU-Authored-Strategy.aspx>) for which Lakewood’s support may be needed. Or the fear of Lincoln Elementary School’s future in the district’s Master Facilities Plan

as communicated by one Lincoln parent in a letter distributed and posted at <http://www.lakewood-observer.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=10518>. This letter urged voters to avoid candidates who have said they will revisit the plan.

Whatever the case, there are many voters left feeling like their interests and values may not be represented by the very like-minded members of this elected Board. After all, if our Why I Love Lakewood fourth grade contest winner is “proud to say I live in a community that really is a melting pot,” shouldn’t our school board reflect the same pride?

With Pagsuyoin’s strong finish throughout the city (coming in ahead of Barcelona in 60% of precincts) and thousands of votes cast for the strong field of alternative candidates, we know that many here accept the notion of inclusive government and would welcome diverse representation. Building on this momentum, I encourage you to pay attention, stay informed, get involved, spread the word and communicate with Board Members. Most importantly, please vote when opportunities arise, every one of them counts.

We Lit Up Lakewood, But Where Was The Band?

by David Stein

What an amazing fifth year for LightUpLakewood. Kudos to Ian Andrews, Shannon Strachan, Tamara Karel and the too many to list sponsors and volunteers. The event, parade and weather were fantastic! The fireworks-Thank You to The University of Akron, Lakewood- were spectacular. The new lights on the Hospital- wow! Though something was definitely missing. Where was the Lakewood High School Marching Band?

I started playing the coronet when I was 10 and carried that through to college, yes I was a band geek! We marched basically wherever we were told to go. The 90 degree heat, the 5 degree cold. I’ve heard rumors as to why

the Lakewood High School Marching Band did not participate in the LightUpLakewood parade- I don’t like rumors, I would however like to pose this question and hope many other residents would too. I am a tax paying Lakewood resident and is our High School not a public school, funded by us? It wasn’t too cold for the band members to play, yes- one rumor! It wasn’t raining for the band members to get wet. It was 46 degrees! I don’t think they were at a bowl game. KUDOS to the Beck center band! A group formed of musical residents from all over Lakewood- but wouldn’t it have been nice to have had more than one marching band? Where were you Lakewood High School Marching Band?



Welcome Heidi Finniiff

First Federal Lakewood is proud to announce the appointment of Heidi Finniiff as the manager of our Lakewood branch.

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Minding The Issues

More Reflections From The Political Prism

Occupiers--Next Steps

When the Occupiers got evicted from their sites in a number of cities, some commentators remarked that it was the best thing that could happen to them.

I agree. The Occupiers have made their point, and made it very well. But demonstrations per se are mindless. Dozens of brilliant ideas may have been generated in the Occupiers' minds, but none have been conveyed to the general public. It is time, as they say, to move on.

But the Occupiers don't have to stop demonstrating. They can decentralize across the city, demonstrating at any number of spots for a few hours or a day at a time. (Think of all the mini-parks in Lakewood.) These mini-demonstrations offer much better opportunities for contact with members of the public than the mass demonstrations seen so far. And this leads to the next step, which is...

Recruiting and education: For every Occupier, there are probably scores or hundreds of individuals who are sympathetic but who for one reason or another have not joined the demonstrations. They must be recruited, and they must organize. Recruitment can be done by person-to-person contact. Education can be done partly in the same way, but mainly through the media and through teach-ins--which are a logical next step in any case.

For the benefit of those living on another planet, I note that a presidential election, along with congressional elections, will be held in about a year. This is just about the right amount of time to form an effective organization. Occupiers and Friends of Occupiers could form neighborhood organizations devoted to self-education and all the day-to-day jobs that make up the so-called ground operations of political campaigns.

Such an effort would require, first, the definition of goals and principles; second, identification of candidates who agree with these goals and principles; and, third, working to elect these candidates. And this brings up some problematic issues:

Organization and decision-making: Consensus and complete egalitarianism--which seem to be the custom in the Occupations so far--simply aren't adequate to the job of large-scale action. For example, to bring various local Occupations into relation with one another, there must be representation. To carry out new activities, there must be someone to direct them. To make decisions, there must be some procedure that isn't crippled by the need for absolute consensus. All this implies some sort of hierarchy, however mild.

Goals and principles: What are the goals and principles to be asserted, and how are candidates expected to respond to them? Defining the goals and principles should pose no particular problems--it will

by Gordon Brumm

just require a lot of work. The statement of principles should be specific enough to generate actual policies, but broad enough to allow flexibility.

Candidates should be asked to agree with these principles in substance, not to bind themselves to any one specific policy. Indeed, an officeholder should never be required to commit absolutely to any specific policy--an example being the no-tax pledge, which is as despicable as it is pernicious. But even without any requirement of absolute commitment, it should be easy to distinguish the sheep from the goats.

Nor should the Friends of Occupiers identify with any one political party. To do so makes for easy betrayal.

Having acquired goals to work toward, the Friends of Occupiers could work on a local level--though related to each other through networks on a statewide or even national level --to bring about the change that the Occupations have called for.

On a Favorite Analogy of Deficit Hawks

In arguing against government expenditures, some ideologues draw a comparison between the national government and the family. (State governments are generally excluded because their constitutions require a balanced budget.) Reality, they say, dictates that the national government follow the example of a family. A family must live within its means--if it doesn't have enough income to meet expenses, it must cut its expenses. It can't borrow. FALSE. Many families borrow--they borrow the money to buy their homes. That is what happens when they take out a mortgage.

Just as the eligibility of a mortgage applicant can be open to question, so can the advisability of government borrowing be questioned in any particular case. But to decide the question absolutely on the basis of the government-family analogy is hogwash.

Teachers--Who Goes?

One of the most contentious questions in the recent battle over Issue 2 concerned the place of teacher seniority in the process of staff reductions. Issue 2 supporters argued that the iron rule of seniority allows incompetent teachers to remain in their jobs at the expense of new generations of young, dynamic and idealistic teachers.

On this general subject I plead much ignorance. As a student I have known some incompetent or lazy teachers (or so I thought), and I have heard complaints about incompetent and lazy teachers. But as to the specifics--how many incompetent teachers hold their jobs in this district or that, how their incompetence manifests itself, how performance is measured--these are things I wish I knew more about. Our School Board, or any

school board, would be doing a service if they educated us about these things.

One question in mind concerns the teachers' unions. It arises from the distinction between two kinds of union, which I'll call commodity unions and skill unions.

By commodity unions I mean unions that organize workers whose labor is essentially a commodity, in the sense that one unit of labor can be substituted for another without significant result. In other words, as long as the laborer has the minimum required capability, one hour of his or her work is no better and no worse than any others. Absent a great shortage of laborers (as in the wake of the Black Death, for example), employers will have a decided advantage over employees in setting wages for this kind of job--the employer can set wages on a "take it or leave it" basis, knowing that if one applicant turns down the job there are many others who won't. Thus unions are formed, presenting a united front. Strict seniority rules are important as a safeguard against firing on arbitrary grounds or because the worker is a "troublemaker" (read: union activist).

In skill unions, by contrast, each member has his or her own skill set and skill level, acquired through education, experience or innate ability. Interchanging the work of one member of a skill union with that of another will probably make a significant difference-- the result attained by one member will be better or worse than that attained by another.

Commodity unions have an important place in the history of the labor movement. Therefore, I suspect, there is a tendency on the part of skill unions to take the perspective appropriate to commodity unions. Is this true of teachers' unions?

Skill unions stand on the competence of their members. Hence it seems to me that it would be in the interest of teachers' unions to protect their brand by weeding out those who do not belong in their jobs, either because of general incompetence, laziness or because they are

in a situation they are unsuited for. The school administration would be natural allies. (Some school districts may already be making this effort. If so, I applaud them.)

But to talk of weeding out bad teachers brings up the question of how we recognize bad teachers, which is to say, how to measure performance.

Here the question of junior vs. senior comes up. Whenever I hear about the brilliance of young, dedicated, idealistic teachers, I head for the hills. Idealistic and dedicated? Yes, in all probability. Fully competent? I have my doubts. One clear thing my life experience has taught me is that it takes a few years to sort out the good ideas from the bad and learn the tricks of the trade. On the other hand, teachers have to be young before they can be mature. Where is the next generation of teachers coming from, if they all get fired at the beginning? Getting rid of young teachers is like throwing away your seed corn.

It's a dilemma.

Indeed, the whole subject of performance measurement is a quandary. What is the criterion? Test scores? Different teachers have different types of students to work with. Comparison with other teachers? How many teachers in a school are teaching the exact same subject in the exact same situation, and how do we know which teachers are extraordinarily bad and which are extraordinarily good? Principals' evaluations? That brings in the possibility of personal bias. And common sense tells me that some teachers are more effective in some situations than in others, whether for ethnic, social or intellectual reasons. Perhaps the schools need less punitive testing and more diagnostic testing, along with a focus on best practices.

The complexity of the problem makes me throw up my hands, but it leads to one firm conclusion: Rigid, universal commandments are not the answer. Each school district, keeping the welfare of the students firmly in mind, can best work out their problems in their own way.



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Lakewood Perspectives

All I Want For Christmas

by Bret Callentine

Is there any more iconic Hollywood image of Christmas than that of little Ralphie Parker in “A Christmas Story,” clinging to the top of the department store slide in a desperate attempt to plead his gift request to Santa--“No, no, I want an official Red Ryder carbine-action two hundred shot range model air rifle!”? Earlier in the story, Ralphie even admits to no longer believing in Santa, but seemingly getting nowhere in his other efforts to cajole his parents into the purchase, he submits to a secular version of Pascal’s Wager.

There is something heartwarming and, given the recent political environment, something eerily poignant about Ralphie’s gambit. Quickly losing hope, he seeks out everyone and anyone who might be able to aide in his quest to receive the blue steel beauty with the compass in the stock and that thing that tells time (and yes, that IS my house with the leg lamp prominently displayed in the front window – it’s a major award). Whether you’re a 99%-er or a Tea Party member, you’ve got to really empathize with his plight. After all, politicians’ approval ratings aren’t in the single digits just because we’re not getting what we want, but, because we’re beginning to think we’re no longer even being heard.

If you peel back all the party politics and radical rhetoric, most people are actually supporting some very similar goals. But regardless of the demands of their constituents, most politicians quickly dismiss the argument with the impertinent equivalent of, “You’ll shoot your eye out.” We’re not having any logical discussions anymore, you don’t see politicians give you the list of pros and cons, and regardless of how many grizzly bears have been

spotted near Polaski’s Candy Store, their minds are seemingly made up.

So what are we to do? Well, Raphie went to Santa, so I think I’m willing to give it a try also. Well, maybe not with Saint Nick, but with an option that I, likewise, stopped believing in quite a while ago: the media. So here you go Lakewood Observer, here’s my Christmas list. I’m getting nowhere talking to politicians, so I’m putting my last hope in Jim O’Bryan, who, come to think of it, would make a rather convincing Santa Claus...

First of all, for my friends over at the Westerly, I want a daily Community Circulator. I want it to loop around to all the critical Lakewood stops (the hospital, grocery stores, etc.) and I want it to have a GPS transponder so that anyone who wants to can use an app to know just where it is at any given time so they don’t have to wait outside in the rain or snow hoping that they didn’t just miss it. And to keep it affordable for seniors, I want it to have a powerful speaker system and tricked out interior so that you can run it on Friday and Saturday nights as a party bus for the drunks to get from bar to bar.

For my family that comes into town a couple times a year, I want a fishing pier and boardwalk at Lakewood Park, complete with seasonal kiosks that can be leased out to local businesses looking to sell their wares. I’m sick and tired of Lakewood being the only waterfront community that has a “look but don’t touch” mentality when it comes to its biggest marketable resource.

For my son, I’d humbly like to ask for a finished High School. He’s only at

Harding this year, but at the rate we’re going, if I don’t ask now, by the time he moves up, the mascot might officially get changed from the Ranger to the Construction Worker. Come on people, we might be the only school system in the country that has more wheels on our students’ classrooms than on the vehicles the city officially operates to get them there.

And for me, my request is much less complicated but much more problematic. I want candidates. Not politicians, candidates. Next election, I would love to be blessed with a handful of decent, honest, hard-working citizens who are willing to throw their hats in the ring and give civic leadership a try. As a capitalist, I believe in the benefits of open competition. It’s not that I’m against our current Mayor or Council Members, or think that they are necessarily doing a bad job. But I think the easiest

way to keep an elected official on track is to let them know that there are other options. Letting a person run unopposed is akin to us admitting that we have few expectations and even fewer ambitions. Having an opponent forces debate, it demands discussion, and it mandates that each candidate make an argument not just that they can do the job, but that they can do it better than the other person.

That’s it. That’s all I want. I’m willing to live without a movie theatre, I’m willing to tolerate never being more than twenty yards from a drug store, and I’ve gotten strangely comfortable with having a six foot squirrel hocking cell phones at the end of the block. If Ralphie can have his BB gun, I don’t think it’s too much to ask if we can have a few things that’ll make our city better. So, Mr. O’Bryan-claus and all you elves over at the Observer, if you would be so kind as to honor my Christmas list, I’ll be sure to drink my Ovaltine.

Heirloom Home Celebrates First Anniversary: Support The Beck Center!

by Brenda Ellner

Heirloom Home celebrates its 1st birthday with a special holiday sale of unique items. Give the present of wonderful handcrafted vintage necklaces and bracelets; handsome, quality watches that have a secret compartment; antiques and beautiful silver; glass and collectibles.

This is the place for ornaments and Christmas decoratives--serving pieces, plates, candles, trees and angels in metal and wood--all one of a kind to be treasured forever.

Enjoy and purchase yummy cookies and candies--such great fun to browse with your kids for gifts. And all at BARGAIN PRICES and all proceeds support scholarships for children at THE BECK. Heirloom Home is at 18119 Detroit Avenue. Holiday hours are Tuesday - Sunday noon - 5:00 p.m.; Thursday and Friday until 7:00 p.m.; Saturday - opens at 10:00 a.m.



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Join the Discussion at: www.lakewoodobserver.com

Gift Guide- Madison

Late Night Thursdays On Madison Avenue!

by Christin Sorensen

The holiday shopping season is upon us! To make it easier for people to buy local and support area businesses, many of the shops along Madison Avenue will be extending their hours until at least 7 p.m. on Thursdays. From restaurants to unique shops, Madison Avenue has something for everyone on your list! More information can be found on the Madison Avenue Merchant's Association Facebook page.

Specials include:

Acenda Yoga
17305 Madison
8:15 p.m. relaxation class, \$5 off!

Carabel Salon
15309 Madison
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Enter to win a mani/pedi party for 4!

Carol Lynn's Salon
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Crafty Goodness
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Beverages & Snacks

Delta Computers
15400 Madison Avenue
Open 10 a.m.- 9 p.m.

Future No Future Vintage Clothing
15027 Madison

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\$5 specials and free candy canes!

Goddess Blessed
15729 Madison
Open 6-9 p.m.
\$30 cash for 15 minutes of reiki, massage, and a tarot reading
Beverages & Snacks

LaBella Cupcakes
15208 Madison
Open until 7 p.m. starting December 2!

Marrell Music & Instrument Repair
13733 Madison
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MODA
14203 Madison
Open noon-8 pm

Metro Home Design*Food & Wine
15226 Madison
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The Red Rose Cafe
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30 cent Wings dine in only till 1am
\$4 1/2 Pound Burger & Fries from Noon till 7:30 p.m.

Rockflower Studio
15707 Madison
Open until 9 p.m.
Beverages & Snacks
Christmas crafts from 12/16-12/22
\$5 gift projects to make and take, no appt necessary

Screaming Rooster
15527 Madison
Happy Hour until 8 p.m., \$.40 wings until 11 p.m.

Spin Bike Shop
14515 Madison
Open until 8 p.m.
Gift certificates, cycling stocking stuffer gifts, personalized help in selecting the perfect bike

Winchester Music Hall
12112 Madison
Open until midnight or later
Open Mic Night
Plus many other wonderful shops. Make Madison Avenue a destination this holiday season, you will be glad you did! Buy local!

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Gift Guide- Downtown

Gingerbread House Tour

by Paula Reed

A new holiday tradition has begun in Downtown Lakewood with the second annual Gingerbread House Tour, sponsored by the Downtown Lakewood Business Alliance. There are 24 structures on display in businesses between Lincoln Avenue and Arthur Avenue. Seeing the inventiveness of their creators is reason enough to visit all of these constructions, but while you're looking, participate in the Scavenger Hunt. Pick up a Scavenger Hunt form at any host merchant or download and print one from downtownlakewood.org. The form features a photo of a detail of each house, with a line below on which to write the location of the gingerbread structure pictured. The Scavenger Hunt will continue through Tuesday, December 20. Completed sheets may be turned in at any participating merchant or the LakewoodAlive office. Those correctly identifying all the houses will be entered into a drawing for a Downtown Lakewood gift basket.

Judging of the entries will occur



Elf Mountain Resort built by Hotel & Leisure Advisors.

on Thursday, December 15th at 6:00 p.m. DLBA's panel of judges, Dan Deagan, owner of Deagan's Kitchen & Bar; Mary Anne Crampton, former executive director of LakewoodAlive, & Eric Lowrey, Realtor and former pastry chef, will select a house that exemplifies Most Creative Use of Materials, Best Execution of a Theme and Best of Show. Categories are: Children & Family (12 & under); Youth (13-17); Adult (18+); Business/Organization; and Professional. The last two categories

will not be judged. Prizes, donated by Downtown Lakewood Business Alliance, will be awarded on December 22.

Most of the entries are in the family, youth (Lakewood High's Model U.N. club constructed a gingerbread model of the U.N. building) or adult categories, but the one entry in the Business category, Elf Mountain Resort, built by Hotel & Leisure Advisors, headquartered in the Detroit-Warren Building, is worth a special trip to Rozi's to see it. Having learned from last year's outstanding effort, a water park complete with a marshmallow water slide, they were eager to try again. A core group of 5 employees worked on the resort while the rest of the staff provided support and encouragement. They started brainstorming in October, and their staff architect prepared a cardboard model on which they patterned their gingerbread pieces. The ski lodge took

shape before work, during lunch, and one weekend. The ski lodge has amazing detail, including a chair lift with pretzel seats, gum paste elves relaxing in a hot tub, and a chimney made of gingerbread stones mortared with royal icing. Their challenge now is figuring out how to top this one next year!

Be sure to put on your detective hat and join the Scavenger Hunt! Businesses hosting gingerbread structures are:

Aladdin's, GreenSmartGifts, AT&T, Landfall Travel, Blue Onion, lion and blue, Cerny's, Paisley Monkey, Discount Drug Mart, Plantation Home, Dramatics Salon, Rozi's, Empty Nest, Tease Salon, First Federal of Lakewood, Tess' Tender Touch and Geiger's.



Piecing together the gingerbread houses.

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Gift Guide- Downtown

Light-Up Lakewood A Big Success

by Kevin Cush and Calvin Dolatowski- 6th graders from Harding Middle School

On Saturday, December 3 some joy, singing and fun came to the community of Lakewood. The event was held in downtown Lakewood on Detroit Avenue between Lakewood Hospital and Lakewood Public Library. This year's Light-Up Lakewood Festival was a big success. It was sponsored

by the Downtown Business Alliance and was available to all of the community, all ages.

The Light-Up Lakewood festival started out as a way to attract customers to the business district in downtown Lakewood, but then it spread out to include our whole community as activities like Santa's visit to the library were added.

There were many fun arts and

crafts at the library and around town, and great holiday entertainment at the Lakewood Masonic Temple, with performances from Harding Singers, Lincoln Singers, Garfield Music Crew and Silhouette Dance Studio, not to forget the lighting ceremony at Lakewood Hospital!

At the festival we had the best time listening to the great music at the library and seeing all of the younger

children having fun with Santa, and we considered it to be the best festival yet!



The Trash Talkers from St. Ed's are the evening's rock stars.



It was a perfect night for Christmas fireworks.



Poet Laureate of Lakewood, Bill Knittel, captivated the crowd with his Christmas ballad.

"Christmas Court"
Lyrics and Music
Bill Knittel
Lakewood's Poet Laureate

Is that reindeer I hear on the roof,
Does that sound come from each little hoof?
Let's run out in the snow,
And look up then we'll know,
Snap a picture and then we'll have proof;

Let us hide over there by that tree,
As quiet and as quick as can be,
Now look over that way,
Hey! Is that Santa's sleigh?
Oh my gosh! Don't believe what I see;

I don't think we've broken any laws,
So let's knock off the hem and the haws,
Say we just couldn't sleep,
The excuse we will keep,
We don't want to tick off Santa Claus;

Now we are in Santa Claus Court,
And the jury they all look so short,
They're all sitting on shelves,
Guess they all must be elves,
Hope the judge is a real good sport;

There's a moral to this story you know,
And believe me it aint no Ho, Ho,
Cause we heard the judge say,
There's no gifts Christmas day,
Back to bed is just where we will go;

What we did was a dumb stupid trick,
And the outcome made us really sick,
Yes it made us believe,
That every Christmas Eve,
You don't mess, with our old pal St. Nick;

So if you want peace,
From the Christmas Eve Police,
Go to bed and do it mighty quick!
Go to bed and do it mighty quick!
Mighty quick!

P.S. P.S. We awoke the next day,
To a Christmas display,
That said see what you get when you're good.
Ho! Ho! Ho!
Signed Santa, The End!
Yes see what you get when you're good.
Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho...



Congressman Dennis Kucinich takes in the parade.



The King and Queen of Light Up Lakewood, Lakewood High School juniors Peter Nelson and Rachel Ritter, share a smile.



Live Christmas windows entertained the crowds.

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Gift Guide- Lakewood

Cleveland Craft Coalition Handmade Holiday Show

by Christin Sorensen

‘Twas the week before Christmas when all through the town
Not a shopper was finished, not even one.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that some handmade awesomeness soon would be there.
The Cleveland Craft Coalition is excited to announce our 2011 Handmade Holiday Show! This will be a two-day affair on Friday, December 16th from 7 to 10 p.m. and Saturday, December 17th from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It will be held at Breakneck Gallery, 17020 Madison Ave., Lakewood’s newest addition to the arts scene.
We will showcase 20 artists delivering the goods you want for all of your handmade holiday shopping needs,

including vintage jewelry, zombie-inspired sock monkeys, pottery, hair accessories, knitwear, purses, ornaments and so much more!!
Think outside of the Big Box and go handmade this holiday season! Your friends and family will love you for it.

Participating Artists:
Audrey- leather cuffs embellished with vintage pieces, handbags
Beth (www.etsy.com/shop/clevelandart)- ornaments, linocut prints, wooden boxes
Bethany (http://www.etsy.com/shop/beethingsstudio)- jewelry
Brandi & Holly (http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Lovely-Wrecks/157989037582600)- earrings, necklaces, and things with buttons
Bridgette- beaded, hemp and wire

jewelry; knit and crochet items
Brit (www.holdenallan.etsy.com)- upcycled guitar picks
Caitlin- cupcakes, holiday chocolate bark
Candice (http://www.etsy.com/shop/tattoo1981ink)- children’s clothing, headbands, necklaces
Chris (http://www.etsy.com/shop/craftygirl)- pottery, ornaments, sushi sets
Denise (http://www.etsy.com/shop/treatcentral)- fleece scarves, purses and headbands
Emily (http://www.facebook.com/VisualGrammar216)- hats, fascinators, accessories, ornaments
Ingrid- snarky cross stitch, amigurumi
Kristen- totes, record bowls, ornaments

Kristen (http://thefountaincreativestudio.com/images/museme.html)- porn star and serial killer ornaments and tree toppers, mobile mini bars
Marie (http://www.etsy.com/shop/TheDrunkenGnome)- jewelry, crocheted amigurumi, beer koozies, ornaments
Nicki (http://www.etsy.com/shop/ZombieSocks)- zombie sock monkeys, ornaments
Rhiannon (http://www.etsy.com/shop/Snikitty)- voodoo dolls, hair accessories, cat toys, ornaments
Samantha (http://thesnowstore.net/)- crocheted amigurumi
Sean (http://www.etsy.com/shop/magicplanet)- art, spider webs, bread
Tina- quirky housewares, kitschy prints, wreaths, soap and cards

Simple Holiday Decorating Ideas

by Robby Zettler

The holidays can be stressful and frazzling. The first tip I give everyone is “keep it simple”. Elaborate décor is fussy and time consuming. “Less is more” goes a long way in this hectic season. Having said that, I hope one of these festive ideas makes it to your home for this wonderful time of the year!

Transfer some of the plain bulbs on your tree to a big glass bowl (a trifle bowl can be purchased for about \$4.00 and has many uses throughout the year.) Set it on a countertop or make it your centerpiece at the dining table. Fill it with ornaments or pine cones and garland for an organic look.

Choose a color scheme. Whether it’s the new jewel tone colored lights and bulbs, traditional green and red, or shades that match your décor, coordinating pulls everything together.

Although the aforementioned colored lights are making a comeback and blue ones have always been a seasonal favorite, nothing beats the sparkle of the small clear lights. They make everything twinkle with holiday elegance!

Fresh garland is a beautiful organic addition to any home but it can be messier than removing a live tree. Break it down. Add some to or around the bowl of bulbs, or a bowl of fruit, around the candles, or tied with jute to a rolled napkin on the place setting. Add some to a basket with bulbs and pine cones for a natural look at the front door.

My favorite tree skirt is a length

of satin in the color of your choice wrapped around the base of the tree. Small trees only need about a yard. Start with 2 yards, for bigger trees.

For the table:
Always use white tablecloths. They match everything for all occasions and you can bleach them after use.
Add:
Runners. Depending on the size of your table, using two or three across the shorter length of the table adds interest. Lengths of satin or silk are very elegant.
Glitter. The larger pieces in the shapes of stars or squares are easier to clean up and, although they sound fussy, they add a beautiful effect when sprinkled across your table. Be sure to do this right after you lay the tablecloths so as not to get them into food or other objects on the table.
Candles. They add a wonderful ambience and are one of the simplest design elements any time of year. Place votives in small glass bowls or on your often-unused teacup saucers.
Mirrors. Squares and rounds under the candles will make everything light up and sparkle! They can be purchased at craft stores. A full length wall mirror makes one of the most interesting table runners you’ll ever use. I guarantee someone will comment.
Name tags. These are important. People arrive at a table and want to know where their host wants them to sit.
Let children be creative; this will give them a fun holiday chore.

Buy them at your local office supply store and make them on your computer or just use your best handwriting with a metallic marker.
Slit the tops of wine corks and insert a business card with the name of your guests. These can also be purchased at an office supply store.
Set the table the night before or early in the day so everyone can see how beautiful it looks before it’s used. If you have a dining room just for holidays and special occasions, you can set it anytime and the room will be decorated.
Most importantly, remember to enjoy the fruits of your labor. After all is primped and placed, pour a glass of wine, sit back and admire your beautiful holiday home!

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Pulse Of The City

Our Local Colleges And Universities- Keys To The Future!

There's no doubt about it, college does not come cheap, and, truth be told, for a young person to hope for a good livelihood he or she will probably need to complete some college studies or receive training in a good vocational school. To many Americans, that means trying to get their children into what they perceive to be a "top-tier" school of higher education. Even with whatever scholarships might be available, those schools often mean thousands of dollars out-of-pocket, along with thousands of dollars for student loans and room-and-board fees. Frankly, I just don't think that kind of expense account works for all of us.

My dad was the only breadwinner in our family. Adding to that were considerable costs from numerous surgeries that I had to undergo as a child, all of which made the idea of college a pipe dream for me. We did well to pay the bills of life as we went along, and quite frankly, had Dad not worked several jobs, we might not have even been able to do that; so when college time came for me, the piggy bank was empty. The deck was stacked against me in other ways, as well. Having a moderate-to-severe speech impediment, as well as hearing and walking issues, there were any number of people who questioned whether I could even become a productive member of

society.

My parents, and my university's leadership, were fortunately not among those people. I'm a 1973 cum laude graduate of Cleveland State University, having received a degree in Political Science with Secondary Education credentials at that time, with my post-graduate level special education coursework taken there afterwards. I've had a tremendous life as a public school and private teacher, public speaker, musician, "guitar guy," photographer, and writer, among other pursuits. So many of those adventures derived from the successes I experienced while at Cleveland State University.

I entered CSU in 1969. At that time, the university had a Lakewood High School satellite campus. As Lakewood had been my high school, it was quite convenient to make a college transition while at the same time remain close to home. As a person who had experienced long-term difficulties with what, back then, were referred to as speech and hearing "handicaps," it was important to me that I start my college journey in relatively familiar surroundings and with smaller classes. I was also able to work as a reporter for The Norseman, CSU's Lakewood Academic Center newspaper. That experience served me quite

well, as I've since been a writer for Folknet's Continuum, Guitar Digest, and your Lakewood Observer newspaper.

I elected to become part of the CSU family for several reasons. For one, cost was the big factor. As one who had experienced a number of hospitalizations as a child, money was always a concern in our family. The informal and intimate atmosphere of those evening classes also helped greatly in fostering that intangible feeling of acceptance that people (and particularly those having special needs) really appreciate. With sincere thanks, I also note here that there were several accommodations that the university graciously made for my particular needs. Those were done for me in the days before it was common to do that sort of thing for persons having so-called "disabilities."

One very significant question for the university was whether to admit me to their College of Education. Both my speech and hearing issues brought concerns as to whether I would, or even should, consider becoming a teacher. While some expressed reluctance with my heading in that direction, my strong desire, coupled with some forward-thinking administrators, allowed me to enter that college and complete the coursework necessary to become a certified classroom teacher. I received my degree and first teaching certificate in 1973, a full two years before a federal law recognizing the rights of the disabled came into play. In that respect, CSU was a pioneer university concerning awareness of the rights of special-needs people.

I later went back and took post-graduate hours at CSU to receive my Special Education certification. It was very important to me that I enter that field, mainly because I wanted to help students like myself who had also experienced undue difficulties in their lives. I began my career in Special Education as a tutor with the Lakewood Schools,



Gary, with his "CSU Viking Green" guitar, built by Lakewoodite Guy Hlynosky and authentic vintage CSU "Greenie-Beanie"

and concluded that career in 2005 with my retirement as a teacher with the Parma City School District.

Being a musician since childhood, I enjoyed my time in the CSU Instrumental Ensemble, where we played an eclectic library of great material. My musical interests continued through the years, as I taught private music lessons and played in local bands on evenings and weekends as a drummer and guitarist. My interest in guitar history, along with an ability with guitar repair, led to my being asked to evaluate the guitars of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1995. Since that time, I have helped them as a guitar consultant whenever they've needed my assistance.

To me, it is essential and beneficial that we now have a new exciting and dynamic University of Akron satellite campus at the heart of our city, at Detroit Ave. and Warren Road. Students who come to Ohio's great state schools and community colleges need to know that their qualifications will receive careful consideration, and after admission, that they will be given every opportunity, as I was, to succeed in the achievement of their dreams. They need to know that there are absolutely no limits to what they can achieve, and that they do not need to go elsewhere to find the excellence that is already right there waiting for them.

My life has centered around helping students, particularly students who might be considered "high-risk," as I once was considered by some people. I am here as a state-school graduate example to those students that they can be successful, especially when they are backed by these great local schools like Cleveland State, Cuyahoga Community College, or Lakewood's new University of Akron branch!

(Incidentally, the State of Ohio has a great "Project 60" program, where Ohio residents 60 or over can attend many State University classes at no charge on a not-for-credit basis. Contact your favorite state university for more information.)

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Lakewood Living

Slap Happy

by Edward Staskus

By all accounts Ryan Woidke appears a normal 19-year-old, born and raised in Lakewood where he still lives on weekends while in his second year at Kent State University. A graduate of Lakewood High School now majoring in Criminal Justice, trim and athletic, a full-time academic with two part-time jobs, he blends in with most other backpacking students.

Except on Friday nights, when he exchanges his t-shirt and blue jeans for deer-hide leather shorts, wide embroidered suspenders, a white cotton shirt, a green wool hat with a grouse feather ornament, knee socks, black shoes with thick two-inch heels and cleats big as horseshoes, and goes shoe slapping at the Donauschwaben German-American Cultural Center in Olmsted Township.

“What happened,” said Woidke, “was in my freshman year at Lakewood one of my best friends asked me to help serve dinner at their winter dance event, and later he invited me to a practice, and, of course, when you show up they start making you dance, and right away I was hooked on it.”

The dance is schuhplattler, or ‘hitting the shoe’, native to the mountainous Bavarian and Tyrolean regions of Germany, in which the women spin around the men or in place, and the men perform a syncopated series of loud slaps on lederhosen-clad legs

and the soles of their shoes. Between slaps the men and women waltz to the accompaniment of accordions.

“I had never danced before,” said Woidke. “I don’t know if I have rhythm (known as plattle in schuhplattler circles) or not, but at least for this I do.”

Schuhplattling requires flexibility, stamina, and unity of the group, so that the slapping isn’t just loud, but is one very loud slap in concert. Traditionally a courtship dance, it developed to showcase the agility and strength of men and as a spectacle to dazzle women.

“Some of us are younger,” said Woidke, “and have the endurance for it. Others are in their 50s, but they’ve been doing it since they were little kids, so they’re used to it.”

Schuhplattling came to Cleveland in the early 1920s when four couples toured the city demonstrating the folk dance at civic functions. The dance group Schuhplattler und Trachtenverenien, better known as STV Bavaria, was formed in the mid-60s and today thrives with more than a hundred members, ranging in age from 7 to 70.

“Many of our young adults grew up within the club, but Ryan came to us as a teenager,” said Paul Beargie, vice-president of STV Bavaria and a long-time Lakewood resident. “He has taken to the dance and fully immersed himself in the culture. It is encouraging to see his enthusiasm to learn and

pass on what he has learned.”

Five years of weekly practices, competitions, and cultural events have immersed Woidke in the history and customs of his adopted Bavarian Alps dancing that dates back to the 11th century.

“Ryan is more than a dancer,” said Kenny Ott, president of STV Bavaria. “He is second-in-command of the men’s teaching. He is a young man who has stepped up and assumed a role of responsibility, perpetuating the culture for at least another generation.”

One of four dance directors for the group, Woidke brings a young man’s energy to the one-thousand-year-old tradition.

“I’m at the point they can show me five dances a night and I’ll know all of them,” he said

Every year STV Bavaria participates at the Cleveland Labor Day Oktoberfest, drawing large crowds. It is the club’s major fund-raising event, as well as an opportunity to perform their native dances and sometimes even strut their stuff before an audience often unfamiliar with schuhplattler.

“We do all kinds of funny skits,” said Mr. Woidke. “In one of them we come out dressed as old men with canes. A lady comes out with a sign saying she’s got a special brew, and we drink it, go around the glockenspiel, and when we come back, we’ve lost our beards and scraggly wigs, and we’re

dancing upright. It’s like the beer that makes you younger.”

A recent poll on the Oktoberfest Facebook page rated the colorful STV Bavaria pavilion and folk dances in full costume tops for the holiday weekend, for more reasons than one.

“We have sponsors who donate bead necklaces and sunglasses, and we toss stuff out to the crowds right after the shows,” said Woidke. “One year they gave us Jagermeister apparel to throw out. That was nuts, everybody was grabbing for those.”

Affiliated with Gauverband Nordamerika, a non-profit foundation formed in 1966 to preserve and carry on the cultural heritage of Bavaria and Tyrol, including their ethnic costumes and dances, Cleveland’s STV Bavaria group regularly competes in the biennial Gaufest national competition. Since 1973 they have won 7 gold medals.

In Orlando, Florida, in July 2011, STV Bavaria brought home first place in the group dance, and well as placing two couples in the top three of the singles competitions. They qualified for the 2012 Bayrische Loewe in Germany, at which they will go shoe-to-shoe against teams from both the fountainhead and from around the world. Woidke can’t wait.

“We’re going to go and compete against all of their best,” he said. “I’ve only been here five years, so there are many things I don’t know, but I’m still going.”

By his own reckoning part German, largely on his father’s side, Woidke dances schuhplattler for the heritage, for the competition, but mostly for the camaraderie.

“The people are great,” he said. “It’s like one big family. They’re fun to hang out with.”

Woidke’s future plans include his undergraduate degree, the police academy at KSU, possibly enlisting in the Marine Corps, and definitely schuhplattler.

“No matter what,” he said, “even if I go into the military, I’ll keep it up. I can jump right in when I’m on leave. You can’t beat it.”

In the meantime he will continue to work on his plattle.

Thank You!


by Brett Brown

I would like to send a warm thank you to the kind managers at Caribou Coffee, Menchies and Hungry Howies for allowing me to put up my boxes at their establishments to collect coats,

hats, and scarves! I attend Lakewood highschool; I am 14 years old. Just because I am a highschool student it doesn’t mean that I am mindless or selfish. I am a caring and compassionate person. My coat drive started after I

was watching the news and listening to the politicians complain about everything from A-Z. I thought, why do we complain so much and not do enough to resolve our issues? I wanted to help in some way, so I started a coat drive. The wonderful people in Lakewood donated hats, scarves, coats, clothes, and gloves. I was so happy that people really do care and are not afraid to help out. Helping people is all of our responsibility, this is how we build great communities.

To Caribou Coffee, Menchies and Hungry Howies and the people of Lakewood who donated for a great cause, thank you all immensely!



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SINCE 1991

Lakewood Living

America’s “First” Christmas Tree

by Ziggy Rein

Pastor Heinrich (Henry) Christian Schwan made history when he celebrated his first Christmas in Cleveland by placing a candlelit tree in his church’s sanctuary, a custom that was popular in Germany, his native country, and helped spread the tradition across America.

Early on Christmas Eve 1851, the Rev. Schwan, newly installed pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Cleveland, went into the forest near his parsonage and chopped down a small beautifully-shaped evergreen. After taking it into his church and placing it in a prominent spot in the chancel, he and his wife, Emma, spent the afternoon trimming the tree with cookies, colored ribbons, fancy nuts and candles. A silver star that Schwan had brought with him from his boyhood home in Hanover, Germany, topping off the tree, was a reminder of his happy boyhood Christmases.

He wanted to share this same happiness with members of his congregation, most of whom were also German-born and thus likely to have seen a Christmas tree in their past. The custom hadn’t caught on yet in America.

Most of the members of his congregation were pleasantly surprised, and wonderful Christmas memories of the Old Country were enkindled by the sight of the beautifully decorated and lighted tree. Others, however, were offended by the idea of having a Tannenbaum in church.

Within a day or two, Schwan’s Christmas tree was the talk of the town, and the talk was not good. A prominent local newspaper called it “a nonsensical, asinine, moronic absurdity, besides being silly.” It editorialized against “these Lutherans . . . worshipping a tree . . . groveling before a shrub.” Worse, it recommended that the good Christian citizens of Cleveland ostracize, shun and refuse to do business with anyone “who tolerates such heathenish, idolatrous practices in his church.”

Even members of the congregation thought it was sacrilege and idolatry to have such a tree in the church. During the following year, Schwan carefully researched the issue of Christmas trees. He ultimately concluded that such trees were not a sacrilege but rather a solid Christian custom — a custom in which Christians could express their joy at the birth of the Christ Child.

Finding it hard to believe that the use of the Christmas tree was really unknown to the people of Cleveland, Pastor Schwan began to make inquiries, by personal contacts as well as by correspondence. He learned that the lighting of the Christmas tree had been a custom in the home of the Imgaard family in Wooster, Ohio, since 1847. Fortified with this information, Pastor Schwan convinced the leaders of the community and his congregation that his Christmas tree was not so wicked as it had been made out to be.

On Christmas Eve 1852, Schwan’s church again displayed a blazing Christmas tree. But this time it was not the only one in Cleveland. In fact, decorated trees appeared in homes all over town, and within five years Christmas trees were going up in homes and churches all across the country!

The Rev. J. H. Meyer, D. D., pastor at the former St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lakewood, wrote in 1960:

“[T]he claim has been made that Pastor Schwan was the first to introduce the use of the Christmas tree in a church. That claim, however, is not quite correct. There is evidence that the Rev. John Muehlhaeuser of Rochester, New York, used the Christmas tree in his church as early as 1840. There, however, it was chiefly a money-making scheme, admission being charged to raise money for the church. Therefore, although Pastor Schwan was not the first to introduce the Christmas tree into the church, as was believed for a time, we may still credit him with the honor of lifting the custom to a worthy plane and bringing out its beautiful significance.”

Although Pastor Schwan was not the first person to decorate a Christmas tree in North America, he was the first to introduce one into a church. And he was almost singlehandedly responsible for this custom gaining widespread acceptance and popularity in the United States.

The location of Zion Lutheran Church has changed since the 1850s, but on its original spot, the corner of Lakeside Avenue and East Sixth Street, stands a historical marker that states:

“On this site stood the first Christmas tree in America publicly lighted and displayed in a church Christmas ceremony. [Here] stood the original Zion Lutheran Church, where in 1851, on Christmas Eve, Pastor Henry Schwan lighted the first Christmas tree in Cleveland. The tradition he brought from Germany soon became widely accepted throughout America. The present site of Zion Lutheran Church is at 2062 East 30th Street, Cleveland, Ohio.”

On December 5, as every year, Hope Lutheran Church, Cleveland Heights, celebrated and commemorated the accomplishments of the Rev. Schwan by holding a graveside tree-trimming ceremony at his grave in Lake View Cemetery.

Decking Your Halls For The Holidays

by Michael Mooneyham

It’s that time of the year again and you’re selling your home. The questions inevitably come up: When I am selling my home, should I decorate for the holidays or not? If you normally decorate your home then I would continue to do so. The decorations can give the home a warm, inviting feel but could distract a buyer from the great features you have to offer and could offend others. My opinion would be to tone it down a bit from what you would normally do.

When decorating your home, here are a few tips you can use that will help bring the festive mood into your home, but still appeal to the buyer and allow your home to put its best foot forward.

1. If you normally get an 8 foot Christmas tree, think about a smaller tree or a table top tree so as to not overwhelm the buyers or make the house appear small.
2. Do not hide or over decorate the special features of your home. If you have a fireplace, maybe put garland along the top with lights, but do not put decorations in the front.
3. Keep walkways clear of presents and decorations so as to not cause trip hazards.
4. On the tables you can bring in the outdoors by using pine cones, holly, candles and fresh fruit.
5. Use ample amounts of the color red, it is an emotionally appealing color.
6. Keep the outdoor lighting at a minimum. Give your rooftop Santa and Reindeer the year off.
7. Do not display religious items as this could be a turn off to buyers who do not share your family’s faith.

Keeping things simple and understated is the way to go; it will bring people in without overwhelming them. You should use decorations to highlight your home’s best features. You have your home on the market and the desire to sell soon, if you keep the amount of holiday decorations to a minimum it will be easier to move when the time comes.

Michael Mooneyham is a licensed realtor for The Salem Team at Keller Williams

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