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# State Of The City Address March 27 • Shop Local

## THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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Volume 8, Issue 6, March 20, 2012

## Sidewalks And Parks Cause Division

Council President Brian Powers called the March 5, 2012 Council Meeting to order at 7:33P.M. He then read a communication from the Committee of the Whole summarizing the topics they discussed. Among them was the issue of a Workmen's Compensation case that was about to go to trial. Council approved allowing the Law Director to offer up to \$10,000 dollars to try and settle the case.

Next Councilman Powers (At-Large) asked for a motion to have the Clerk read through seven items on the agenda at once so that they might be acted upon with a single vote. The motion was approved and the Clerk read the items. The seven

by Christopher Bindel

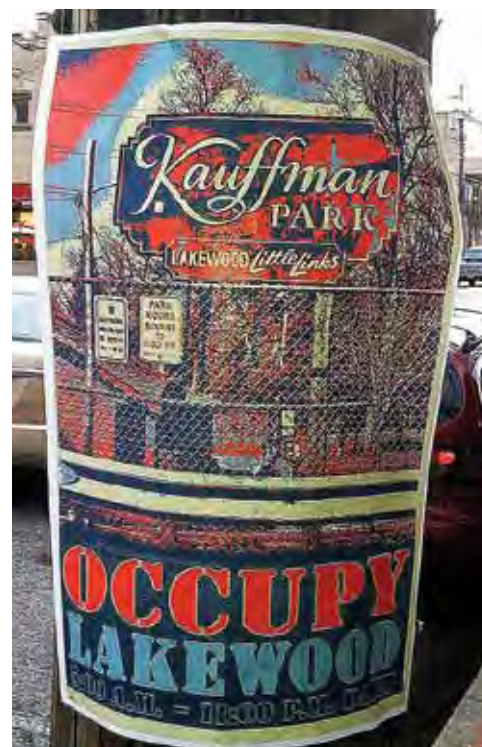
items were ordinances allowing the City to contract and spend funds for specific programs. For some of the items, contract authority was being asked for, these included street signs and traffic signals, building and

facility improvements, water system replacement program, C.D.B.G. fund infrastructure improvements and sidewalk improvements. All the items were on their final reading, and therefore could be passed at this

meeting.

Before voting to pass the items, Councilman Shawn Juris (Ward III) asked if he could have some clarification from the Mayor and the Directors over the contracting authority and overall intent for the sidewalk improvements. Powers allowed it, but reminded everyone on Council that the items

continued on page 3



## Soul Food: A Fun Time Addresses A Serious Problem

by Jason Weiner

According to information recently released by Cuyahoga County, the number of Lakewood residents taking advantage of food assistance programs has increased 83% over the past seven years.

In terms of real numbers, this means that 4,721 people accessed food stamps in January 2005; in January 2012, that number increased to 8,631. In the County's suburban communities, the numbers are even more dramatic: a 98%

increase over the same period of time. Compare this to an increase of 36% over the same period of time in the city of Cleveland itself, a place where the widespread effects of unemployment and poverty took hold on a broader scale long ago.

Communities once thought immune from hunger and the need for social support are now seeing drastic increases in the number of people accessing these services: Bay Village, Orange, Westlake, Pepper Pike, Beachwood. If the way the numbers of people accessing food assistance programs has grown in our County is an indicator of anything, it is that none of us are immune to the ravages of a tough economy. At some level, we are all just a medical emergency or some other unexpected household expense away from needing some kind of extra support ourselves.

Let's do away with the stereotype that those needing hunger assistance in our community are simply those who are lazy, mentally ill, or somehow not trying hard enough. While there's no doubt that

rience. A championship was won! The Harding girls' 7th grade basketball team walked

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## Harding Team Caps Perfect Season With Championship



The champion 7th grade Harding girls' basketball team: (Front from left) Ryann Greenfield, Trinity Nall, Emma Ribar, Taylor Strnad, Hannah Posedel; (Back, from left) Maya Nabakowski, Coach Steve Argento, Ruthie Hendrikson, Sophia Mack, Courtney Moran, Addison Soukop and Jane Mechenbier

by Rodgers Gerhardt,  
Harding Middle School  
Athletic Director

On March 15, something happened that few get to expe-

## Breakfast With The Bunny

By Emmie Hutchison

On March 31, the City of Lakewood's H2O (Help to Others) program will transform the Women's Pavilion at Lakewood

Park into a seasonal, Spring-time wonderland and serve a breakfast featuring pancakes, sausage, fruit, and beverages with the Easter Bunny!

Keepsake photos with the Bunny will be available for \$5 – or you can pose with the Bunny for free if you bring your own camera. Raffle tickets will be sold for the opportunity to win themed gift baskets donated from local businesses.

This popular, often sold-continued on page 5



## Responsible Hen Raising In Lakewood

by April Stoltz

Can hens be raised responsibly in a Lakewood backyard? That is the topic of the public forum being con-hosted by LEAF and Hens in Lakewood. The forum is scheduled for Monday, March 26 at 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. and will be held at the Lakewood Public Library, Detroit Ave. branch, in the main auditorium.

This is an excellent opportunity for both Lakewood residents and elected officials to learn about the national movement of suburban hen-raising, Lakewood's proposed pilot project and how this is a fit with Lakewood's successful local food landscape. There will be time for questions and answers. Residents with



Backyard chicken coop.

thoughts and concerns are encouraged to come, ask and get factual information. On hand will be varying experts from the OSU extension, realtors, hen-keepers and local food advocates.

The idea of keeping backyard hens for eggs is rapidly becoming the norm of the 21st century American city. 92% of major American cit-

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Calendar Page

**Thursday, March 22**  
**Lakewood Family Collaborative March**  
**Spotlight: Domestic Violence & Child**  
**Advocacy Center**  
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Attending a meeting of the Lakewood Family Collaborative is a great way to intermingle with other like-minded professionals and to discuss important issues facing our community. All are welcome to attend our free meetings.  
**Women's Pavilion**  
**at Lakewood Park (Belle/Lake Ave.)**

**Herbal Medicine Class**  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

This popular class is appropriate for anyone interested in treating themselves, family, neighbors and friends through natural, safe methods.  
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**Health and Balance Institute**  
**Located inside Holistic Lakewood**  
**15217 Madison Ave.**

**Friday, March 23**  
**The Velocity of Autumn**  
**Starring Dorothy Silver**  
8:00 PM

The grand dame of Cleveland theater, Dorothy Silver returns to Beck Center to portray Lillian, an elderly woman with a wicked sense of humor, in this regional premiere of Coble's brilliant new script. Despite her children's attempts to move her into a retirement home, this aging artist is determined to spend her final years in her Brooklyn brownstone. Her estranged son, Tom, is forced back into her life after years of separation when Lillian threatens to burn down her home. A delicate tale that walks a



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MAY 5TH

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

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*Bringing Lakewood home-related resources and businesses together to serve the needs of Lakewood homes and the residents who care for them.*

**Location: Harding Middle School, Lakewood, Ohio**

tightrope between sadness and joy, fear and hope, and love and frustration. Lillian's story is vivid with brilliant imagery, affectionate humor, and a touching relationship that you won't soon forget. (No performances April 6-8)  
**Beck Center for the Arts**  
**Mackey Main Stage**  
**17801 Detroit Avenue**

**Saturday, March 24**  
**The 3D ART Show!**  
6:00 PM - 10:00 PM  
The 3D ART Show! at Breakneck Gallery is an art show like no other! (that we know of at least) The show will feature over 15 Local artists work ranging from paintings, photography, sculpture and more, and all in 3D! In this show we are looking to push the limits of the 3D effect. Artists will be using either the

traditional Anaglyphic 3D (red and blue lens) and/or ChromaDepth 3D glasses to create their work. Glasses will be provided for viewing at the show and will be available for purchase at the gallery for \$1 for a set of both the Chromadepth and Anaglyphic.  
As a special bonus DummArt.com will be giving away 100 free 3D art pins at the opening reception. As always there will be drinks, food, fun, and of course ART!  
21+ After party next door at Mullens on Madison 17014 Madison Ave., Lakewood  
**Breakneck Gallery, 17020 Madison Ave.**  
**216-767-5610**

**Thursday, March 29**  
**What Bikeability Means For Your Business**  
7:30 PM  
The Lakewood Chamber of Commerce Education Task Force presents "What Bikeability Means For

Your Business". The City of Lakewood's bike master plan is approved and set for 2012 implementation. What does this mean for your business? Join Lakewood stakeholders as we discuss details of the plan, emerging opportunities, and bike-friendly initiatives already adopted by businesses in the community. Participate and help us develop one of the most bicycle-friendly communities in the country by 2015.  
This meeting is free and open to the public.  
**Beck Center for the Arts**  
**17801 Detroit Avenue, Lakewood**

**Saturday, March 31**  
**Breakfast with the Bunny**  
8:30 AM - 1:15 PM  
The City of Lakewood's H2O (Help to Others) Organization presents Breakfast with the Bunny. Available seating times: 8:30am, 9:45am, 11:00am, and 12:15pm  
Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. Kids can also get a picture taken with the Easter Bunny for \$5.  
Reservation deadline is March 28th.  
Please visit <http://www.thelakewoodfoundation.org/H2O/bunnybreakfast.html> to order tickets online For more information, call 216/214-1740 or email [h2oLakewood@gmail.com](mailto:h2oLakewood@gmail.com)  
**Lakewood Women's Pavilion at Lakewood Park**  
**14532 Lake Ave, Lakewood, OH 44107**

**Cruise Around The World Wings Auction**  
**2012: An International Celebration**  
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Tuesday, March 6

Tuesday, April 17

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# Lakewood City News

## Sidewalks And Parks Cause Division

**continued from page 1**  
before them had already been recommended for passage.

Mayor Mike Summers was the first one to respond to Councilman Juris’ question. He said that further discussion is still needed for developing any plan for sidewalks. Part of the reason for this is because there is no money in the budget this year for sidewalk repair and maintenance. Therefore developing a sidewalk plan requires working with residents and helping them figure out the most economical way for them to replace or maintain their sidewalks themselves. Also they are still looking at the best way to identify sidewalks that need repair, not sure if they should pair it up with the housing inspections or separate sidewalk inspections.

Councilman Juris followed up saying that without a plan it is difficult to make an educated decision on whether to approve the contracting authority. Without money in the budget for sidewalks, and no plan for sidewalks Juris seemed hesitant to vote for the matter. He asked the Mayor, to better understand, what the impact would be if the item did not pass.

Finance Director, Jennifer Pae, responded saying that the item before them is contracting authority for up to \$100,000 dollars that can be spent on sidewalk repairs. This is not saying the City will spend that much on sidewalks, but simply, if there is money available from other sources, for instance some left over from streets, like there was this last year, that that money can be used toward sidewalk repairs. These repairs would be done on sidewalks around city property, such as around a park or fire station. She also stated that without the passage of this contracting authority

legislation, if there was money available later in the year, the City would not be able to repair any sidewalks.

Councilman Tom Bullock (Ward II) then chimed in saying that he appreciated both the Mayor and Director Pae’s responses, however said that he would not be voting for the ordinance. He said that without a clear plan upfront he did not feel comfortable voting to expend additional funds. He continued saying that if there were any additional funds left over from streets he would like to see them spent on the streets.

Councilwoman Mary Louise Madigan (Ward IV) responded to Councilman Bullock restating that this is contracting authority only. This simply means that if the money becomes available they can use it, and since there isn’t money in the budget for sidewalks, that this authority needs to be kept so they can get some sidewalks done if they can. She continued saying that this is the way it has been done for the last couple of years, successfully. Lastly she said that these topics were discussed in the Finance Committee, which all members of Council are a part of, and said that the community was welcome to attend. She also said that she is sorry that Councilman Bullock’s issues with the sidewalk plan have not been resolved, because she believes every member of the Administration has tried to do so.

Bullock said that until the issues are resolved he doesn’t want to support an ordinance that wouldn’t get them resolved. He said that by passing this ordinance the Council is in effect signing off on their approval before they have any idea of what they are approving. He said that if it comes to the point

where there is money available that can be used for this, he wants to be part of the conversation regarding how it should be spent at that time.

The Mayor responded to Bullock saying that he understands the dissenting position, and respects him for it. In fact the Mayor said he even shares some of the same sentiments. He continued saying that even if they pass it at that meeting nothing would really happen until late fall. Therefore if Council would like to continue to work with the Administration to come up with a working plan he said he was open to that.

Councilman Juris made a final comment saying that he wanted to make it clear that if they did vote down the contracting authority, Council isn’t in any way being critical of the Public Works Department, the Mayor or the Administration, they are just making it clear that they are looking to continue the conversation. He said that once it is made clear what the plan is he would look forward to seeing the topic return to Council.

Councilman Powers then made the point that part of the reason they do it this way is so that if there is something that comes up that needs to be done in an expedited fashion, whether it's due to sudden damage or unexpected funds acquired, already passing this allows the City to act without having to wait for an action of Council which could take weeks.

The Mayor responded to these concerns by making the suggestion that Council could lower the contracting amount to perhaps \$10,000 dollars which would allow them to handle any potential emergency, but would also give them time to establish a strategy that they could later revisit with Council for expanded contracting authority.

After a few more closing words it was decided that Council would defer the matter of the contracting authority for the sidewalks until they could discuss it further in the Finance Committee. The other six items however were passed.

Next, Councilman Ryan Nowlin (At-Large) read a report from the Public Safety Committee regarding two ordinances. The first was an update to the pitbull legislation passed a few years ago, making temporary exceptions to the ban for certain establishments. The second ordinance would change the closing times at Kauffman and Madison Parks to one hour past sunset, instead of 11 P.M. This would leave Lakewood Park the only park open to 11 P.M. After consideration the Committee recommended adoption of both ordinances.

Before voting, Councilman Bullock had a few comments about the parks closing ordinance. The first was to correct the spelling of Kauffman

**continued on page 4**

## New Ordinance Hopes To Make Lakewood Parks Safer

by Gloria Eadeh

A new ordinance set forth by Lakewood City Council will close Kauffman and Madison parks one hour after sunset.

Director of Public Works, Joe Beno, said the new hours will be beneficial to the community.

“We can’t always be there to monitor the parks. There are no gates there, so we will not be locking it. If you walk your dog through or if you need to cut through the park that’s fine,” he said.

Beno said he has only heard from a few disgruntled citizens about the new measure.

“I haven’t heard more one way or the other. But I can understand a little bit from people that are upset,” said Beno.

Ward 1 Councilman David Anderson, the only opposing vote against the ordinance, said closing the parks early will not deter vandalism.

“I appreciate the effort, but this isn’t about safety, they are plenty safe,” said Anderson. “Vandalism takes place when few people are there. By closing early we are giving them more time to

enter and do damage to the parks.”

Lakewood park is a sprawling 34 acres and Kauffman Park and Madison Park are 17 acres and seven acres respectively. However, Lakewood Police Chief, Timothy Malley, says Lakewood Park is easier to access for police.

“Lakewood Park has a more accessible driveway,” said Malley. “We will enforce any ordinance the city council puts on the books.”

Malley says closing the parks early probably will not be a problem for families.

“Usually when it is dark families take their kids home. Those there after dark are congregating and not using the park for its intended purpose,” said Malley.

Recreational leagues will still be able to use the parks after hours. The new ordinance allows for special events with the proper permit. Anderson and Beno say Lakewood Park closing early is unlikely to happen.

Those found in the park after closing can face a fine of up to \$240. Curfews for juveniles range from 9:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.



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# Lakewood City News

## Sidewalks And Parks Cause Division

continued from page 3

Park. Throughout the ordinance it had been spelled with only one ‘f.’ His second remark was that he was torn on what to do regarding this ordinance, as he feels that a presence in the parks would do more to prevent vandalism then closing them earlier. Because of this, he asked if the Director of Public works could give them periodic updates on vandalism in the parks after the changes go into effect. This way they will better understand the correlation between the two.

Councilman David Anderson (Ward I) said that the idea of closing parks to residents to help curtail vandalism is hard for him to accept. However he said he appreciated Councilman Bullock's idea and asked that it be considered. He would like to hear

from the patrolling officers regarding what they are seeing at the parks an hour after sunset just so that they can have a more complete picture. He said he was not going to support the ordinance, but appreciated the collaborated effort that they went through.

Councilman Juris said that he did not believe that this ordinance was intended to take the use of the parks away from citizens who are legitimately using them after dark. However he said he has yet to hear of a legitimate use of the parks after dark. He continued by saying that, rather than it being stated that Council is taking something away from citizens, he would like to hear what specifically it is that they are taking away.

Councilman Anderson responded that he also would like the answers to those questions, so they might better

## Responsible Hen Raising

continued from page 1

ies allow hen-keeping. The eggs from birds raised this way are both superior in taste and nutrition. Beyond the national movement to grow and raise our own food, many are turning to hen-keeping as a response to what agribusinesses are doing to our food supply. Raising backyard hens provides a steady source of quality fresh food for our families and neighbors.

**THE BACK STORY**

Hens in Lakewood with the support of LEAF felt the best way toward eventually changing the city's ordinance to allow hen-keeping would be a pilot project. The pilot project idea was presented to the Lakewood Animal Safety and Welfare Advisory Board. The animal board needed to know more and the result was an official pilot project proposal which was presented at their September meeting. The animal board voted to recommend to Mayor Summers that he provide exemptions to the three families participating in the pilot. The exemptions were necessary to allow them to own hens so the pilot could start. Mayor Summers verbally granted the exemptions in November. Some members of City Council proposed an ordinance change to take away the mayor's right to grant exemptions to anyone asking to keep an animal on the city's "no" list (unless it's for scientific,



World War 1 poster.

commercial or educational purposes). This proposed change was made law at Council's January 3rd meeting.

Now, in order to have a pilot project for hen-keeping, it will need to be voted on by City Council. LEAF and Hens in Lakewood believe a pilot project is a common sense approach to testing this idea out in our city. We decided that the next best step would be to host this public forum on Monday, March 26th. We believe that public dialogue and citizen activism are what makes this a great place to live. So, come to the forum and be part of the discussion. See you on the 26th!

understand the benefits and consequences to this potential change. He, however, felt that the half hour discussion they held in committee was not sufficient to fully vet all aspects of this matter.

Coming to the end of the discussion following the Public Safety report, Council voted on the two ordinances. The ordinance concerning temporary exceptions to the pitbull ban passed, with Councilwoman Monique Smith (At-Large) voting against it. The ordinance changing the closing times of the parks also passed, with Councilman Anderson voting against it.

Next, Law Director Kevin Butler asked Council to consider an ordinance that would change the law concerning intersections that do not allow right hand turns on red. As it stands right now, every intersection that falls under that category is listed in Lakewood's codified ordinances and can only be changed by an act of Council. This ordinance would change it so that the Director of Public Works would be able to make these decisions. The reason the change is being requested is because with schools and businesses changing, there are frequent changes in traffic patterns and it is hard to keep the intersections up-to-date every time something changes. This would allow the Director of Public Works a lot more ease in handling these changes. Director Butler made sure to reiterate that this would not change Council's authority over this jurisdiction.

Council referred the ordinance to

the Public Safety Committee for further discussion.

Fire Chief Gilman then asked Council to pass a resolution proclaiming the week of March 26-30th as Severe Weather Awareness week. This would allow the city to join the national effort to help educate people on proper behaviors and safety practices to exhibit during severe weather. It also gives the City a chance to test its emergency warning system.

**Council passed the resolution.**

The Director of Public Works, Joe Beno, then asked Council to pass a resolution that would allow the City to participate in the Cuyahoga County Enterprise Geographic Information System (GIS) Shared Services Feasibility Study application for the State of Ohio Local Government Innovation Fund. This would allow the City to apply for a grant, with the rest of the County, from the state, to conduct a study that will help the county see if the use of any shared services in the county would be beneficial. Lakewood's estimated cost of participation is \$1,015.30.

**Council passed the resolution.**

Coming to the end of the agenda items, and with no one from the public there with any comments, Council President Powers adjourned the meeting at 8:51 P.M.

**Council meetings are held every first and third Monday of the month at 7:30 P.M. in the City Hall Auditorium.**

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# Lakewood City News

## H2O Summer Service Camp 2012

by Emmie Hutchison

H2O, “Help to Others” is excited to announce that planning is under-way for the 18th year of Summer Service Camp. Middle school-aged kids who are Lakewood residents can apply to attend camp during one of its four two-week sessions. Campers are placed into small groups with a trained counselor. Each camper experiences a variety of service opportunities by going to a different site each day. Last year’s sites and agencies included Asian Services in Action, Migration and Refugee Services, Camp Can Do, Cleveland Foodbank, Crestmont North Nursing Facility, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Childcare facilities, H2O Clothing Drive, H2O LEAF garden, Lakewood Community Services Center, Lakewood Division of Aging,

Laura’s Home, Ronald McDonald House, and Lakewood Arts Festival Craft Day. The camp experience is enhanced by themes, speakers, games, and an over-all sense of belonging.

While the mission and structure of camp remains the same, there are a few changes in the registration process this year. First of all, the fee to attend camp has been raised from \$60.00 per camper for a two-week session to \$80.00 per session. The increased fee still does not reflect the true cost of the camp experience. The main expense of camp is the salaries of its seasonal staff, and it is greatly offset by H2O’s annual fundraising efforts. Without the annual giving campaign and the generous donors who respond to the request, H2O would have to charge much more for each registration. It is part of the

mission of camp to offer a low-cost experience so that it is available to families, regardless of income. With that in mind, we understand that the increased fee may be outside the range of affordability for some, so a portion of the fundraised dollars are reserved to offer partial financial assistance to campers. Financial arrangements can be made by calling the H2O office at 529-6045.

The popularity of Summer Service Camp has made it necessary to pool all the applications and draw through a lottery system to fill spots in the sessions. The change to the process this year is that the lottery will be drawn in 2 stages: 7-9th grade and then 6th grade if any spaces are left. There are two main reasons for this change: Some of the social service agencies at which we

volunteer have minimum age requirements, and Summer Service Camp benefits students the most as a continuous experience into high school. This change in process will allow more more of the older kids to experience camp.

Aside from these changes, all the other good stuff will be the same: Great staff, a variety of service learning opportunities, a fun theme, and a truly memorable two weeks of camp! Camp applications will be available on April 2nd online (<http://onelakewood.com/HumanServices/Youth/H2O/>), at Lakewood Public Libraries, and at the Lakewood Recreation Department. Camp applications are due by 5:00 p.m. Friday, April 27th, and notifications will be sent home by May 7th regarding camp placements.

## Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center Addresses Lakewood Family Collaborative

by Amy Thacker

On Thursday, March 22 at 1:00 p.m. in the Lakewood Women’s Pavilion, Kathleen Vogtsberger of the The Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center (DVCAC) in Cleveland will be addressing the Lakewood Family Collaborative about DVCAC’s new program for teen and young adult victims of intimate partner violence. Last year, DVCAC was awarded a grant from the Office on Violence Against Women to provide intervention services to victims ages 13 to 24-years-old. This grant was made available in-part because of Ohio’s House Bill 10.

The law, which went into effect in 2010, is named after Shynerra Grant, a victim of an abusive teen relationship. Grant was unable to receive a protection order because there was no law granting juveniles Civil Protection Orders at that time. In 2005, Grant was fatally shot by her ex-boyfriend, Antonio Rodgers. Her mother, Cheryl Rucker, along with Cleveland’s Johanna Orozco, worked at the state level to get House Bill 10 passed.

House Bill 10 allows juvenile victims to obtain Juvenile Civil Protection Orders (JCPO) at the Juvenile Court in the jurisdiction where the abuse occurred. Juvenile victims can file a JCPO petition independently; however,

parents, guardians, adult family members, or any person the Juvenile Court determines as appropriate, may file a JCPO on the juvenile victim’s behalf. A JCPO petition must include an allegation of a juvenile perpetrating certain behaviors including assault, stalking, sexually-oriented offenses, threats to harm or aggravated trespassing.

Cleveland’s DVCAC is a place for victims and survivors to seek support and assistance in areas ranging from protection-order assistance, to confidential support groups, individual counseling, and advocacy at police stations, hospitals, and schools. Moreover, all services are free of charge. DVCAC also operates a 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline, 216-391-HELP and a 24 Hour Family Helpline, 216-229-8800.

This presentation is part of the Lakewood Family Collaborative’s monthly Spotlight series held at 1:00 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of every month at Lakewood Park’s Women’s Pavilion. Attendees include residents, business owners, and area groups concerned with helping families become successful members of the Lakewood community. All meetings are free and open to the public.

Amy Thacker is the PR representative for the Lakewood Family Collaborative.

## Breakfast With The Bunny

continued from page 1

out fundraiser event helps to support H2O – a program that promotes community service among high school and middle school students, and provides assistance and support at more than 90 community events each year. Money raised will help with the cost of H2O’s summer camp and year-round activities. This year, First Federal of Lakewood is generously sponsoring

Breakfast with the Bunny, allowing more of the funds raised at the event to directly support H2O’s programming.

There will be four seatings with the Bunny: 8:30am-9:30am, 9:45am-10:45am, 11:00am-12:00 noon, and 12:15pm-1:15pm. Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. Tickets can be purchased online at <http://www.thelakewoodfoundation.org/H2O/bunnybreakfast.html> Deadline for reservations is March 28.

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# Lakewood Public Library Events

compiled by Leana Donofrio-Milovan

## March 20

### Knit and Lit

#### Daughter of Fortune by Isabel Allende

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](http://www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/bookclubs) for a complete list of the books being considered and find out which title you should read for the next discussion.

Tuesday, March 20 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Meeting Room

## March 22

### Introduction to Ancestry: Library Edition

The Ancestry genealogy resource is free to use every day at the Library. How far back would you like to trace your family tree? Genealogist Deborah Abbott will show you how to unlock the secrets held by census reports, military records, birth certificates and death notices in this hands-on workshop. Unravel your history with professional results.

Space is limited. Call 226-8275, ext. 127 to register

Thursday, March 22 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Learning Lab

## March 24

### Five Star Films

#### Chariots of Fire (1981), Directed by Hugh Hudson, Rated PG

During the 1924 Olympic Games in France, English university student Ben Cross and Scottish missionary Ian Charleson compete for England. The Scotsman runs for the glory of God. The Cambridge man runs against prejudice. Both athletes have trained to the maximum. A world-class American team is their biggest threat.

Saturday, March 24 at 6:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

March 25  
Sunday with the Friends: RW Magic's Afternoon of Amazement  
Presto! The master is back with astonishing feats of modern wonderment—and a few tricks from the old school. This time the magic will happen in the audience's very hands so that they can feel what they can't quite believe.  
Sunday, March 25 at 2:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

## March 27

### Meet the Author

#### Be the Miracle: 50 Lessons for Making the Impossible

##### Possible by Regina Brett

Have you ever wanted to see a miracle? What are you waiting for? You can be a miracle simply by believing that change is possible and making a difference in the world around you.

The Plain Dealer's Regina Brett challenges readers with a collection of inspirational essays drawn from her own life experience and from the people she has met in her 24 years as a journalist. Each chapter is a lesson that can stand alone, but when read together, they form a handbook for seeing the miracle of change everywhere. With upbeat observations and compelling wisdom, this book will help you accept and embrace yourself, and better serve others in your home, community or workplace—maybe the whole world! Books will be available for sale and signing at the event.

Tuesday, March 27 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

## March 31

### Art House Cinema

#### Niagara, Niagara (1997), Directed by Bob Gosse, Rated R

Seth and Marcy are loners. He's plagued by an abusive father. She suffers from Tourette's syndrome. An escape to the promised land of Canada quickly spirals out of control. Can a bond built out of loneliness survive their personal demons? This movie earned Robin Tunney a best actress award at the Venice Film Festival, but unfortunately never made it to DVD in the States. With the director's permission, we proudly present the first digital transfer.

Saturday, March 31 at 6:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

## April 1

### Sunday with the Friends: The Smokin' Fez Monkeys

No Joke! This modern jug band, with old-fashioned ideas about having fun, seeks to do for our concert series what the Wiernmobile did for the auto. But don't let the laughs fool you. They really know their way around a whole grab bag of instruments and will play their hearts out for you if you just stamp your feet.

Sunday, April 1 at 2:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

## April 2

### Health and Wealth:

#### Power Living: Power Getting

Do you have problems getting what you want or need from others? Do you wish you had more love in your life? Are you looking to bring more joy to the world around you? Are tender emotional wounds getting in the way of the life you want to live? Dr. River Smith, a local psychologist and the author of A Conspiracy to Love: Living a Life of Joy, Generosity & Power, introduces powerful techniques designed to put you back into control

Monday, April 2 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

## April 3

### Poetry Month

#### The Life and Works of Hart Crane: From Garrettsville to Brooklyn and Beyond

The life of Hart Crane was tragically short, but his impact on the world of poetry was large and the list of those he has influenced is long. Tim Tavcar, the artistic director of WordStage invites you to contemplate the legacy of this buckeye-born literary giant through poems, letters and the music of his time. Inspired by the epic achievement of T.S. Eliot's The Wasteland, yet also repulsed by its ironic despair, Crane challenged himself to articulate, "a mystic synthesis of America" that celebrated the possibility of life. Sometimes disturbing and often transporting, his body of verse emphasizes the strange beauty and innate spirituality of the modern world as he saw it at the dawn of the 20th century.

Tuesday, April 3 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

## April 7

### Western Cinema

#### Stagecoach (1939), Directed by John Ford

Once critics had finally declared the western dead for good, John Ford led a caravan of cameras and crew into Utah's Monument Valley to breathe new life into his favorite genre. Nine characters from all classes of society—and from both sides of the law—find themselves confined and in danger as they cross through red-rock country on the Stagecoach to Lordsburg.

Saturday, April 7 at 6:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

# Children/Youth Events

compiled by Arlie Matera

## Wednesdays, March 21 - May 9

### It's All Greek to Me - For youth in fifth through eighth grade

The Iliad, The Odyssey, Percy Jackson and the Olympians... All fail to capture the adventure in this role-playing program of mythic proportions. If you feel brave enough to register, please setop in or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 140.

Wednesdays, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room.

## Saturday, March 24

### Vibrant Wind Dancers - For the whole family

Join us for an evening of Middle Eastern style and interpretive dance especially designed for boys and girls. The Vibrant Wind Dancers will perform to music by Raffi, the Chenille Sisters, and more. All children will be invited to come up and dance the final song.

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

## Saturdays, March 24 and March 31

### Teen Lit Circle: Hunger Games - For teens ages 13 - 18

Read the Hunger Games series? Have thoughts about the story? Questions? Opinions? We want to hear them! Join us for a peer-driven literature circle where you are the key to guiding the discussion. To register, please stop in or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 140.

3:00 - 4:00 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room.

## 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](http://www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/youth)) for times and upcoming themes.


Main Library Activity Room and Madison Branch Auditorium

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# Lakewood Public Library

## Tail Waggin' Tutors

by Stephanie Schuerger-Fries

Does your school-age child love dogs? Do they like to read, or need time to practice reading? There is a monthly opportunity at the Lakewood Public Library that helps kids bone up on their reading skills by reading to a therapy dog. The dogs and their owners have been certified through Therapy Dogs International. Not only is this a chance for your child to practice their reading out loud, but it is a chance for the friendly canines to practice their listening!

There is no registration required. Simply bring a student by the Multipurpose Room in the Children and Youth Service's Department and select from a collection of books the library staff has assembled, or students may bring their own book. Then the student can

snuggle up and read to a therapy dog one-on-one. There are always a few dogs waiting to hear a story, so drop in at any time! The dogs will be happy to see you!

The Tail Waggin' Tutor sessions that are offered for this spring and summer include: Saturdays, April 14, May 12, June 9, July 14, and August 11 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Stay tuned for more dates to come in the near future! The program is specifically geared for students age 7 through 12, though younger students are welcome when accompanied by an adult. For questions or more information, please call (216) 226-8275 x140.

*Stephanie Schuerger-Fries is a Children's Library Assistant at the Lakewood Public Library and mom of Lakewood School students.*

## Spring Brings Budding Artists To The Library

by Nicka Petruccio

It's time again for young artists to fire up their creativity at the Lakewood Public Library. This spring marks the ninth season of Art Explosion, the Library's popular art program for students in the fifth through eighth grades. Plans are in the works to make Art Explosion's fifth year its biggest and best to date with exciting, unique projects, a guest appearance from local artists Glenn and Beth Gaewsky and of course, our fantastic art show finale. Both returning students and fresh faces have a lot to look forward to--painting, sculpture, illustration, assemblage and more are in store for our young artists this time around.

Art Explosion has had an intense and dedicated following since its inception, and is continually met with great enthusiasm by the students who participate and their parents as well. Their excitement is contagious, and many participants return season after season. What makes this program really unique is our approach to teaching art. We focus on art concepts and techniques, using examples from classical as

well as contemporary art, and strive to show how these foundational concepts can enhance and improve a student's artwork no matter what style they create in or what level of skill they have. We also reinforce the many directions that creativity can take. Young people with artistic inclinations have a world of options laid out for them. Our goal is to provide a positive and supportive art experience for every participant, and to show that even students who don't have strong drawing skills can manifest their own creative urges in many ways.

Do you have a young person in your life who is eager to learn about art, and make some of their own along the way?

Registration is open now for the spring session, which will begin on March 19th. Call the Lakewood Library Children & Youth Services Department to find out more! (216)226-8275 ext. 140.

*Nicka Petruccio is a librarian at the Lakewood Public Library in the Children & Youth Services Department.*



Children pet a Burmese Python at the Lakewood Public Library.

### Jungle Terry Entertains And Educates

by Marge Foley

Close to 200 people enjoyed the animals, energy, and enthusiasm of Jungle Terry during his recent Saturday evening performance at the Lakewood Public Library. The audience, young and old alike, had the opportunity to view and learn about some interesting creatures not usually found in Lakewood homes or backyards. Children in attendance were enthralled by the program and had the chance to touch most of the critters.

## Meet The Author: Regina Brett

by Leana Donofrio-Milovan

Have you ever wanted to see a miracle? What are you waiting for? You can be a miracle simply by believing that change is possible and making a difference in the world around you. The Plain Dealer's Regina Brett challenges readers with a collection of inspirational essays drawn from her own life experience and from the people she has met in her 24 years as a journalist.

Meet Brett at Lakewood Public Library at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 27.

"Growing old beats the alternative – dying young. That's one of my life lessons. People have sent my lessons across the globe. That's why I turned them into books, first, 'God Never Blinks: 50 Lessons for Life's Little Detours,' and now, 'Be the Miracle: 50 Lessons for Making the Impossible Possible,'" Brett said. "The lessons reflect what I learned from life as a single parent for 18 years, struggling to find the right partner in life, battling breast cancer and healing the bruises from a bumpy childhood. And they reflect what I've learned from readers as my 27 years as a journalist."

Each chapter is a lesson that can stand alone, but when read together, they form a handbook for seeing the miracle of change everywhere. With



Regina Brett

upbeat observations and compelling wisdom, this book will help you accept and embrace yourself, and better serve others in your home, community or workplace—maybe the whole world! Books will be available for sale and signing at the event.

This free event will be held in the Lakewood Public Library Main Auditorium at 15425 Detroit Avenue. Visit [lakewoodpubliclibrary.com/literary](http://lakewoodpubliclibrary.com/literary) for more events. No registration is needed. Call (216) 226-8275 ext. 127 for more information.

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# Lakewood Schools



Junior Chelsea Polk and sophomore Danny Toner will perform with the All-National Honor Orchestra in Washington, D.C., in June.

## Two LHS Musicians Selected For National Honor Orchestra

by Christine Gordillo

Lakewood High school student musicians Chelsea Polk and Danny Toner, both cellists, have been selected to perform with the National Association for Music Education’s All-National Honor Orchestra, which will perform in June at the Kennedy Performing Arts Center in Washington, D.C. They are among only 64 in the country chosen for the honor.

Polk, a junior, and Toner, a sophomore, will rehearse and perform with renowned conductors and some of the nation’s best high school musicians when they travel to Washington on June 21 for three days of rehearsals capped off with a performance on Sunday, June 24 as part of NAFME’s Music Education Week, which holds events throughout the week in the Baltimore-Washington area. The National Honor Orchestra will be joined in that performance by the National Honor Ensembles for Band, Mixed Choir and Jazz Band.

Sophomores, juniors and seniors from across the country were eligible to audition and had to submit two scales, two etudes and a one-minute solo excerpt. To have two students selected from the same section in a school orchestra is rare, said Lakewood

High School Orchestra Director Beth Hankins. Polk and Toner participated earlier in the year with the Ohio Music Education Association’s All-State Orchestra.

Both Polk and Toner said that “surprised” was their reaction when Hankins told them of their selection in to the prestigious ensemble. The opportunity to play with the best high school musicians in the country is what they are most excited about.

“You know you are going to be playing in an orchestra that is just top-notch,” Toner said.

Hankins said participation in the National Ensemble by two of her students will help raise the level of musicianship and standards with her other orchestra students as well.

“Danny and Chelsea’s acceptance is not only a tribute to them as musicians, but also to their parents, their private teachers, the Lakewood High School Orchestra program and the Lakewood community,” Hankins said. “Without our commitment to excellence in music and beyond, our students would not even have had the opportunity to apply. This is the results of hard work and high expectations... We are very proud!”

## Emerson And Volunteers A Perfect Match

by Christine Gordillo

The Lakewood City Schools are always looking to get the community at large more involved with the schools. When Emerson Elementary principal Peg Seibel asked her new Parent Resource Coordinator, Tara Shirley, to think about how she could get more community members working with the school, Shirley turned to the Barton Center for assistance.

Shirley thought the senior center would be a good place to find some volunteers that had time on their hands and plenty of wisdom and knowledge to share with the students. Shirley was right.

A group of six women residents from the Westerly apartments has been helping out Emerson teachers once a week since January. By all accounts on both the teachers’ and volunteers’ part, it has been a great success.

“The teachers are just thrilled,” said Shirley. “They (the volunteers) bring so much experience and history and richness to share with the children. They are a very dedicated group and very committed to their responsibility.” The volunteers’ backgrounds range from a retired English teacher to a motivational speaker.

All the women agreed that the experience has been beneficial and has fulfilled their wish to spend more time with young people and be more involved with the community.

“I just love the kids,” said Linda Strizzi. “I would not trade this experience for anything...the teachers really make you feel part of the team.”

The volunteers arrange their



Emerson volunteer Helen Slaninka is happy to spend some time each week with students such as Nathan Johnson and Zina Jalabi.

schedules individually with their assigned teacher and help with a variety of activities such as reading skills, word skills and spelling. Currently teachers in Kindergarten, 2nd and 5th grades are participating.

The only downside that anyone sees with the program is a function of its success so far: volunteers want more time with the students and more teachers want volunteers.

All have noticed how positively the students respond to spending time with the senior women. “They seem to gravitate toward us,” Strizzi said.

The volunteers also commented on what a great job the teachers at Emerson are doing. “The kids are happy, positive and respectful,” said volunteer Barbara Helms.

## Garfield Club Growing Interest In Hair Donation


Garfield Middle School’s Hair Because We Care club is looking for volunteers to participate in its annual hair donation event held in June. Club members have been growing their hair all year in hopes of donating their tresses to Locks of Love, a nonprofit which makes wigs out of the donated hair for cancer patients.

This year’s donation event is generously hosted by Revelations Salon & Spa, 15620 Detroit Ave. and will take place on June 6 from 3-4 p.m. Revelations stylists will be donating their time to give participants their new cut. If you are interested in being part of the Hair Because We Care club’s event, contact teachers Alina Sandoval, [alina.sandoval@lakewood.k12.oh.us](mailto:alina.sandoval@lakewood.k12.oh.us) or Liz Street at [Elizabeth.street@lakewood.k12.oh.us](mailto:Elizabeth.street@lakewood.k12.oh.us).

## Community Leader’s Breakfast



Once again a packed house for the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce’s Community Leaders Breakfast. This year’s topic was about the new ways children are learning in Lakewood Public Schools. The guest speakers were: Matt Shields, 4th Grade Teacher, Emerson, Pam Thompson, Language Arts Teacher, Garfield, and Sean Wheeler, English Teacher, Lakewood High. The wonderful breakfast was prepared by Ranger Catering. Stop by and try the Ranger Café today!



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# Lakewood Schools

## Middle School Athletes' GPAs Show They Are Students First

By Harry Manos and Rodgers Gerhardt

The following is information regarding the academic accomplishments of our winter student-athletes at both Garfield and Harding middle schools. The two schools had a total of 109 student-athletes this winter. This covers 7th/8th grade boys and girls basketball, 7th/8th grade basketball cheerleading, and 7th/8th grade wrestling. If you attended one of our events, you know our student-athletes represent Lakewood Garfield and Lakewood Harding in the gym with enthusiasm, pride and hard work, but they also did well in the classroom. Often times many forget that our athletes are students first and must perform on the court, mat or field and in the classroom, a quality that deserves recognition and respect.

The 7th grade Garfield girls' basketball team had a team cumulative GPA of 3.62

The 8th grade Harding girls' basketball team had a team cumulative GPA of 3.55

The 7th/8th grade Garfield basketball cheerleading squad had a team cumulative GPA of 3.38

The 7th grade Harding girls' basketball team had a team cumulative GPA of 3.38

The 8th grade Garfield girls' basketball team had a team cumulative GPA of 3.26

The 8th grade Garfield boys' bas-

ketball team had a team cumulative GPA of 3.21

The 7th grade Garfield boys' basketball team had a team cumulative GPA of 3.03

The 7th grade Harding boys' basketball team had a team cumulative GPA of 2.89

The 7th/8th grade Harding basketball cheerleading squad had a team cumulative GPA of 2.88

The 7th/8th grade Lakewood middle school wrestling team had a team cumulative GPA of 2.72

The 8th grade Harding boys' bas-

ketball team had a team cumulative GPA of 2.41

As a group, the overall combined GPAs of all Garfield and Harding winter student-athletes was 3.12.

Of the 109 Garfield and Harding winter student-athletes, 15 received Distinguished Honor Roll (perfect 4.00 GPA), 25 received Honor Roll (GPA of 3.5-3.99), and 23 received Merit Roll (GPA of 3.00-3.49) bringing us to a total of 63 of the 109 (58%) Garfield and Harding winter student-athletes receiving some form of recognition.

The student-athletes at Garfield

and Harding should be commended for their hard work in the classroom. So much of the attention gets placed on their won/loss record and not enough attention gets placed on the fact that they are students first, athletes second. These particular student-athletes have budgeted their time well between practice, games, and school work. Congratulations to them.

*Harry Manos (Garfield) and Rodgers Gerhardt (Harding) are the Lakewood City Schools' middle school athletic directors.*

## Harding Team Caps Perfect Season With Championship

continued from page 1

into Bay Village Middle School and took on the tough 16-2 Eagles team from Avon.

From the warm-ups you could tell this was going to be a special contest. The intensity of the event was already showing. The gym was packed and loud as the girls were introduced. The Rangers took an early lead. Playing the aggressive full-court defense that they are now known for, Harding got several steals that led to easy lay-ups.

Following the half-time break, the Eagles started executing their strategy of getting the ball inside.

The game became a battle. Avon brought the score to within 6 points. But like they have done all season, the Rangers kept their composure, stepped up their attack and pulled further ahead.

As the crowd started to count down the final seconds, everyone in the gym knew that they were witnessing a special moment. At game's end, the scoreboard read: Lakewood 38 - Avon 28. The Rangers not only brought home a championship, but they concluded the PERFECT SEASON! They ended their season never experiencing a loss. A record of 19-0.

Having notable performances in the game were Ryann Greenfield

with 23 points, Emma Ribar with 8 and Trinity Nall who dropped in 4 and had several steals. But for a team to win every game, every player on the team must contribute and play a huge role during the season. Here are the girls who also were part of this incredible season: Ruthie Henrikson, Sophia Mack, Courtney Moran, Jane Mechenbier, Maya Nabakowski, Hannah Posedel, Addison Soukop and Taylor Strnad.

Coach Steve Argento later said, "I couldn't be prouder of this group of girls for their accomplishments this season, they made Harding history."



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## Lakewood Is Art. ©2005

# LHS Students' Work To Hang In Governor's Youth Art Exhibit

by Christine Gordillo

Five Lakewood High students have had their artwork selected to be part of the prestigious Ohio Governor's Youth Art Exhibition. Dedicated to the educational and artistic advancement of our talented young people in the state of Ohio, the exhibition is open to all of Ohio's 1,112 high schools, both public and private, chartered by the State of Ohio Department of Education.

The five students whose art was chosen to be one of the 350 pieces out of 12,000 entries submitted to be on display in Columbus are Brenna Dobos (painting), Nicole Matthews (two photographs), Kelly McKee (painting), Bram Myers (drawing), and Elizabeth Taucher (video).

"This is a major honor for our art students at LHS," said art teacher Amy Sedlak.

The process of selecting artworks for the state exhibition begins with 15 regional judgments. This year Lakewood High had 15 pieces by 10 students win at the regional level and advance to state competition. Those students are Jessica Balmer, Montaque Cockrell,



Senior Brenna Dobos' self portrait will be one of six pieces from LHS students to be on display in Columbus.

Lis Demmitt, Brenna Dobos, Nathan Manthey, Nicole Matthews, Kelly McKee, Bram Myers, Kaitlin Stanaitis and David Torrence.

Judges for the state level competition are chosen from all over the

country and are generally professional artists, college level instructors, or both. From the 12,000 regional entries from the 15 regions, approximately 2,500 are selected to enter the state judging. State jurors then select 300

for the actual exhibition, with 25 of the 300 chosen to receive the Governor's Award of Excellence. Those chosen for exhibition at the state level are eligible for scholarships offered by more than 30 universities and colleges of art.

The exhibition opens at the James A. Rhodes State Office Tower, across from the State Capitol, in April, and closes at the end of May.



Senior Bram Myers' thumbprint self portrait will also be part of the exhibit.

## Earn High School Credit At Beck Center!

by Fran Storch

Beck Center for the Arts is proud to partner with Lakewood High School to offer exciting summer camps for high school credit through the Credit Flex program. Beck Center's popular Acting Camp, Improv Camp and Musical Theater Camp for students ages 13 to 19 are eligible for credit. A fourth camp "Poetry Slam," is currently being developed.

Credit Flexibility is a relatively new program adopted by the Ohio Board of Education which allows school districts to offer alternative options for students to accumulate high school credit outside of the traditional classroom setting and curriculum. Students can customize their learning through increased opportunities for real-world experiences that relate to their interests and career aspirations.



Teens play an improv game at Beck Center summer camp.

Ohio's plan for credit flexibility is designed to broaden the scope of curricular options available to students,

increase the depth of study possible for a particular subject, and allow tailoring of learning time and/or con-

ditions. Beck Center's collaboration with Lakewood High School offers students the opportunity to pursue more educational opportunities in music and the arts.

Details about Credit Flex opportunities at Beck Center will soon be available online at [beckcenter.org](http://beckcenter.org) and included in the LHS summer school course brochure. For more information, contact Beck Center's director of education, Ed Gallagher at [egallagher@beckcenter.org](mailto:egallagher@beckcenter.org).

Located at 17801 Detroit Avenue in Lakewood, Beck Center for the Arts is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization that offers professional theater productions, arts education programming in dance, music, theater, visual arts, early childhood, and creative arts therapies for special needs students, and gallery exhibits featuring regional artists.

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Lakewood Cares

Junk 2 Funk Charity Event To Benefit NCHM

by Elizabeth O'Brien

Local Girl Gallery and stART Neo have joined forces to bring back Junk-2Funk, the season's funkier event, featuring local artists' and designers' work created from repurposed materials, to benefit North Coast Health Ministry, the west side's free medical clinic for the low-income uninsured.

The event will take place on Friday, April 20 from 7 to 10 p.m. at Local Girl Gallery, 16106 Detroit Avenue. The evening will feature unique art, jewelry, sculpture, furniture and more created by northeast Ohio artists and designers. The evening will be highlighted by a live auction, Chinese raffles, wine, hors d'oeuvres and desserts from local res-



taurants and caterers, and organic, fair trade coffee from Coffee for a Cause.

"The evening is about the local creative community pulling together to help our neighbors going through some tough times," says Ruthie Koenigsmark, stART Neo president. "It's a great date night or a fun girls' night out and the opportunity to come home with some beautiful one-of-a-kind treasures."

Artists wishing to donate a piece to the benefit are asked to contact Ruthie Koenigsmark at 216-521-2894 or rkoenigsmark@yahoo.com. Many items from past events have been inspired by repurposed "found" items or created from recycled materials. Artists' pieces should be dropped off at Local Girl Gallery no later than April 16. Arrangements can also be made to have donations picked up at the artist's convenience.

Tickets are \$15 in advance or \$20

on the day of the event, and can be purchased online from North Coast Health Ministry at [www.nchealthministry.org/](http://www.nchealthministry.org/) events or by contacting Elizabeth O'Brien at 216-228-7878 ext. 114 or [eobrien@nchealthministry.org](mailto:eobrien@nchealthministry.org). The event has sold out in advance the past two years.

**About North Coast Health Ministry**

North Coast Health Ministry is a faith-based free clinic serving the low-income uninsured on Greater Cleveland West Side. In 2001, NCHM provided care to 2,700 patients who had no other route to health care. With the support of 120 volunteer physicians, nurses and other caregivers, NCHM is able to provide primary health care, specialty referrals, prescription assistance, behavioral health care and social service referrals to the medically underserved. NCHM strives to be the medical home for its patients providing preventive care and chronic disease management as well as care for acute illnesses and injuries. Founded in 1986, North Coast Health Ministry is a vital part of the health care safety net on Greater Cleveland's West Side. NCHM's primary location is at 16110 Detroit Avenue in Lakewood, Ohio.

"Friends From The Start" A Call For Volunteers

by Tom Jelep

I am very pleased to announce the establishment of a non-profit called "Friends From The Start" Foundation. Our objective will be to provide resources and services to individuals diagnosed with cancer.

On August 2, 2010, I was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. On May 28, 2011, I received a bone marrow transplant, and while much occurred between those two dates, the bottom line is I received a clean bill of health at my 9 month check-up just a couple of weeks ago. I truly feel blessed!

During our journey, I had a support system that was incredible, starting with God, my wife-Bev, my daughters Liz and Cate, and my family and friends. My spirits and attitude, so crucial to recovery, stayed high due to these wonderful people.

The toughest part of the whole experience was, however, watching the emotional toll my illness was having on my loved ones. With that in mind, we want to help alleviate the overwhelming stress that exists by providing resources and services to those in need. While this will continue to be a work in progress, our primary mission is twofold.

First, we are working in collaboration with Cuyahoga Community College and Lorain County Community College to develop a comprehensive website which serves

as the information center for anything and everything related to the subject of cancer, with particular focus on services and resources that are available to those in need. For lack of a better term, kind of like a "one stop shop". While I am a dinosaur when it comes to the area of technology, we have the right people involved to make it happen. We are also talking with area hospitals, existing non-profits, and others that will have make a positive contribution to our efforts as well. The website should be in operation by this summer.

Secondly, and specific to this request, we are developing a list of individuals and corresponding services that will be helpful to those in need. Tasks such as house cleaning, lawn mowing, shopping, and rides to doctors' appointments that are normally taken for granted can become monumental. The list of potential assistance is endless. For example, we recently had an attorney volunteer to do documents such as Power of Attorney, Living Wills, etc. at no cost. There is no help or gesture, no matter how small, that wouldn't be appreciated.

This will be a very important part of the website. If you can provide time or services, at reasonable prices, reduced prices, or for free, please send an e-mail with your contact information and how you can help to [friendsfromthestart@gmail.com](mailto:friendsfromthestart@gmail.com) and

we will proceed to the next step.

We will be focusing on the West Shore suburbs to begin with, so if you are reading this, then we want you. My family and I are from Lakewood with strong roots in the community.

The unfortunate reality is virtually everyone will be affected by cancer at some point in their lives, whether as a patient or as a loved one. If we, however, can get good people working together with good people, there is no limit on what can be accomplished as a TEAM!

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER  
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*The Very Rev. Tracey Lind, preaching*  
8 a.m. Early Eucharist  
9 a.m. Mostly Jazz Mass  
11:15 a.m. Choral Eucharist  
5 p.m. Solemn Sung Eucharist  
9 p.m. Compline

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4**  
6 p.m. Tenebrae Service

**MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 5**  
12:10 p.m. Eucharist & Healing Service  
6 p.m. Last Supper, Foot Washing, Potluck, and Vigil

**GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 6**  
12 p.m. Solemn Liturgy  
1 p.m. Good Friday Blues & Lamentations  
1 p.m. Children's Good Friday Program  
7:30 p.m. Good Friday Concert  
PASSIO by Arvo Pärt  
Trinity Cathedral Choir, soloists and instrumentalists; Todd Wilson, conductor

**EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 8**  
6 a.m. The Great Vigil of Easter  
*The Rt. Rev. Arthur B. Williams, Jr., presiding;  
The Rev. Canon Will Mebane, preaching*  
9 a.m. Contemporary Festival Eucharist  
*The Very Rev. Tracey Lind, preaching and presiding*  
10:10 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt for grades preK-5  
11:15 a.m. Festival Eucharist  
*The Rt. Rev. William Persell, presiding  
The Very Rev. Tracey Lind, preaching*



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- Tuesday Night Bible Study at 7pm

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Presentation 7:30PM
- Apr. 7th COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT 2PM
- Apr. 8th EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE 9AM

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Join the Discussion at: [www.lakewoodobserver.com](http://www.lakewoodobserver.com)



Lakewood Cares

Ministerial Musings: Sacred Patience

By The Rev. Dr. John Tamilio III

I write these words from the waiting room of Beverly Hospital in Massachusetts. My father is still in surgery for blocked, carotid arteries. As some of you know, my Dad recently had a stroke — his third in recent years. He also had a couple of heart attacks and suffers from severe diabetes.

His options are limited.

His doctor informed him that if he did not have this surgery, he would more likely than not have a massive, fatal stroke in the near future. The surgery, though, is risky and comes with no guarantees; he could die on the operating table.

So we wait — his family and friends. We sit in the waiting room of the hospital with other families whose loved ones face one type of surgery or another. Singer-songwriter Tom Petty once proclaimed that, “The waiting is the hardest part.” It brings with it the unease and fretfulness of being utterly helpless.

This is the reality of Lent, is it not? We are in somewhat of a holding pattern. We are waiting for the final steps that will lead us to both a torturous cross and the glorious, empty tomb.

In some respects, we want to rush the journey. On one hand it is because we do not like to wait. On the other hand, we do not want to face the penitential aspects of the Lenten trek. But the journey itself is important and, as I have said many times before, the goal

of the journey is the journey itself. Percussionist extraordinaire Neil Peart (of Rush fame) said it best: “The point of the journey is not to arrive.”

But that does not make it any less taxing — the same is true of sitting in a hospital waiting room. We want it to be over. We want to skip the sojourn and know that our loved ones are ok.

But waiting for God and God’s work to unfold in our lives cultivates patience. There are many passages in Scripture that speak of patience:

“I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.” ~ Psalm 40:1

“...but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” ~ Isaiah 40:31

Soul Food: A Fun Time Addresses A Serious Problem

continued from page 1

some people like this do fill the lines of the local hunger center (as well as the ranks of the gainfully employed), the fact is, most people taking advantage of hunger assistance in our community are normal, average, everyday people just like you and me: people with and without children, with and without employment, with and without the support of friends and family to help through challenging times.

In the city of Lakewood alone, there

Tenebrae: A Service Of Darkness

by Carolyn Rummery

Tenebrae: A Service of Darkness by contemporary composer Hal H. Hopson will be offered at the Community Service at Lakewood United Methodist Church on Good Friday, April 6, at 7:00 p.m. It will feature combined choirs from Lakewood churches, organ, oboe, and strings. Dr. Gene Willet will direct with Hal Lissow at the organ.


Everyone is invited to attend this special evening. The church is located at 15700 Detroit Ave., at Summit. For additional information call 216-226-8644 or visit [www.LkwdUMC.org](http://www.LkwdUMC.org).

“And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” ~ Romans 5:3-5

“Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.” ~ James 5:7-8

And these are just a few of them.

Patience does produce character. It helps us connect with the Divine. It gives us strength. It helps to nurture




our faith.

Use the rest of this Lenten trek to its fullest, my friends. Be still. Find solitude. Cultivate the peace that will yield abundant blessings.

By the way, my Dad came through surgery amazingly. He is conscious and doing quite well. He waited patiently on the Lord. May we all do the same.

Go where  
your best  
prayers  
take you.  
Frederick Buechner

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## Lakewood Cares

# There's An Epidemic Out There. Are You At Risk?

by Gina Gavlak

When you hear the word epidemic, what do you think? What would you do to protect yourself and those you love? In America, there's an epidemic, a disease, that is continuing to increase at alarming rates. It affects all of us regardless of age, skin color or gender and one out of every three American adults is at high risk for developing this disease. Even more alarming-- it is predicted that one in three children, and one in two minority children, will develop this disease if current trends continue. This epidemic is the leading cause of blindness, kidney disease (which leads to kidney failure and the need for dialysis), amputations of toes, feet and legs and a leading cause of heart attack and stroke. The risk for death among people with this disease is about twice that of people of similar age who do not have it. This epidemic is type 2 diabetes: a disease that is serious and incredibly dangerous but one that can often be prevented. Every 17 seconds someone is diagnosed, don't be the one. Take these three simple steps to protect yourself and those you love.

**Step one:** Know the Risk Factors. Your risk increases if you are overweight, not exercising, over the age of 45, African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, Pacific Islander or Asian American. A family history of diabetes also increases your risk. If you have a parent who was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes before the age of 50, your risk for developing diabetes is 1:7; if that parent was diagnosed after the age of 50, your risk is 1:13. If both your parents have type 2 diabetes, your risk is 1:2.

**Step two:** Take Action. On Tuesday, March 27th the American Diabetes

Association (ADA) will be conducting the 24th annual Alert! Day. This call to action encourages all people to take the Diabetes Risk Test to find out if they are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. You can be a part of the ADA's movement to Stop Diabetes® and receive a free Diabetes Risk Test (English or Spanish) by visiting the American Diabetes Association on Facebook, <https://www.stopdiabetes.com> or by calling 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383). Although Alert! Day is a one-day event, the Diabetes Risk Test is available year-round. Take it and share it with everyone you know.

On Friday, March 30th Lakewood Hospital Diabetes and Endocrine Cen-

ter is joining the American Diabetes Association's efforts to raise diabetes awareness by offering a free Diabetes Alert! Day screening event at Lakewood Hospital Wasmer Auditorium. Stop by from 6:30-9:30am or 2:30-4pm to receive free blood sugar, blood pressure, total cholesterol, foot and eye screenings. Diabetes educators will be available to answer your questions. Bring your family and friends. Everyone screened will be entered into a drawing for a \$25 Giant Eagle gift card.

**Step three:** Make Changes. A combination of healthy eating and increased physical activity are key components to diabetes prevention. Do

these things together with your family. The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), a large prevention study of people at high risk for diabetes, showed that lifestyle intervention to lose weight and increase physical activity reduced the development of type 2 diabetes by 58% during a 3-year period. The reduction was even greater, 71%, among adults aged 60 years or older.

There's an epidemic hurting millions of American adults and children; one that needs all of us to pay more attention. It's time for everyone to take action. What will you do to protect yourself and those you love? What will you do to help Stop Diabetes®?

## Supporting Jordan's Family Foundation At The Boston Marathon

by Corey Rossen

On April 16th Ryan McCartney will be running the Boston Marathon in support of Lakewood's own, Jordan's Family Foundation (JFF). Ryan, a local Cleveland teacher, has been training many years for the opportunity to run in the prestigious race. In this, his inaugural year of qualifying, he has chosen to run for a cause, Congenital Heart Disease through Jordan's Family Foundation. Last year, Ryan ran the Cleveland Marathon in support of JFF and raised well over \$1000 while on the way to a Personal Best time. If you would like to support JFF through Ryan's running efforts, please follow this link- <http://www.active.com/donate/Jordansfamily/RyanMcCartney> (proceeds made through this link will benefit Jordan's Family Foundation).

In brief, Jordan's Family Foundation primarily provides funding for research,

development and education in the field of pediatric cardiology. The organization also conducts heart healthy children's activities such as Recess ROCKS!, where kids and families come together to play while also learning about healthy living. JFF contributes to other heart-health related organizations such as the Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital for Pediatric Cardiology and the American Heart Association while also being involved with national events such as Healthy Family Training Camp and Hockey for Health. This year begins JFF's efforts to provide meals and activities for families and patients at Cleveland's Ronald McDonald House.

To find out more about Jordan's Family Foundation visit [JordansFamilyFoundation.org](http://JordansFamilyFoundation.org). Please attend our upcoming fundraiser, the 7th Annual "Healthy Starts. Happy Hearts" Charity Wine & Beer Tasting on April 19th



Ryan McCartney will be running the Boston Marathon this year in support of Jordan's Family Foundation.

at Rozi's Wine House from 6 – 9pm. Admission is \$25 which includes all wine, beer and gourmet food pairings.

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## LUNCH & LEARN



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**Thursday, March 29, 2012**  
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# Business News

Lakewood Chamber Hosts

## “What Bikeability Means For Your Business”

by Valerie Mechenbier

The City of Lakewood’s Bicycle Master Plan was approved on January 17th and is set for 2012 implementation. What does this mean for your business?

If your answer is: “The Bike Master Plan will not have any impact on my business – all of my employees and customers drive to this location,” or perhaps, “It means that we’ll just need to install a bike rack out front,” then the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce Education Task Force forum titled “What Bikeability Means for Your Business” is a must-attend event. The forum will take place on Thursday, March 29th at 7:30 p.m. in the Skylight Room on the second floor of the Beck Center for the Arts (17801 Detroit Avenue).

The City of Lakewood’s goal is to become nationally recognized as one of the most bicycle-friendly communities in the country by 2015. The Bicycle Master Plan, available online at [www.onelakewood.org](http://www.onelakewood.org), advocates for expanded bike parking and improved signage and stresses the need for cyclist and motorist education (like the “Share the Road” campaign) and public outreach. But a true bicycle friendly community is where biking is considered, facilitated, and promoted at all levels and by all stakeholders, including local business owners.

Bicycling and “bike culture” can play a role in promoting a community as an attractive place to live, work and do business. Cities such as Portland, OR; Long Beach, CA; Arlington, VA; and even Minneapolis, MN--where snow is seen up to 8 months out of the year--have created programs such as Bike-Friendly Business Districts (BFBDS) and Bike

Saturdays discount programs. Bicyclists in a bike-friendly city are more likely to explore restaurants, cafes and shops that they would not have noticed while speeding by in a car.

In addition to recognizing a community as bike-friendly, a “Bike Friendly Business” designation might be awarded to a business for providing bike parking, promoting incentives for employees to bike to work, using bicycle couriers, keeping a loaner lock and tire repair kits on hand, implementing bike-share programs, and sponsoring bike events or cycling teams. Bike-friendly business practices can be inexpensive but can garner good publicity by demonstrating that you, the business owner, are concerned about the wellness of employees, customers, and the environment.

### Upcoming Events

**Thursday, March 29th**  
**“What Bikeability Means for Your Business”**

Presented by the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce Education Task Force  
**Beck Center for the Arts (Skylight Room)**  
**17801 Detroit Avenue, Lakewood**  
**7:30pm, Free, Open to all**

**Friday, April 20th**  
**Lakewood Chamber of Commerce Monthly Meeting**

Annual Mayor’s Address to the Chamber by Lakewood Mayor Michael P. Summers and State of the Chamber address by Board Chair Diane Helbig  
Registration & Networking: 11:30am, Lunch & Program: Noon  
\$15 members, \$20 non-members  
**Lakewood Senior Health Campus(Assisted Living Entrance)**  
**1381 Bunts Road, Lakewood**

Join Lakewood stakeholders as we discuss details of Lakewood’s Bicycle Master Plan, emerging opportunities, and bike-friendly initiatives already adopted by businesses in the community.

Panelists include:

- Bryce Sylvester, Department of Planning & Development, City of Lakewood
- Tom Bullock, Ward 2 Councilman, City of Lakewood
- Erika Durham, Bike Lakewood
- Julie Hutchison, The Root Cafe
- Amanda Harland and Geof Pelaia, Bike for Beck

Participate and help Lakewood

### All-Green Clean Comes To Lakewood Absolute Chem-Dry®

by Christi Stahl

Absolute Chem-Dry® is a new carpet and upholstery cleaning company that has come into the Lakewood area. As new Chamber members, they are building a strong presence and would like to get more involved in the community. Their process is unique-with no soaps or detergents, there’s no dirt-

become one of the most bicycle-friendly communities in the country by 2015. This event is presented by the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce Education Task Force, and is free and open to the public.

### Did You Know...

A growing body of economic research shows that in an increasingly homogenized world, entrepreneurs and skilled workers are more likely to invest and settle in communities that preserve their one-of-a-kind businesses and distinctive character.

attracting residue left behind in the carpet. Their Green Certified Clean will dry in 2 hours- a perfect solution for the hardwood floors under the carpet in many of Lakewood’s older homes. Absolute Chem-Dry® is fast, efficient, and economical. Visit their website at [www.chem-dry.net/absolute.oh](http://www.chem-dry.net/absolute.oh) for more information.



Above, Mayor Michael P. Summers stands with Mike Daso of AXA Advisors, while CEO and President of the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce, Patty Ryan gives Mike a plaque to commemorate the ribbon cutting. **More online.**



### Chamber Member Spotlight: AXA Advisors

by Valerie Mechenbier

Michael Daso, a Lakewood-based financial planner with AXA Advisors, recently purchased and rehabilitated the former West Shore Assembly of God church building at 16300 Delaware Avenue (across from Hayes Elementary School). Daso looked for commercial properties for his growing business for over two years, and was excited to find this unique building with an open floor plan. Daso and his staff celebrated the move with a public open house and ribbon-cutting ceremony last week. Daso is happy to be keeping his business in Lakewood, where it has been located since 2006.

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## Residents Launch Event Planning Company

by Jenni Baker

Lakewood residents Jenni Baker, Jane Diemer, Timi Kormos and Holly Lauch have launched Cardigan Event Productions LLC, an event planning and production firm focused on non-

profit and corporate clients. The four principals bring years of event experience to their new venture, including some of Lakewood’s most successful events such as Light Up Lakewood, the Lakewood Arts Festival, the Mayor’s Ball and the Lakewood Catholic Academy (and St. Luke’s School) Auction.

Cardigan’s services include creating, designing, marketing and implementing events, as well as developing fund raising and sponsorship plans for nonprofit events.

Cardigan’s first event is (W)in It Together, a March Madness event for In It Together, a new nonprofit organization whose mission is to support and advocate for children and families affected by Pediatric and Adolescent Young Adult Cancer. The event will take place on Friday, March 23 at the Around The Corner Warehouse. For ticket information, visit [www.neo4u.org](http://www.neo4u.org).

For more information about Cardigan Event Productions, please send an e-mail to [info@cardiganevents.com](mailto:info@cardiganevents.com), or call 216-406-0887.

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## Pooch Photos With Easter Bunny Benefits FLDP

by Alanna Faith

Many of the things we most believe in we can't really see, like Mother Nature, the Tooth Fairy and Santa Claus. You'll be able to see an Easter Bunny at "HOPPY PAWS" on Sunday, March 25th from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Pet's General Store, 16821 Madison Avenue.

"HOPPY PAWS" - PROFESSIONAL POOCH PHOTOS with the Easter Bunny benefits Friends of the Lakewood Dog Park, Inc. 501(c)(3), the non-profit volunteer organization managing the Lakewood Dog Park in conjunction with the City of Lakewood.

The \$10.00 PROFESSIONAL POOCH PHOTO PACKAGE will include one 4" x 6" print to take with you, and your choice of either an access code to all your photos on line or all your photos on a CDR; both will be available April 1st. CDR's will be available for pick-up at Pet's General Store (the \$10.00 fee is per dog). There will also be a 50/50 raffle.

This is always a popular event, so spring on in early! There's no advanced registration, it's first come, first served, at Lakewood Dog Park. In 2002, the City of Lakewood gave the go ahead for the dog park, now ranked among the Top 10 Dog Parks in Ohio by Dogster.com. The Lakewood Dog Park grand opening will be celebrated in 2013.

Ask about Friends of the Lakewood Dog Park 2012 events and promotions; including Sunday "Doggy Brunches" at the Rocky River Wine Bar, 1313 Linda Street, Rocky River, Ohio 44116. Help Friends of the Lakewood Dog Park raise funds for park improvements and enjoy "Doggy Brunch" at the Rocky River Wine Bar with your pooch on the patio.

## First MAMA Lakewood Cash Mob Announced!

by Christin Sorensen

Cash Mobs are all over the news lately, and now we have one in Lakewood! All over the country "cash mobs" are being organized to help out small businesses. The idea is very simple: get together in a large group, visit a local store and spend some cash. The small business will see a boost in sales, something every shop owner can definitely benefit from. The mobbers will benefit as well by purchasing awesome local goods and helping their community. A win-win situation!

Each month we will be mobbing a different small local business. The goal is to have each person spend at least \$10 during the mob. A small amount that can make a huge impact when enough people are involved. To find out when our mobs will be, please email [lakewoodcashmob@yahoo.com](mailto:lakewoodcashmob@yahoo.com) or like the facebook page, [www.facebook.com/lakewoodcashmob](http://www.facebook.com/lakewoodcashmob).

The very first MAMA Lakewood Cash Mob will be this month, on Saturday March 31st at 7:00 p.m. The selected business will remain a secret, but I can assure you it is a great choice for the first MAMA mob! The only hint I can give is that the owner is a life-long Lakewood resident. It will be an exciting evening full of fun that you will not want to miss. Be sure to save the date!

*Chris Sorensen is the owner of Crafty Goodness on Madison.*

## Buying Musical Instruments On EBay: New Vs. Used Part 2– Used

by Sharon Marrell

In part one you saw that sometimes new, unknown brand name instruments may not be the best investment when it comes to giving your child the best musical experience and a chance at success. An alternative is buying a used instrument that has a brand name recommended by teachers and/or music stores. This will give your child an excellent start in a beginning instrumental program. A general list of brand names includes – Selmer, Conn, King, Gemeinhardt, Jupiter, Getzen, Olds, and Yamaha among others. Band directors and private teachers have their favorites based on their experience and the reliability of the instrument.

Over the years instrument manufacturers have consolidated and many brands are produced under one roof. One example, Conn –Selmer, Inc. has twenty-five brand name instruments housed under one roof, and additionally is owned by the Steinway Co. – yes the maker of pianos! Very few remain individual companies manufacturing one brand.

Some brands that are no longer manufactured but are good quality instruments that have stood the test of time, are great for the beginner and your budget when bought on EBay. Many brand name instruments from the 1970's to present, are good investments and if there is a problem, a repair technicians can more than likely find parts to fix the instrument. Once you receive the instrument, take the time to have a repair technician check the instrument. Even though the seller says it works perfectly, many times some adjustments are needed to have it in good playing condition.

In addition to the above mentioned, the following are trusted brand names to use as a reference when searching EBay: Armstrong, Avanti, Artley, Blessing, Besson, Buescher, Bach, Bundy, Emerson, Holton, Leblanc, Ludwig, Noblet, Normandy, Prelude, Glaesel, Vito, Yanagisawa, Evette, Buffet.

*Sharon Marrell, a Lakewood resident, owns Marrell Music and has been a repair technician for over 20 years.*

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# Lakewood Observer

## Whistling Dixie In Ohio

by Chris Perry

*“Southern man, better keep your head / Don’t forget what your good book said / Southern change gonna come at last / Now your crosses are burning fast... I heard screamin’ and bullwhips cracking / How long? How long?”*

– From the song “Southern Man” by Neil Young

It feels like the wrong kind of “southern change” has come here to Ohio as Dixie has risen and spread its ruinous rebel red menace forcefully northward, no longer confined to the old Confederacy. Who really did win the Civil War? For all the hue and cry of the South being a conquered people, it is the North that increasingly finds itself under the dominion of the Confederacy. The United States won’t have to re-fight the Civil War to set matters right. Rather, North and South should simply follow the example of the Czech Republic and Slovakia: Shake hands, say it’s been real, and go their separate ways.

I often think about what America could be without the anchor of the South. Maybe Ohio and the North should think secession. Economically and socially, secession would be painless for the North. The South has always been a gangrenous limb, one that should have been lopped off and discarded decades ago. America is a democracy in spite of the South, who only adopted the tenets of a civil society via force or federal legislation — never voluntarily.

Per data from the Southern Education Foundation, nearly twice as many people live below the poverty line in the old Confederacy than in the Northeast and Midwest combined. More than 2.4 million extremely poor children — 42 percent of the nation’s total — live in the South. You are three times more likely to be murdered in Dixie than anywhere in New England, despite a feverish devotion to law-and-order that has made eight Southern states home to 92 percent of all U.S. executions since 1980 and home to the nation’s highest incarceration rates (Christian Science Monitor). The South has the highest infant-mortality rate, the highest teen pregnancy rate, the highest rate of divorce and the highest incidences of sexually transmitted diseases, while it lags well behind the rest of the country in terms of test scores and opportunities for women. The Confederate states rail against the tyranny of big government, yet they are some of the largest recipients of federal tax dollars with several states (Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana) receiving nearly twice the amount per capita than Ohio (The Tax Foundation). They steal business away from Ohio the same way that developing countries worldwide have always attracted foreign investment and job relocation: through low wages, anti-union laws, privatization of state assets and lax environmental oversight. The tobacco grown by Dixie kills over a half-million Americans each year. The old Confederate states have some of the highest rates of cancers in the country (7 of the top 10 per the National Cancer Institute); in some forms of cancer nearly double the national average in the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Ala-

bama and Georgia due to an appalling disregard of the environment and corresponding overexposure to toxins. Think “cancer alley,” global nuclear waste depositories (some European countries export their spent uranium waste down south), the proliferation of petrochemical industrial agriculture and little environmental regulatory enforcement.

This re-emergence and spreading epidemic of Confederate-style politics resurrecting itself today under the guise of Tea Party faux populism is merely the symptom of a much deeper problem: The North and South can no longer claim to be one nation. It’s 1860 all over again and Ohio seems to be caught in the middle — pulled up and forward in one direction with the North, then jerked forcefully back down from the South. If you want proof, just look at the electoral map from the last six presidential elections. They nearly mimic the pre-Civil War 1861 U.S. map that shows the “free states” border above the old Mason-Dixon Line and the Ohio River and the “slave states” lying in the gutter below. Or consider that in 2000, George W. Bush lost the U.S. popular vote by 550,000 votes, but he won the old Confederacy by a resounding 3.6 million votes. Since 1992, Democratic presidential candidates have won only four old Confederate states.

As the electoral center of gravity has shifted in the United States, so too have the orientations of the two major political parties. Both parties now pander to the old Confederacy. For Republicans, the South is their base. For Democrats, it means the near-abandonment of their history of progressivism in an often futile effort to swing one or two Confederate states to their side. The Democrats lost their historic claim to the South when the party fractured over the New Deal and the Civil Rights movement. With Dixie up for grabs, the Republicans went carpetbagging for electoral votes by raging for states’ rights and opposition to the Civil Rights bill. Every victorious Republican candidate since then has dished out exactly what Southern voters want to hear.

Imagine then, for just a moment, the North as its own nation. Over 80 percent of Tea Party congressional representatives would be foreigners. If you were to expel all Southerners from Congress (both parties, mind you) the new liberal majority would be able to correct the most objectionable aspects of Southern culture and the corporate plantation-style dominance of our government would be greatly constrained. Instead of endless culture wars that take attention and focus away from real problems, politics would be broken down to what it really is—a struggle between haves and have-nots — a few Wall Street bankers running for office against 200 million credit card and mortgage customers being nickel-and-dimed to death. That is the real demographic divide in a country in which the top one percent has 40 percent of the wealth. If the North and South were separate nations, we could end the hypocrisy of Red-state welfare. Instead we could provide them with foreign aid contingent

upon sincere efforts to clean up the environment and improve human rights. We could send Peace Corps volunteers down South to teach the necessary skills that would allow Southerners to pull themselves out of poverty and illiteracy while simultaneously promoting a better understanding of American values.

Here in Ohio, the Dixification of the “Party of Lincoln” is near complete. I have been thinking about this threat for years, but the recent redlining of Ohio’s voters through redistricting has heightened my concern for our collective future. Think citizen disenfranchisement — Southern style. In many ways the fate of Ohio has been sealed through redistricting tactics and voter suppression laws hatched in the South, as voters no longer choose their leaders, rather they are in effect chosen beforehand by partisan gerrymandering schemes to eliminate competition to render elections meaningless. Much like the South has done for generations, voting is nothing but a false show of democracy with outcomes already decided and narrow ideology allowed to proceed largely unimpeded. The Ohio Republican legislature has eliminated multi-party competitive elections by pooling voters inclined to back them with bizarrely-shaped district lines while isolating voters who might oppose them in electoral wastelands. In a state which is nearly evenly split between the two major parties with 39 percent of registered voters being Democrats and 38 percent registered as Republicans, one would think that Ohio would have districts that reflect the true nature of our voting population. Yet, what we have now for at least the next ten years are 16 Congressional House districts with 12 of them being sure-fire Republican-held seats, not remotely representative of the state of Ohio, hostile to Northeast Ohio, aligned with Dixie.

Redistricting in Ohio is a behind-closed-doors process, controlled by Republican Party insiders who are close to major campaign corporate and individual donors who seek to squash the competition and narrow the debate to coincide with their low-wage, privatization, income-inequality Southern agenda. In 2010, Ohio Republicans barely won elections for governor and attorney general, each by less than 0.05 percent of the vote, thus gaining complete control to gerrymander the state map to lock in Republican rule at both the state and Federal levels for at least a decade, if not longer — imposing their will upon an entire state of 11 million-plus people.

***By the time you read this, Representatives Dennis Kucinich and Marcy Kaptur, stalwart members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, who were thrown together into the same district, will have faced off in the new 9th District Democratic primary in which we will have been forced to eliminate one of the House’s two most consistent economic and social justice populists. Both of these exceptional individuals deserve to represent Ohio. The loss***

***of one of them will set us back, send us way down South...to the “Land of Dixie”...look away, please look away.***

Today’s burning legacy of Southern culture is the cult-like worshipping at the Alter of the Rich. It’s plantation politics — if you shackle the poor and unshackle the rich, they’ll rev up the economy. But for whom? Think of this as the super-myth — the one underlying so many other Southern fallacies. For decades, America’s economic policies have been based on the notion that catering to corporations and the wealthy is the way to stimulate the economy. Republicans routinely insist that we need to bail them out, lower their taxes, allow them to repatriate billions in overseas profits, and free them from annoying government meddling. If we don’t, the “job creators” will stay in a funk, and the economy will stay in a rut. ***But here’s a pesky fact neither corporate America nor the Southern GOP establishment is trumpeting: After-tax corporate profits are currently at an all-time high. Rich people don’t create jobs when we hand them big windfalls.***

We still can’t shake the Southern peasant mentality that says we should go easy on the “best and brightest,” whose greed nearly knocked our economy back to the Great Depression and who have rigged the system in part by perpetuating the myth that in creating more wealth for them will save us from ruin. That is the myth at the core of trickle-down economics and the basis for the Southern economy since Reconstruction. The still brutal Southern strategy of racial exclusivity, deep income inequality, evangelical fervor and militaristic nationalism which has now infected the National discourse — is insulting to humanity, to a civil society, to people who do the work. Author Matt Taibbi sums it up best when he states: “In a county where every Joe the Plumber has been hoodwinked into thinking he’s one clogged toilet away from being rich himself, we are all invested in rigging the system for the rich.” This system is rooted down South and manifesting itself on a national scale.

The top one percent can spend their billions on walls and gates and private security guards to insulate themselves from the pitchforks of the angry masses. But today in Ohio, where do the rest of us look in the Yellow Pages to hire private protection from Southern culture? Where do we find protection from insider trading? Against fraudulent bankers? Against unknown chemicals being injected into to our hydro-fractured landscape? Against price-fixing of commodities such as corn and gasoline? Is each individual Ohio family supposed to hire the Pinkertons to keep the local factory from dumping dioxin in the community drinking water source, or the local power plant from ejecting mercury? Will we have to call in the Federal government to save us...? To restore democracy?

“How long, How long” did it take to change the Southern man? “How long, How long” will it take to seize back Ohio, take it back from the South?



## Pulse Of The City

# Congressman Kucinich! Thank You...

Dear Congressman Kucinich:

by Gary Rice

This is a difficult letter to write, and one that I hoped I would never have to write. After eight terms serving this area as our Congressman, and even in this election garnering the majority of votes in Cuyahoga County, you are now being effectively forced from office by downstate politicians who combined your district with that of well-known fifteen-term Toledo-area Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur.

If you are feeling any personal outrage about this, please know that that feeling is shared by many of your constituents. Not that Marcy Kaptur isn't a hardworking and highly effective representative in Congress. She certainly is. As time passes, I have no doubt that she'll be a very effective spokesperson for our county, just as she has been for the constituents in her district. Of course, now she must run in November against Samuel J. Wurzelbacher, also nationally known as "Joe the Plumber"-the well-spoken "guy-on-the-street" who faced off with Barack Obama in that now-historic interchange.

The high-stakes game of politics in America goes on, and for the moment, your own place in that game is uncertain. You must be aware of how frustrated many Americans are by that game. That frustration is demonstrated by the shockingly low numbers of registered voters who actually take the time to vote. More and more it seems people are opting out of the whole political process. It's easy to see why. In the last few days, in the privacy of our own home, we received more annoying and intrusive robo-calls than I can even count regarding whom we should vote for and why. We've been bombarded by television and radio ads dripping with venom. We are exposed to one-sided talk shows that smack



of the propaganda days of the Third Reich. Our private lives and even our private dinner party conversations have been forever besmirched by this never-ending pollution of pernicious political profundity.

As voters, we are, quite frankly, sick to our stomachs over the whole mess.

I, for one, am a Political Science cum laude college graduate. I once loved the study of politics. At one time or another, I have been both a Republican and a Democrat. Quite honestly, today I'm starting to care less about the whole shebang, and I am not alone.

And yet? Once in a GREAT while....a political person comes along who gives hope to those of us who struggle with this myopic cyclops called "The American Vision." Once in a while, someone comes along who compels us to return to the polling place, and begin to care once again. For my family, and for so many others, you were one of those people.

Still, this is not a hero-worshipping fan letter, nor is it intended to show that we always agreed with you. There were times that we emphatically disagreed

with you....but then, there are always those times in life, are there not?

When we first learned about you, it was in the news. You were in the City of Cleveland. First in City Council and then as the young "Boy Mayor." As suburbanites, we paid scant attention to the political goings-on of that deep, dark, and foreboding metropolis to our east. You know what the suburbs thought of Cleveland...We were "holier than thou," perhaps even "better" than you guys were on the other side of Highland Avenue. (WE called it Highland here in Lakewood. To you guys, it was W.117th, and perhaps not so ironically, that's exactly where you set up camp... at Tony's Diner up there near Lorain Avenue. Even back then, perhaps you were trying to symbolically pull us all together?) We laughed when you took on powerful interests over Cleveland's Muni Light, causing the city to default. We discovered much later that you had been right, only it was "Cleveland," so we suburbanites really didn't care back then one way or the other. Little did we know how much this region was interconnected...Little did we know.

Then, you came to Lakewood. At first, it seemed almost comical. Here was this guy in a rumpled black suit walking the streets of Lakewood almost like a vagrant looking for work, which is, of course, exactly what you WERE doing in running for Congress. We'd even heard that at times you had even BEEN a virtual vagrant on the streets of Cleveland as a youngster, taking care of your siblings while your family struggled to make ends meet? At least that was the story I heard. Well, you knocked on the door of our then-Republican home. I answered that door. Even back then, you were a celebrity, albeit a bit bedraggled one, or so I thought. Thinking that the family would like to meet you, I invited you back. You said that you'd come back that evening to meet them, and you gave me a time. I think it was 6 p.m., and there you stood, right on time in our doorway. You kept your word to us, and in so doing, cracked open the foundations of our then-Republican voting pattern. Time and again, this cynical columnist has seen you keep your word, and not only with the community elites, but also with average people who came to you with their problems.

You took on the big problems in our town, and in our world as well. Whether it was with St. Alexis, the steel mills, or even the world beyond...you did what good you could, even though the political costs could be and indeed at the last were devastating for you. You even met with the President of Syria seeking peace at a time when virtually no one else would. In so many ways, you lived that great quote of George Bernard Shaw's and Robert Kennedy's. You know the quote, don't you? ...about some people seeing things as they are and asking why? But you too saw those things that never were...and asked, "Why not?"

For daring to dream, some called you quixotic or even hopelessly idealistic. Some called you a leftist, or even the dreaded "L" word...a liberal...and perhaps in some ways, you are. But I also know that in other ways, you were the most conservative guy I know, especially when it came to veterans. Having experienced a very personal situation with your veteran brother, you have a special sensitivity and affinity for America's veterans that is second to none.

For all that you have done for Cleveland, for Lakewood, for my own family... for bringing our city and our region closer together...for daring to dream the impossible...for caring beyond words for the commoners and the kings...for trying to stop the preemptive wars, and the killings and the bloodshed...thank you. The pulse of this city will never forget what you have done for us, and tried to do for the world. As you prepare to leave office, it very much feels as if we are sending you out into that world again as the proverbial lamb among wolves. Godspeed you on your journey, public servant. Don't forget about us. Tony's Diner may be gone now, but we still have John's Diner in Lakewood. Your table will always be waiting for you.

## Traffic Light Removals...Bad Idea

by Laurie Leaf

Regarding the recent letters from the Manor Park residents...those of us who live on Mars Avenue understand your pain...although our city leaders and our unconcerned councilman do not!

The simple fact that this traffic survey is inconsistent should be enough to have anyone with an ounce of sense questioning it. It was SUPPOSEDLY done in October 2008 (although it is stamped and dated from the city on 1/5/2008???) How does one receive a report like this BEFORE it is even done???. Would anyone with real logic base something this important on information that is over 3 years old? The Manor Park intersection at Detroit is used on a consistent basis by our wonderful senior citizens who deserve more than they are getting from this city. We so understand!

I so wish I could say to the residents of Manor Park that our street has seen a decrease in traffic. With the main branch of our Public Library located on the corner of Mars and Detroit, we

have not experienced such a decrease. Instead we have more speeders and traffic than usual. This will only be compounded when the new Quaker Steak and Lube opens up in the Drug Mart Plaza. The main entrance to the library is located here on our corner, as is the front entrance to Drug Mart. It is a heavily used intersection, pedestrian and vehicle. The city was prepared for this as they had no problem spending the money to affix a police camera at the intersection! But they cannot fight for us to keep a traffic light and crossing signals? Money talks and who cares how many citizens' safety is in jeopardy?

The state says they do not see a need for the signal after one visit here on our corner in the middle of October 2008. Will our city help us fight for what is right and help us with our citizens' safety? NO THEY WILL NOT. They will collect their taxes (WHICH ARE WAY MORE THAN THEY SHOULD BE, CONSIDERING THAT WE GET NOTHING IN RETURN FROM THEM). I so espe-

cially love the way they placed cones and caution tape, along with signs that say "Do Not Cross Here," at our intersection. No one pays a bit of attention to them. Do they really think people are going to walk down a block out of their way to the crosswalk at Arthur (a street which got to keep its light due to the fact that the survey was "conveniently" done when Andrews Avenue was closed and a softball tournament was going on at Kaufman Field)? I SMELL A RAT!!! As a matter of fact, the first pedestrian was struck by a car on March 6, 2012, right in front of the library. So how many people are going to have to endanger their lives before our wonderful city takes action??? My guess is however many it takes till they are faced with a lawsuit for their own stupidity.

Hey Manor Park...let's get together! Mars and Manor Park need to fight this very bad decision. We know that we cannot count on our councilman or city to step up and do it for us! Let's fight the stupidity!!!!



# Lakewood Living

## 11th Annual Lakewood Hospital Ambulance Chase

by Polly Stringer

Celebrate the Ambulance Chase on Sunday, May 6!

Presented by Donald Martens & Sons, this event is for everyone: from the youngest among us in the Children's Chase to participants well into their eighties; from the serious runner to the leisurely walker. The race is about more than just a start and finish line, it is about the journey of how we get there, and the journey that continues beyond the event.

Since its inception, the Ambulance Chase has generated nearly \$350,000, touching countless patients and families through the enhancement of a myriad of programs including services for infants and their parents, teens and seniors, emergency medicine, diabetes management assistance, radiology, surgery and community outreach. This year's race will again benefit patients utilizing Lakewood Hospital's full continuum of rehabilitation services as well as a variety of patient care programs.

The Ambulance Chase includes a



5K runners waiting at the start line at last year's Ambulance Chase.

5K run/walk, 1 mile walk, and Children's Chase (for ages 8 and under), with start and finish lines at Lakewood Park. Registration fee is \$20 through April 20 and \$25 thereafter. To register online, visit [hermesccleveland.com](http://hermesccleveland.com). Teams of 10 or more receive a discount, and teams of 20 or more have the

option of a team name on the back of their t-shirt. Teams must be submitted together by April 13.

The impact of this event on patients and families who place their trust and faith in our hospital caregivers at their most vulnerable of times is awe-inspiring.

Bill Forester and Bob Pfahl are just two of the hundreds of patients who have been touched through their association with the Ambulance Chase and Lakewood Hospital. Both are stroke survivors and credit their achievement of major milestones to the hospital's Rehabilitation Services and its dedicated therapists. And both supported last year's event, along with family and friends.

The Ambulance Chase brings people from all walks together to support a common goal. "To see the droves of people who come out to participate is amazing. It is clear that Lakewood Hospital has touched the lives of many. It is a great way to support the Rehab department," says Lori Forester, Bill's wife.

Bob's wife Karen notes, "There has not been a moment since Bob's stroke that we have felt alone in his recovery. He has been surrounded by caring, encouraging and positive thinking therapists and medical professionals who work tirelessly with him to achieve his goal," she says. "The Ambulance Chase gives us the opportunity to say thank you." As a way of giving back, Karen is serving on the 2012 Race Committee.

"It is exciting to be involved with a cause that benefits so many, and the commitment of the hospital team makes me passionate about the Ambulance Chase. The benefits that result from the race are reason enough to just be a small part of it," notes Bob.

So, whether you have participated before or are new to the event, join us on May 6 as we continue to impact those patients and families served by Lakewood Hospital.

For registration or sponsorship information, visit [lakewoodhospital-foundation.org/ambulancechase](http://lakewoodhospital-foundation.org/ambulancechase) or call 216.529.7009.

## Menu For The Future: Serving Up Community Dialogue

by Margaret Downing

The Menu for the Future project is involving Lakewood residents in learning about and discussing the issues affecting their daily food choices. The expected outcome is to create more literate consumers, which in turn will drive sales of local, healthy food. The program is based on a six-week course developed by the Northwest Earth Institute that involves selected readings and self-facilitated discussion. It is part of the Local Food Celebration Year for Sustainable Cleveland 2019.

In September of 2011, a working group came together at the Sustainable Cleveland 2019 Summit and set a goal to get as many groups as possible to use the Menu for the Future course within their faith community, organization, business or neighborhood during 2012. About a dozen pilot groups, with a farmer or food producer in each one, are meeting in February and March, and plans are in motion to scale up during the remainder of the year.

The course, designed for groups of eight to twelve participants, is based on a source book of readings that includes directions for self-facilitation by the groups for guided conversation about

our food systems. The course has been successfully used in Port Townsend, WA, where they ran 25 simultaneous courses with a farmer or food producer in each course (most groups were ten to fifteen people). It changed the nature of the conversation about food in the town and established relationships between producers and consumers that have been of economic as well as personal benefit.

The course is designed to educate and to inspire people to move to action based on that information. With readings from a variety of sources including Michael Pollan, Wendell Berry, Frances Lappe and Barbara Kingsolver, it:

Explores food systems and their impact on culture, society and ecological systems.

Offers insights into agricultural and individual practices that promote personal and ecological well-being.

Challenges participants to consider their role in creating or supporting sustainable food systems.

The Lakewood Public Library has ordered five copies, and books can be purchased for \$20, a special Cleveland rate. Currently groups are meeting in a variety of settings and geographic areas: River's Edge, Carnegie West Library, the Galleria, the Catholic Diocese Headquarters, Preterm, Gates

Mills Library, Unitarian Universalist churches in Shaker Heights, Akron and Kent, and a Hudson Ecumenical group. The pilot groups and interested conveners will hold a celebration potluck at the Galleria on April 19th. Additional groups will launch in April and May, including a group at the Lakewood Public Library. Anyone interested in convening a group (no special expertise needed) or joining a group should contact [menuforthefuture@gmail.org](mailto:menuforthefuture@gmail.org) or call 216-264-0181.

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Lakewood Living

# Vernon Stouffer-Lakewood Success Story

by Thomas George

One of the most popular consumer brands in America has strong Lakewood roots. Stouffer Foods was founded by Lakewood's Vernon Stouffer, who has never enjoyed a French Bread Pizza.

Stouffer, born August 26, 1901, attended the Wharton School in Philadelphia where he graduated in 1923. Upon returning to Cleveland he worked at the family's Downtown lunch counter, which by 1929 had gone public and was the first in a chain of Stouffer's restaurants.

In addition to restaurants, under Vernon Stouffer's leadership, Stouffer Corporation gradually expanded into motor inns and frozen foods. Eventually, the frozen foods segment became

the corporation's major focus and in 1967 was sold to Litton Industries, which merged with Nestle in 1973.

Stouffer was also the owner of the Cleveland Indians during a troubled time in the franchise's history. He purchased the Tribe in 1966 and did his best to maintain the team during some lean years in the win column. At one point Stouffer sold part interest of the team to New Orleans investors with the intent of playing 30 Indians games in the Emerald City, but this idea was voided by the American League.

Another West Shore resident, George Steinbrenner, made an unsuccessful attempt to purchase the team which Stouffer eventually sold in 1972 to another Lakewood native, Nick Mileti, whose son Jim today owns the

popular Winchester Tavern on Madison Avenue.

In 1947 Stouffer and his wife Gertrude purchased a home at 17884 Beach Rd., near the top of the beach hill next to the Clifton Club in Lakewood. Because he was an important businessman, celebrities and other important people often visited him. The Clifton Park neighborhood was abuzz when, in 1961 Walt Disney visited the Stouffers.

Stouffer eventually moved to the Winton Place where he initiated the construction of a new Stouffer's restaurant, Pier W in 1965. Pier W, which is attached to the Winton Place and now owned and managed by Select Restaurants, Inc., was and remains one of greater Cleveland's premier dining locations.

Stouffer foods were selected by NASA to feed Apollo 11, 12 and 14. Under Stouffer's leadership the company purchased a 42 acre site in Solon and established its North American processing plant. Nestle acquired Stouffer's in 1973. Currently the company has sales of \$1.21 billion and over 4,000 employees.

Stouffer lived at Lakewood's Winton Place until July 26, 1974, when he died at the age of 72.

Vernon Stouffer, a true Lakewood success story.

## 2011 Real Estate Review

by Chris Bergin

If you ask the average person on the street how they thought the local real estate market was in 2011, I think they would say that it was awful. The numbers, however, seem to indicate a flat trend since 2008. Here's how Lakewood stacked up over the past few years:

- 2007:** Total Single Family Sales 373; Median Sales Price \$130,000  
*[Financial Crisis Hits]*
- 2008:** Total Single Family Sales 354; Median Sales Price \$113,700
- 2009:** Total Single Family Sales 357; Median Sales Price \$114,000
- 2010:** Total Single Family Sales 320; Median Sales Price \$114,500
- 2011:** Total Single Family Sales 318; Median Sales Price \$112,350

Further breaking down these numbers provides some interesting insights. If we look at all sales under \$100,000, there were only 135 sales in 2011 compared to 141 in this price range in 2010. Many of these sales were short sales or bank owned properties. The median sales price in this price range fell from \$64,000 to \$54,500.

If we dissect the \$100,000 to \$200,000 range, there were 139 sales of single family homes in 2011 compared to 145 in 2010. The median sales price dropped from \$135,500 to \$130,000. But back in 2009, although there were 177 sales in this range, the median sales price was only \$129,000.

The highlight, and sign that the market may indeed have bottomed out and started working its way up, is found in sales over \$200,000. Total sales in this range were the highest since 2007. In 2011, 45 homes sold for over \$200,000 at a median sales price of \$295,000. For comparison, 2010 had 41 sales for a median sales price of \$265,000, 2009 had 37 sales for \$252,000, and 2008 had 43 sales for \$250,000.

So what does the 2012 real estate market have in store for us? No one knows for sure, but it appears that we are neither significantly up nor down, but on a slow course to recovery. It will take some time for us to see a "full" recovery. Predictions are for interest rates to remain low and extremely affordable this year, and for home

prices to remain competitive. Now is most likely the best time to consider a purchase if you are a first time buyer.

We can't predict the future, but at some point we will be able to look back and pinpoint when the recovery started. One thing that is most certain once the recovery is in full motion is that interest rates will rise, most likely sharply. Contact your lender and realtor today to discuss your options. When you look back five years down the road, you'll be happy you did.

## Bank Walkaways

by Monica Woodman

At a press conference on January 3, 2012 Senator Brown, Former Cuyahoga County Treasurer Jim Rokakis, and others presented a serious problem facing our communities. Not only are banks foreclosing on families, they are in many cases then walking away from the foreclosure process they started. When this happens, the homeowner is left thinking that they no longer own the property when in fact, they do.

One woman was invited to share

her story. She bought a home in Cleveland Heights and when she lost her job she was foreclosed on. When her home was going to sheriff's sale she signed a two year lease for an apartment. Then, months after making that commitment she found out the bank walked away from the foreclosure process leaving her responsible for both the now vacant home and the two year lease she signed.

This is happening far too often, so if you're going through foreclosure beware.

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