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Volume 8, Issue 7, April 3, 2012

State Of The City Address

Mayor Gives Candid View Of Challenges Ahead



A packed house listens intently to Mayor Summers as he gives his State of the City Address at the Masonic Temple.

by Gloria Eadeh

Mayor Michael Summers gave his second annual State of the City speech on March 27. He addressed three main areas including housing, economic development and core services. The mayor said the city is doing well, but needs improvement in these areas due to inadequate financial resources.

After recognizing the School Board, Judge Patrick Carroll, Council members and the directors of public safety he

went on to discuss the diversity of Lakewood today.

"I want to share a story with you about a community and a home," Summers said. He illustrated the broad sort of people living in Lakewood today, ranging from refugees to college students. "Each of these characters in my story has a very unique path and a very unique story, but we all share one community."

Looking at the road ahead, he discussed key trends in the

city using a PowerPoint presentation.

"Where Lakewood was 10 or 20 years ago, it is now a much younger community, it is a more educated community but in many aspects it's also a poorer community," Summers told a crowd at the Lakewood Masonic Temple.

The mayor pointed to economic distresses many homes are facing today. Lakewood's poverty level is nearly double from 8.9 percent in 2000 to 15 percent in 2010. The mayor stressed that Lakewood will continue to be a middle class community with the average home income of \$43,000

annually.

The issue of safety in the city has been a subject of much debate with many citizens feeling Lakewood is no longer as safe as it could be. Summers dispels this myth by pointing to the police department's

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Superintendent Addresses Issues Raised At Meetings

by Jeffrey W. Patterson,
Superintendent of Lakewood
City Schools

During my series of Community Engagement Meetings held throughout the city during January and February, participants brought up a number of issues regarding possible cost savings solutions that are important to clarify with the rest of the community:

PERSONNEL COMPENSATION CHANGES:

Many of the suggestions brought up regarding potential savings refer to aspects of the district's negotiated labor agreements, such as employee health care and pension contributions, type of health care plan and pay frequency. While there may be savings realized in altering the current contributions, by law this cannot be done without renegotiating with the District's three labor groups. Presently, our labor contracts are valid through July 2013.

The Administration has approached the three labor groups about re-opening the contracts and the three groups have agreed to conduct discussions. We will begin meeting in



Jeffrey W. Patterson, Superintendent of Lakewood City Schools

April to see if some common ground can be found but there is no guarantee that new contract language will be the end result.

It is important to note that meeting participants also were clear about their satisfaction with the quality of our teachers, staff and administrators and that being able to retain and attract that level of quality is a high priority. Offering compensation packages competitive with the market in the region are part of that retainment and recruitment effort.

"MOTH BALLED" BUILDINGS

Another topic that repeatedly arose at the meetings as a possible way to defray the Dis-

trict's projected deficit is to sell the District's unused school buildings – the former Franklin, McKinley and Taft elementaries. Selling a school building is not a straightforward transaction and a number of State statutes must be followed in doing so. The school buildings must be offered first for sale to any charter school that is interested. Secondly, if a sale were to go through, the District would be responsible for the asbestos abatement and/or demolition of the building, which would be a significant cost. On top of that, property prices are at the lowest they have been in decades.

Aside from the financial side of the empty school building equation, those buildings may be needed during the reconstruction of our final three school buildings – Lincoln and Roosevelt elementaries and the east half of Lakewood High School – to house our displaced students.

TAX DELINQUENCIES

Residents also repeatedly asked what is being done to improve the collection of delinquent taxes, which play a role in our projected defi-

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West Shore Career-Technical District Outstanding Student Award recipients honored by the Rotary Club of Lakewood and Rocky River on March 12.

Rotary Recognizes Outstanding West Shore Career-Tech Students

by Lynn Donaldson

West Shore Career-Technical District Outstanding Student Award recipients were honored by the Rotary Club of Lakewood and Rocky River at its noon luncheon on March 12 at the Don Umerley Civic Center.

The 17 students, top performers in their career-technical programs, were chosen for their exemplary accomplishments in the classroom, school activities, clubs, athletics and service in the

community.

Parents, employers, work supervisors and guests were among those in attendance. The Rotary club presented each student with a U.S. Savings Bond and a plaque to honor their achievements. According to Nancy Ralls, West Shore Career-Technical District career development coordinator, this is the fifteenth year the club has honored the Outstanding Student Award winners.

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Calendar Page

Tuesday, April 3 - 14

AARP FREE TAX AIDE HELP

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Still trying to prepare your income tax returns? AARP Tax Aide is offering free electronic filing of tax returns. The program is staffed by IRS-certified volunteers who are ready to assist low- to moderate-income taxpayers of all ages. It is not necessary to be an AARP member to use the service.

Appointments can be made now by calling the site you plan to use. The following Lakewood locations offer assistance on a weekly basis:

Barton Center, 14300 Detroit Ave., 9 a.m. to noon Thursdays; call (216) 221-3400.

Madison Branch of the Lakewood Public Library, 13229 Madison Ave., noon to 4 p.m. Tuesdays; call (216) 228-7428.

Lakewood Senior Center, 16024 Madison Ave., noon to 4 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays; call (216) 226-0611.

All Month

Hixson's 45th Easter Egg Show

10:00 AM - 9:00 PM

An Easter tradition, all week from Palm Sunday through Saturday. Free and open to the public, Bill Hixson's fabulous collection of Easter Eggs is a must see. Several thousand eggs on display, from hundreds of Ukrainian pysanky decorated eggs, wood carved eggs, metal eggs, hand painted ceramic, whimsical sugar eggs and eggs decorated in the jeweled manner of Faberge. Many for sale, along with special basket gifts that you can only find at Hixson's.

Hixson's Flower Barn
14125 Detroit Avenue
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Friday, April 6

Community Service At Lakewood United Methodist Church

7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Tenebrae: A Service Of Darkness by contemporary composer Hal Hopson will be the musical program offered at the Community Service at Lakewood United Methodist Church on Good Friday, April 6 at 7:00 p.m. Everyone is invited. 216-226-8644 www.lkwdUMC.org

Lakewood United Methodist Church
15700 Detroit Ave., at Summit

Saturday, April 7

Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Outdoor Worship

7:30 AM

Lakewood Park's Women's Pavilion parking lot will be the place to gather. 6:30am is the time. Everyone should dress for the weather and bring a candle that is shielded from the wind.

The outdoor venue offers an amazing hallelujah chorus of honking geese, sun rising over the Cleveland landscape, and interdenominational gifts of music, spoken word, and communion (served from the huge rock near the cliff).

Organized by the Lakewood Ministerial Association. Further information can be received by calling 221-4005, Lakewood Baptist Church and Rev. Jonathan Glass-Riley, President of the Ministerial.

Lakewood Park

Thursday, April 12

Free Home Repairs Application Event

4:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Who: Lakewood renters and homeowners with children under 6 years old.

What: We will help you complete and submit your grant application.

Please Bring: Birth certificates for children under 6 years old along with current proof of income for all adults living in the household (i.e. last two paystubs, Social Security Statement, ect).

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1:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Tabletops & Trifles is a specialty sale featuring vintage wares and collectibles. Select from a wonderful array of delicate china, sparkling crystal, gleaming silver, soft linens, lovely candlesticks, graceful vases, unique artwork, striking accessories, vintage hats, purses, gloves, lingerie. Proceeds benefit the programs and properties of the Lakewood Historical Society.

The Nicholson House
13335 Detroit Avenue

Saturday, April 14

Bridges to Recovery 5k Run/Walk Benefit for The Covenant

9:00 AM

The Covenant's Bridges to Recovery 5K Run/

Walk Benefit Race is being held on Saturday, April 14, 2012. Join in starting at 9 am at Lakewood Park at Belle and Lake Avenue in Lakewood, Ohio. Registration opens at 8:00 am. Route includes Lake Avenue, west to Edgewater Drive, loop and return to Lakewood Park. Racers will receive 100% cotton t-shirts, refreshments and food and winners receive medals and jingling jester hats. For information, please call The Covenant at (216) 574-9000 or visit <http://www.hermescleveland.com/roadracing/events/bridges.asp> to register. \$17 in advance, \$22 day of race.

The Bridges to Recovery 5K Run/1 Mile Walk event will benefit The Covenant Adolescent Chemical Dependency Treatment and Prevention Center, Inc. They provide important substance abuse prevention and treatment services for children and youth in Greater Cleveland.

Lakewood Park at Belle and Lake Avenue

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

Upcoming Submission Deadline

Sunday, April 8
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Publish Date

Tuesday, April 17
Tuesday, May 1

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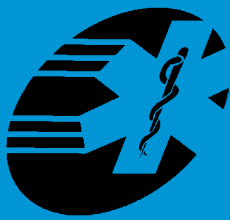
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5K RUN-WALK | 1 MILE WALK

Lakewood City News

Council Approves Stricter Rules on Nuisance Appeals

Council President Brian Powers called the March 19. Council meeting to order and asked Girl Scouts present from all the troops in Lakewood to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilwoman Mary Louise Madigan asked Council to pass a resolution congratulating the Girl Scouts of the USA, and in Lakewood, on celebrating their 100th anniversary. Council did so unanimously.

Next Councilman Ryan Nowlin read a communication from the Public Safety Committee regarding proposed changes to several nuisance abatement ordinances. The first was regarding appeal practices. The change comes in the amount of time the owner has to start the appeal process. Right now there is no limitation. The change would require a 30 day limitation to appeal from the initial declaration.

The next change to the ordinances was regarding fees charged during the nuisance abatement process. The change removes a minimum fee requirement, replacing it with a system that covers more of the city's cost directly. The new system will cover the pay of all personnel in all departments that spend time on the case in addition to resources, such as gas for vehicles, mailings, etc.

The last amendment changes how often the Nuisance Board of Appeals meets. The change would allow the board to only meet within 90 days of receiving an appeal.

Council passed the ordinance making all of the changes.

Director of Planning and Development, Dru Siley, then asked Council to consider updated recommendations from the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). In the fall the CAC made recommendations to Council regarding the spending of the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding. The original expectation was \$1,899,999 dollars. When HUD announced funding this spring Lakewood was only due to receive \$1,718,734.

Councilman Tom Bullock asked if Director Siley could go into detail regarding how the CAC made their revised recommendations, and asked for explanations about what the impact of the cuts might be.

Director Siley said that his department starts with evaluating what they want to accomplish. Once they have their goals they look at what carry-over they have from the year before. As HUD funding oftentimes comes in late in the year, it isn't always all spent by the end of that calendar year, and can be carried over to the next. If there are sizable carry-overs then not as much money will be needed in the current year. They also look at how much each program has gotten historically and whether it has been enough. They could potentially pull back some funding depending on the amount the program is currently receiving.

The fact that funding for Human Services programs can only be 15% of

the total can be limiting, because they can't simply take away from the Streets funding to support what would be cuts from Human Services. Despite this, Director Siley announced that the CAC, with the help of his department, were able to approve recommendations that changed very little in all the previous recommendations, and saved funding for all the Human Services programs because, although the City received less CDBG funding then they had previously estimated, they received about double in the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). This funding can cover some of the same programs that the Lakewood Community Service Center (LCSC) was asking CDBG funding for. LCSC will receive the remainder of its originally allocated amount from ESG. The paint program in the meantime, due to its strict restrictions, has not used its full potential yet, and between the fund balance and the money being allocated for the next year, Siley said there is still enough to do more houses than they did last year.

Councilwoman Monique Smith said that it looked like the Property Revitalization program took a higher percentage cut than some of the non Human Services programs and asked

how they decided to make those cuts.

Director Siley said that the Property Revitalization program had a sizable carry-over balance from the year before, and with the amount allocated, would have enough for the year.

Councilman Bullock then asked Director Siley about cuts to the Storefront Renovation Program. Siley said that it also had a sizable carry-over amount to sustain it.

Director Siley then announced that due to the nice weather his department was able to finish the housing survey, completing the inspections of all houses in Ward 4. He was pleased that the number of houses in each of the four categories trended well with the rest of the city. He said he was looking forward to moving on to the next phase which will involve working with homeowners to help them rectify code violations.

With no other announcements Council President Powers adjourned the meeting at 8:36 P.M.

Council meetings are held every first and third Monday of the month at 7:30 P.M. in the City Hall Auditorium. The next regularly scheduled council meeting will be held on April 16, 2012. For a copy of the agenda or for any other information regarding the Lakewood City Council, you can find it at onelakewood.com/citygovern_council.html.

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Lakewood City News

Mayor Gives Candid View Of Challenges Ahead

continued from page 1

excellent record of apprehending criminals.

"The good news is statistics tell us we are holding our own. Auto thefts are down from 2007, robberies are down from 2006, but they tell us not for a second can we let our guard down," Summers said.

He also pointed to a decline in murder, but cited drugs and alcohol as having a pivotal role in crimes within the city.

Housing and economic development have been the framework of the mayor's agenda since taking office in 2011. He noted the \$20 million in investments, and numerous jobs brought to the city this year with CVS, McDonald's, GrafTech International, and more. Then, Summers cited a recent survey conducted by the city which rated homes and placed them into four categories. Summers used this survey to stress the importance of bringing homes in disrepair up-to-date.

The mayor said 85 percent of the housing stock falls in the top two categories, but 14 percent fall in the lower categories.

"There is not an hour or a minute that we don't think about housing, in Lakewood," Summers said. "Our goal in



Mayor Summers speaks of "Many Communities, One Home, One Lakewood."

2012 is to get that 14 percent cut in half to seven percent and we are going to do it."

The mayor went on to discuss core services within the city, and the financial pressure it is facing today. After a \$1 million cut in state government funds and lower property taxes, the city faces many challenges. With less financial resources, he said City Hall will have to reduce costs, but still maintain a high standard of services. City Hall will be using a new software program, SharePoint, to make finding information easier for citizens and employees.

He went on to discuss the Gold Coast and its need for upgrading. It is

a significant source of revenue to the city, and it is the most populated area in Lakewood. Summers did not specify how he would upgrade the area.

Summers has set his sights on pro-

tecting the parks, repairing the streets, and ensuring excellent water treatment. He also discussed Lakewood Hospital, citing it as a very complicated issue, but did not elaborate.

He went on to emphasized the importance of fixing Lakewood's "dirty little secret," the sewers.

"Now that I have your attention and concern, this may surprise you but over a 100 years ago contractors took shortcuts when building our sewer system," Summers said.

After a wave of laughter from the crowd, he went on to discuss the city's responsibility to comply with the Clean Water Act and the steps necessary to rectify issues with the sewers.

With many obstacles facing the city, Summers portrayed a confident appearance and insisted the he will continue to invest in the issues that matter most.

City To Purchase Two Rooming Houses

by Christopher Bindel

On March 28, City Council convened an emergency meeting in the basement of City Hall while upstairs a meeting was being held in the main Auditorium to discuss the proposed Get Go development.

Council President Brian Powers called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. Councilman David Anderson was absent and Councilman Shawn Juris was at the Get Go meeting, after which he joined the rest of the Council.

The meeting was to discuss the City's purchase of two rooming houses, at 1436 Grace Ave and 1466 Mars Ave. Law Director Kevin Butler explained that the occupancy for these homes tends to be somewhere between 5-10 adults. The City's housing codes no longer allow rooming houses; but these, and seven others, are grandfathered in.

Butler said that in the last 10 years these homes have received over 200 emergency calls. By purchasing them the City can remove the rooming house designation so the homes will no longer be used for that purpose.

Upon discussion with the Grace property owner the City discovered that he owned the Mars home, which was also for sale. Though the Grace house originally was listed at \$200,000; the City was able to negotiate a price of \$207,000 for both homes. The Administration asked Council to approve an additional 10% in the case there are closing contingencies.

Councilman Powers asked the Administration where the purchase money would come from, and asked how much they thought they would recoup on the resale of the homes.

Finance Director Jennifer Pae said about \$150,000 would be coming from the Land Acquisition Fund. The remainder would come from the economic development part of the General Fund, which had been put aside from

2011.

Mayor Summers said how much the City can recoup through resale depends on the market. The City wants to make sure the homes are purchased by buyers who will make them into great single family homes. He's hoping to recoup half, maybe more which will go into the General Fund first, then to the Land Acquisition Fund.

Councilwoman Monique Smith congratulated the Mayor and the Administration on the purchase and on the fact that their tougher stance on housing seems to be making a difference. She said that these aren't the first rentals that have been put up for sale after the City has paid owners a visit to make clear what is expected of them.

Councilman Powers stated that the emergency meeting was called so the City wouldn't have to wait a month to act. The next meeting is April 2 so the earliest they would have been able to act, without this meeting, was in May.

Council passed the resolution unanimously, allowing the mayor to make the purchases.

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Lakewood Public Library Events

compiled by Leana Donofrio-Milovan

Tuesday, 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 Waste-land, 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.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Saturday, 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.

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

Monday, April 9

Health and Wealth: Power Living: Power Lovin

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 your 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

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Tuesday, April 10

Poetry Month

Medieval Ohio: a Poem for d.a. levy

New Words Inspired by a Cleveland Original

Poet Richard Blevins has recently completed a major new work inspired by the short, fervent life of Cleveland poet, publisher and artist d.a. levy. Kenneth Warren, the former Director of Lakewood Public Library, and poet-publisher Tod Thilleman will join Blevins for a roiling discussion of the deep Cleveland history and unchecked hermeticism that gripped the imagination in the 1960s and continues to speak in poetry. The lowercased levy,

best known for works such as The North American Book of the Dead, Cleveland Undercov-ers, and Suburban Monastery Death Poem aspired to nothing less than reading everything, writing everything and losing himself in infinity. His vision and ambition live on over forty years after his death.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Wednesday, April 11

Lakewood Historical Society: Meet Me on Lake Erie, Dearie!

It was the biggest party Cleveland ever threw... In the middle of the Great Depression, the Great Lakes Exposition filled 135 acres of the downtown lakefront with everything from industrial exhibits to ethnic eateries and from Shakespeare to strippers. All these, plus Billy Rose’s Aquacade, will be covered in an illustrated talk by Lakewood writer John Vacha.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Thursday, April 12

Documentary - Beats, Rhymes and Life: The Travels of a Tribe Called Quest (2011) Directed by Michael Rappaport, Rated R

Will A Tribe Called Quest ever make music together again? That’s the question that drives this fan-letter documentary through the history of hip hop into the mystery of creative col-laboration. For the uninitiated, A Tribe Called Quest was the animating force behind the Native Tongues movement, positive rappers more concerned with self-expression than gold chain status. You should know.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Thursday, April 12

Booked for Murder - Girl Sleuth: Nancy Drew and the Women Who Created Her, by Melanie Rehak

Many mystery fans got their first taste of the genre as young girls with the Nancy Drew. In 1930, Edward Stratemeyer started the series that would endure for decades. Rehak fol-lows the story behind the amateur sleuth with her creator Stratemeyer, and his daughter and a journalist who continued the series after his death under the name Carolyn Keene. The evolution of the Nancy Drew character is told alongside the story of women’s lib.

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

Saturday, April 14

Lakewood Public Cinema

Dead Poets Society (1989), Directed by Peter Weir , Rated PG

Oh Captain, My Captain... There is nothing more dangerous than a teenager exposed to the passions and sorrows of those who choose to live as poets. The boys who lead this film are being groomed to rule the world, not to experience it. And any teacher who dares his charges to face death and feel each moment of their lives is only courting danger. Get up on your desk and celebrate National Poetry Month with defiance.

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

Sunday, April 15

Sunday with the Friends:

A Tribute to Daniel Thompson: The People’s Poet

To celebrate National Poetry Month, we offer this video presentation of a once-in-a-life-time gathering of the late poet laureate’s peers, critics, friends and admirers that took place last year at Lakewood Public Library. Testimonials and readings of major works are inter-rupted by spontaneous poetry and other works of art. It makes it seem like the big-hearted, mischievous man was there the whole time.

Sunday, April 15 at 2:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Children/Youth Events

compiled by Arlie Matera

Wednesday, April 4

10 Tips for Working Parents For parents and caregivers

Kim Langley presents a practical and light hearted look at how to raise kids that you really like living with, advice for streamlining daily tasks, and ideas for coping with the demands of being a working parent who wants the family to thrive, not just survive.

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Saturday, April 14

Tail Waggin’ Tutors For school-age children

Bone up on your reading skills by reading to a dog. Drop in for a one-to-one session with one of our dogs and owners that have been certified through Therapy Dogs International.

11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room.

Wednesdays, ongoing through 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 adven-ture 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.

Family Weekend Wonders

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

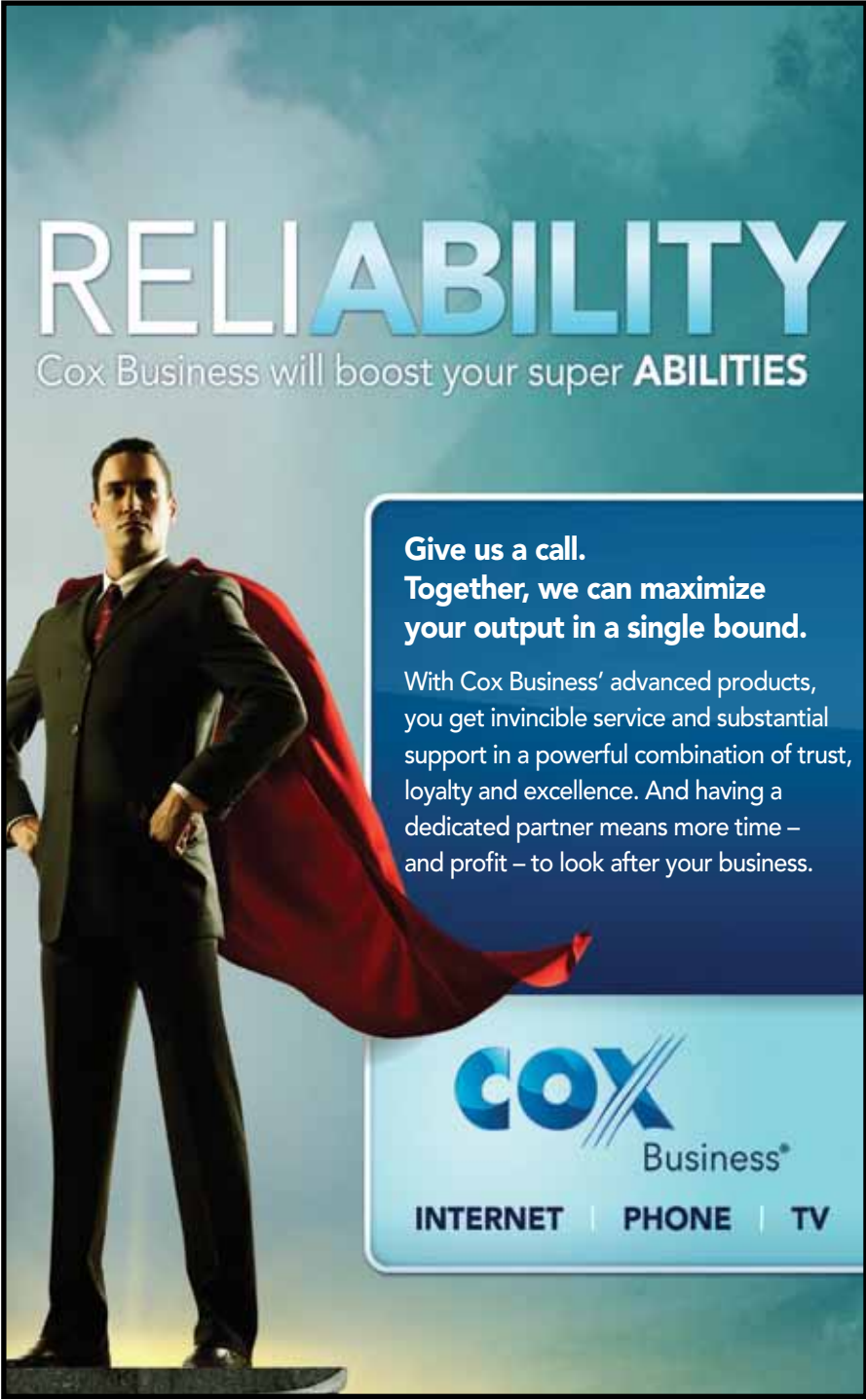
Main Library Activity Room and Madison Branch Auditorium

Weekends With Wee Ones

For families with children under 2 years old

Spend a part of your family weekend time clapping your hands, tapping your feet, singing nursery rhymes and, of course, sharing books. We will provide materials and ideas for fami-lies wishing to continue the fun at home. Programs are offered every weekend throughout the year, and there is no need to register in advance.

Saturdays at 11:30 a.m. and Sundays at 3:30 p.m. in the Madison Branch Auditorium



Lakewood Public Library

What Made This World:

The Library Celebrates National Poetry Month

by Ben Burdick

Somewhere along the line, we lost touch with poetry. Sure we still study poems in school, exchange greeting cards and anoint our favorite songwriters as “true poets.” But poetry for poetry’s sake has all but disappeared from our lives. This is a shame, because nearly every human endeavor has its roots in verses chanted around the campfire—not just literature, but science, philosophy, religion and law. Before the written word, rhymes and metaphors were easier to remember. And with the rise of literacy, words multiplied in surprising new ways.

Today, in a world ruled by clocks, computers and coins, the words have been separated from their primal meanings. They’ve been pinned down with precise definitions, machine-friendly grammar and spell-check approval. Standardization and straightforward prose are useful tools for a human race taking on bigger and more complex challenges, but good poetry takes us back to the beginning and offers a kind of peace of mind that only fools could hope to explain.

That’s why the Lakewood Public Library is going all out in April to celebrate National Poetry Month. We want to reclaim the words with music, dance, discussion, translation, animation, hip hop and more. We’re even going to ask you to take your own stab at immortality and fine dining with a poetry contest. The complete details of the individual programs can be found at www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/poetry or on the Observer’s Library



Calendar. But let’s take a look at the highlights...

Four major events will examine the lives of Ohio poets who made an impact on the world. Hart Crane’s epic sincerity will be accompanied by the music that haunted and inspired his short life. A local poet will tap into the strange power of d.a. levy with a mesmerizing new poem from outside of time. Actors from the legendary Karamu House will read verses of Langston Hughes, both humorous and heart-rending. And Kenneth Patchen’s biographer will join the editor of a new book of Patchen’s remarkable correspondence to read letters from the crossroads of 20th century poetry.

Going back a bit further, Stergios Lazos and Daniel Cavoli of St. Edward

High School will make an offering and allow the dead to speak once again in their original Greek and Latin with an evening of Classical verse. English translations will also be provided, but audiences won’t be deprived of the original rhythms and textures of tales compelling enough to survive millennia.

Meet Me On Lake Erie, Dearie! With Author John Vacha

by Lisa Calfee

In 1936, while the country was straining under the weight of the Great Depression, Cleveland decided it was a good time to throw a party. Over 7 million people agreed! They streamed into Cleveland for the Great Lakes Exposition which featured 135 acres of food, fun and exhibits on downtown Cleveland’s lakefront. Renowned local historian and author John Vacha tells the fascinating story in an illustrated talk on Wednesday, April 11 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Auditorium of the Lakewood Public Library.

Wednesday’s talk will be based on Vacha’s latest award winning book, *Meet Me on Lake Erie, Dearie!*:

Free movies shown on the Library’s big screen will also join the parade with that classic of youth rebellion, *Dead Poets Society*. The tragic, romantic life of John Keats also takes a bow in *Bright Star*. And a special hip hop documentary chronicles the creative conflicts of friends and legends in *Beats, Rhymes and Life: The Travels of A Tribe Called Quest*. Details can be found at www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/film.

The most important point that we’re trying to make with National Poetry Month is that poetry matters in all of our lives. It isn’t owned by the experts, no matter how convincing their arguments to the contrary might be. You can be a poet and you don’t have to change who you are to do so. That is why we are inviting everyone to submit a few choice words to our poetry contest. The prize is a \$200 gift card to Players on Madison. The subject is Transversion, the new sculpture on the Library’s northwest lawn. The poem can be any style from anybody—it doesn’t even have to rhyme. All the rules, plus the dates and times of all the programs can be found at www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/poetry.

St. Ed's Robots Invade Library!

by Andrew Harant

At some point in the future, robots will, of course, take over the world—at least according to many science fiction novels and films. The St. Edward High School Robotics Club helps us progress toward this common future by building and programming present-day robots that compete on a national stage. More than 30 students from St. Edward High School, Magnificat, St. Joseph Academy, and Westlake High School participate in the club, working in such engineering capacities as mechanical, electrical, and/or programming.

Recently the team placed 37th in the annual Buckeye Regional FIRST Robotic Competition by creating a

robot for “Rebound Rumble,” a unique basketball game for robots. Their robot “Street Legal” is controlled by joystick and uses high-speed rollers and belts to pick up then shoot basketballs. The team has competed in this competition annually since 2003.

On Saturday, April 21 at 3:00 p.m., the St Edward High School Robotics Club will bring their robots and humans to Lakewood Public Library for a demonstration. This program for all ages is free and open to the public. It will be held in the Main Library’s Multipurpose Room. For more information, call the Library’s Children’s and Youth Services at (216) 226-8275, ext. 140.

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Lakewood Schools

LHS Artists Dominate Top Spots In Rotary/Beck Contest

by Christine Gordillo

Student artists from Lakewood High school had an impressive showing once again in the 67th annual Lakewood/Rocky River Rotary Club Music, Speech and Visual Arts Contest, in collaboration with The Beck Center for the Arts. Senior Bram Myers captured first place for his piece “Forest in Charcoal” in the Visual Arts category and senior violinist Jiale “Andy” Peng won the top prize in the Music category. Peng also gave a stirring performance of his piece at the awards

ceremony March 27.

Prize winners are given cash prizes by the Rotary of \$500 for first place, \$300 for second and \$150 for third. In the Visual Arts category, which had more than 100 entries, four of the six works among the top three prizes and Honorable Mentions were from Lakewood High students. Senior Montague Cockrell was awarded second place for his acrylic painting, “Cleveland Born.” Seniors Hannah Frimel (“Under the Sea” batik) and Michael Todaro (“Stun E. Cuffs” ink) were given

two of the three Honorable Mentions.

The Music category was dominated by LHS students. Besides Peng’s winning “Violin Concerto” by Sibelius, senior Abby Boland captured second place with her soprano performance of “Se Tu M’ami Se Sospri” by Pergolesi and senior Jacob Short was awarded third place for his trumpet performance of “Hummel Trumpet Concerto, Movement 1” by J. Hummel.

In the speech contest, participants were asked to give an original speech based upon the “The Four Way Test of Rotary.” The speaker was asked to apply this test to everyday relationships with individuals and ask 1) Is it the truth? 2) Is it fair to all concerned? 3) Will it build goodwill and better friendships? and 4) Will it be beneficial

to all concerned. LHS junior Steve Saed captured second place in this category.

This longstanding Rotary contest welcomes the best high school students from Lakewood and Rocky River as they demonstrate excellence in the areas of music, speech and the visual arts. Participants come from one of the five Lakewood and Rocky River high schools: Lakewood High, Rocky River High, St. Edward’s, Magnificat and Lutheran West.

Nearly 60 of the visual arts entries, including the award winners and many from Lakewood High artists, are on display at the Beck Center through April. The entries include ceramic pieces, oil paintings, mixed media, pencil and charcoal drawings among others.

LHS Student’s Video Captures National Award



LHS senior Lizzy Taucher will travel to New York City in June to accept her American Visions Medal for her animated video.

by Christine Gordillo

Lakewood High School senior and West Shore Interactive Media student Lizzy Taucher has been named an American Visions Medal National Award winner in the renowned Scholastic Art & Writing competition. Taucher’s video, “Sydney the Giraffe,” competed with entries from across the country in the Film & Animation category.

In December, Taucher received the Gold Key Regional Award, which qualified her work to be considered on a national level. Taucher and her Interactive Media teacher Anne McQuay

have been invited to New York City to attend the Scholastic Awards ceremony and celebration in June.

Taucher was one of five American Voices & Visions Nominees from the Midwest region and the only one to receive national recognition with the American Visions & Voices Medal.

Taucher joins other celebrated participants including past Scholastic winners Andy Warhol, Robert Redford, and Joyce Carol Oates. You can find Taucher’s story of an owl who teaches a giraffe to sing on You Tube by searching “Sydney the Giraffe.”

Superintendent Addresses Issues Raised

continued from page 1

cit. The responsibility for collecting property taxes lies with Cuyahoga County and not with the Lakewood City Schools or the City of Lakewood. County Executive Ed FitzGerald has put together a task force to recommend better collection practices to improve upon the county’s 15% delinquent tax rate, and we are hopeful that the work of this task force has a positive impact on tax collections.

USE OF GRANT MONEY

Applying for more grants was a suggestion that also arose at many of the meetings. The district actively seeks out grant money to help supplement our operating budget and much of the

new technology that is in our students’ hands today were paid for with grant money. However, the District must be cautious in what type of grants it pursues as experience has proven that what does not cost the District anything at first may in the long run be more taxing on the budget as programs and personnel put in place must be maintained after the grant money runs out. It is a fine line that the District is continually walking in its effort to discover new revenue sources. We pursue every possible grant that we see as a good fit in Lakewood, while maintaining our focus on the Common Core and the

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LHS Music Groups Earn Superior Ratings

courtesy of Beth Hankins, Orchestra Director; Lisa Hanson, Choir Director and Brian Maskow, Band Director

March was a busy month for music contests for our high school music groups and as has become the custom, the Lakewood High student ensembles earned the highest marks in the competitions.

On March 2 and March 3, the LHS Orchestra Program hosted the 2012 Ohio Music Education Association

(OMEA) State Orchestra Adjudicated Event. In addition to hosting, Lakewood High’s Symphonic Strings and Philharmonia Orchestra participated in the event. The Symphonic Strings competed in the highest class and received straight “superior” ratings. Philharmonia participated in the second highest category and received straight “superior” ratings on the performance floor and an “excellent” in the sight reading room. Overall, both orchestras received “superior ratings” as their final score.

On March 9, the LHS Symphonic Mixed Choir and the Symphonic Treble Choir, under the direction of Dr. Lisa Hanson, participated in their OMEA Adjudicated Event. Each choir performed three prepared selections for three judges, and then went to a separate room where they were given a piece of music they had never seen, and were judged on their ability to accurately sight read that piece. The Symphonic Mixed Choir received unanimous “superior” or “I” ratings from their judges, both in the prepared performance and the sight reading portion. The Symphonic Treble Choir received one superior (I) rating and three “Outstanding” (II) ratings for an overall rating of II. Symphonic Treble entered in class “C” and the Symphonic Mixed Choir in the highest class, “AA.”

Some of the comments from the judges for the Symphonic Treble Choir included, “You are a very musical group,” and, “I loved hearing you sing – beautiful voices!” Symphonic Mixed Choir received these comments: “Dr. Hanson, what fine craftsmanship with your shaping of this fine choir. Brava!” and from another judge: “Please thank your teacher for preparing you so well. You are doing so many things correctly and sing with such a beautiful tone. Thank you!”

The high school’s Wind Ensemble and Symphonic bands also earned superior ratings at their OMEA Adjudicated Large Group contest held March 9 and March 10 at Strongsville High School.



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Join the Discussion at: www.lakewoodobserver.com

Lakewood Schools

Westshore Young Leaders Are Locked Into Fun

by Carole Ochs

On March 2nd, teens from six Westshore High Schools attended the Second Annual Westshore Young Leaders Network (WYLN) Lock In at the Westlake Recreation Center. The Westshore Young Leaders is a Leadership Program that was developed by the Westshore Enforcement Bureau (WEB) in August 2010 to promote alcohol and other drug free choices for Middle and High School teens.

WYLN hosted this event, providing 137 teens with an evening of fun during which some played basketball, volleyball, and corn hole while others relaxed in the sauna and the pool's lazy river. D.J.'s played tunes for line dancing and singing karaoke. A photo booth with props was a popular new addition to the event this year. The wide variety of activities available provided something fun for everyone. A delicious pasta bar complete with salad and garlic bread sticks kept energy up for the night's activities.

School Administrators, teachers, resource offices, counselors, and parents along with WEB staff chaperoned the event. Twenty six teams consisting of 5 or 6 teens each were given poster board and markers and commissioned with the task of creating a media message that conveys a positive approach for alcohol and other drug free choices. Posters were

judged for their creativity by a group of chaperones. Prizes for first, second and third place winners were awarded gift cards for I tunes, Target and Mitchell's Homemade Ice Cream.

The posters will be displayed in local merchants' windows in each of the Westshore Communities: Bay Village, Fairview Park, Lakewood, North Olmsted, Rocky River and Westlake, promoting a positive message from teens to teens. All in attendance received a T-shirt donated by Cleveland Printwear, a sponsor for the event. Poppee's Popcorn located in Elyria generously provided cheese corn again this year. The Westshore Enforcement Bureau's Special Agent in Charge Jeff Capretto and this writer meet with the Young Leaders monthly and are

Box It!

by Kaylei Matello and Erica Wills, 6th grade, Harding Middle School

The students at Harding Middle School are benefitting immensely from a new pre-writing method called "Box It." They have been learning this method for several weeks and their learning opportunities continue to grow with each new day. "I see improvement in my work. It helps me cut the time that I would be spending on the questions in half. It helps me see what I should answer even better," says a stu-



From left to right: AJ Garber, Sarah Ghose, Nick Jackoski, Nick Stadler, Chris Cole, Joe Czechanski, Ben Toole, John Lieber, Nick Boatman, Steve Saed, Bayardo Rojas

pleased to know that there isn't a shortage in Westshore Communities of young people who are focused on posi-

tive goals, developing leadership skills, and making a contribution at home, in school and in the community.

dent from Mr. Spooner's class. There is even a song to help students remember the method!

The way this new method works is for every point the question is worth, the student makes a box. Generally, this method is for two point or four point extended-response questions, but it could be used for almost any other kind. The students then find verbs used in the question and label their boxes with those verbs. Box It is used to organize your thoughts and ensure you have answered all parts of the question. "Research shows that students who use the Box It method usually have a higher score on the Ohio Achievement Assessment," says Mr. Costello, the school's media specialist. The students can write out bullet points in the box or complete sentences. Most of the time, they are required to write a paragraph beneath the boxes.

Mr. Costello has a really big impact on Box It. Since he does not have his own classroom, you may find it hard to believe that he created the song that has become so famous among the students. Mr. Costello wanted

to help the students understand this method better, so he started playing notes on his keyboard, recruited students to sing, and the Box It song was created. To hear multiple versions of the song you can go to: http://lakewoodcityschools.org/content_page2.aspx?schoolid=4&cid=726

Many students have seen much improvement in their work. We interviewed some students to see how much they've benefitted from Box It. Sixth grader Carolyn Kocian said, "Box It organizes my thoughts very well. It helps with confusing problems by breaking them down," and Keith Ditchman, a student in Mrs. Kehn's class, said it has, "helped me organize my thoughts and be able to look back at them."

Each of the students interviewed said that they felt Box It would help them get a better grade on the Ohio Achievement Assessment at the end of the year. They also said they noticed improvement in their work. Now that you know about the Box It method, try it for yourself and see the instant improvement in your work!

Superintendent Addresses Issues Raised At Meetings

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21st Century skills that will allow our students to excel upon graduation.

While all of these topics are valid points to bring up in our District's search for savings, I wanted to emphasize that if these were answers to our financial challenges, I can assure you they would be examined. I hope that our talks with the labor groups bear fruit and that the reductions we eventually do make will reflect the values that our community shared with me throughout my meetings.

As one of 613 Ohio school districts, we have a limited number of tools in the toolbox that allow us to have an impact on our fixed costs that are affected by current economic conditions. As many of you also realize, in the last year the State of Ohio has significantly shifted

the burden of funding school districts and municipalities to the local level. However, as your new Superintendent, please understand that I will not rest until I have exhausted every possible solution in helping keep our Lakewood City School District financially healthy and solvent for the next decade and beyond.

We have an ambitious vision in Lakewood to elevate our school system to be one of the top recognized school districts in Ohio. In order to attain this standing, we must have the necessary resources while utilizing them judiciously. As such, we welcome your ideas and we welcome continuing the dialogue which began with the 26 community engagement meetings the past two months. We want to achieve excellence for everyone. Our students deserve no less.

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Lakewood Cares

Is Your Dog In “Spring Training”? Bo Rog, DVM To Be Guest Speaker At FLDP Event

by Alanna Faith

Recently, Mother Nature gave us a glimpse of the gorgeous weather that’s just around the corner. It gave everyone spring fever, and dogs with their owners filled Lakewood Dog Park.

Dr. Rog, of Lakewood Animal Hospital asks, “Is your dog in ‘Spring Training’?”

Just as the the “boys of summer” are warming up for the season ahead, so must dog owners prep pooches for warm weather.

FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, Friends of the Lakewood Dog Park will host Dr. Rog on Sunday, April 22 at 6 p.m. at the Lakewood Public Library Auditorium, 15425 Detroit Avenue. Please arrive early for best seating.

Before your dog takes to the field or runs from home to Lakewood Dog Park this spring, find out how to get your pooch player ready to romp. Dr. Rog will offer tips to keep the canines healthy and safe this season.

When is it too early for “pee wee” puppies to play with other dogs? Why are vaccines, proper ID, and leashes important “equipment”? Is “physical conditioning” a good idea to get in shape for increased exercise? Why are hound hydration and nutrition important? What about summer grooming?

Dr. Rog will coach dog owners so that you’re ready to enjoy a game or two and have fun being outdoors with you dog this summer.

Friends of the Lakewood Dog Park, Inc. is the non-profit, all volunteer organization that manages the Lakewood Dog Park in conjunction with the City of Lakewood, which owns the dog park.

Annual membership in Friends of the Lakewood Dog Park (FLDP) is ONLY \$10! That’s less than a \$1 a month and

helps provide the amenities at Lakewood Dog Park. Plus, it’s tax deductible.

You’re invited to become a member of Friends of the Lakewood Dog Park at the April 22 event. Please arrive early to complete your membership application and payment. FLDP accepts cash and personal checks. You may also join online using credit card payment at

www.LakewoodDogPark.com.

Want to know what other events are happening at Lakewood Dog Park this spring, summer and fall? Sign up for e-mail updates at www.LakewoodDogPark.com and check out the event calendar. “LIKE” the Lakewood Dog Park Facebook page and follow Friends of the Lakewood Dog Park on Twitter.

Lakewood Early Childhood PTA’s Bargain Baby Bonanza

by Sharon O’Donnell

Come and shop at our semi-annual kid’s resale event on Saturday April 21 at Emerson Elementary School, 13439 Clifton Boulevard from 9 a.m.- 1p.m. Find gently used baby and youth clothing, toys, gear and maternity clothes. Sample the homemade treats at the bake

sale along with goodies from Blackbird Bakery and Einstein Brothers’ Bagels and coffee from The Root Café.

Win raffle prizes and find out more about all the services and events available through the LECPTA.

Doors open at 9 a.m. Earlybird admission is \$5 between 9 and 10

a.m. and regular admission is \$1 after 10 a.m.

Last minute seller tables may be available before April 14 at a cost of \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members.

Contact BBB.LECPTA@gmail.com or see www.lecpta.com for more information.

Rotary Recognizes Outstanding West Shore Career-Tech Students

continued from page 1

Each award recipient is automatically nominated to receive the “Career-Technical Student of the Year Award” which will be announced at West Shore’s annual Career Passport and Student Recognition Assembly on May 22.

West Shore districts are Bay Village, Lakewood, Rocky River and Westlake. This year West Shore is serving 491 students in its workforce

development programs.

The 2012 Outstanding Student Award recipients are: Mike Willi, automotive technology; Jessi Gan-yard, biotechnology; Josh Jenkins, business management; Max Smith, community based training at Bonne Bell; Crystal Palmer, community based training at Marriott; Sarah Musleh, community based training at Rae Ann; Corey Riester, construction trades; Howard Kolodny, culinary

arts/ProStart; Caroline Schwind, early childhood education/senior services; John Blainer, electronic technology; Mark Hanna, health careers technology; Elizabeth Taucher, interactive media; Asael Suleiman, medical office management; Alex Wilson, networking /Cisco; Ryan Cleary, Project Lead the Way; Michael Simmons, service occupations training; and Matt Lewis, Transition to Work.

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This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at the Cleveland Clinic and is funded by the NIH.



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Wednesday Combined Communion Service
10 a.m. Auburn Hall at Bay Presbyterian

Combined Maundy Thursday Service
7:30 p.m. Sanctuary at Bay Presbyterian

Combined Good Friday Service
7:30 p.m. Sanctuary at Bay Presbyterian

Easter Sunday
10 a.m. Bay High School
christchurchwestshore.com

"Go, make disciples, teach them to obey the commands of Christ." Matthew 28:19-20

Lakewood Cares

Tabletops And Trifles

by Paula Reed

Introduced for the first time last year, the Tabletops & Trifles sale is back again by popular demand. On Friday, April 13, from 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, April 14th from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. the historic Nicholson House, 13335 Detroit, recalls its elegant past. Its original owners, James and Betsy Nich-



Tabletops and Trifles takes place at the historic Nicholson House.

olson, were instrumental in the growth of young Lakewood, and with this sale we reminisce about the entertaining they must have done in their home. This specialty sale of the Lakewood Historical Society features the finer things in life from the past and today. Among the names you will recognize are Haviland, Limoge, Noritake, Wedgewood, Belleek, Baldwin, Gorham--items seldom found at these prices. Vintage china and glassware, graceful vases, lovely candlesticks, polished silver, crisp linens, smart accessories, picture frames and artwork will outfit your table and home. Need to equip your bar? We can help you serve punch, wine, martinis, or ice whatever



Some of the place settings and decor available for purchase at Tabletops and Trifles.

drinks you desire.

There will also be a selection of vintage fur pieces, hats, gloves, scarves,

purses, lingerie and jewelry in the Ladies' Retiring Room, in which you'll also find the tea table. Enjoy a confection and sip

a cup of tea while you shop--our intention at this sale is to pamper you.

There's parking at St. Ed's, across the street. Gather up a group of friends and combine your shopping trip with a meal at one of our great local restaurants--what fun you'll have! And since the proceeds benefit the programs and properties of the Lakewood Historical Society, you'll be helping a worthy organization while taking advantage of great bargains. Don't miss this beautiful sale!



The Covenant Treatment And Prevention Center Presents A Bridges To Recovery 5K Walk/Run Benefit

by Christa Kraft

The Covenant's Bridges to Recovery 5K Run/Walk Benefit Race is being held on Saturday, April 14, 2012. Join in starting at 9 a.m. at Lakewood Park at Belle and Lake Avenue in Lakewood, Ohio. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. Route includes Lake Avenue, west to Edgewater Drive, loop and return to Lakewood Park. Racers will receive 100% cotton t-shirts, refreshments and food and winners receive medals and jingling jester hats.

The Bridges to Recovery 5K Run/1 Mile Walk event will benefit The Covenant Adolescent Chemical Dependency Treatment and Prevention Center, Inc.

They provide important substance abuse prevention and treatment services for children and youth in Greater Cleveland.

Their mission is to assist children, adolescents and their families who are addressing chemical dependency and mental health problems, so that they have the opportunity to pursue a happy, healthy, and productive lifestyle.

The Covenant pursues this mission by providing high quality, comprehensive and intensive treatment and prevention services to those in need, regardless of their ability to pay.

These important services are provided to children and youth from throughout the Greater Cleveland

region, and each year, more than 90% of clients cannot afford to pay for any of the services they receive. All proceeds from this event will be used to provide services to youth and children in need.

For information, please call The Covenant at (216) 574-9000 or visit <http://www.hermescleveland.com/roadracing/events/bridges.asp> to register. Registration is \$17 in advance, \$22 day of race. Join us for a fun event to help children and youth in need. Presenting sponsor is Forest City Enterprises. For more information about The Covenant, please call us at 216-574-9000 or visit our web site at www.the-covenant.org.

Looking For Good Runners, Joggers, And Walkers

by Ron Petras

I am Ron Petras, the Cleveland team captain for the NF Endurance Team for the Children's Tumor Foundation (CTF), and I am looking for a few good runners, joggers, walkers, and supporters. The Endurance Team is a national program organizing individuals and teams to participate in local marathons. Our objective is to bring awareness, as well as raise funds, for the CTF.

The Children's Tumor Foundation is the global leader in funding medical research to find effective treatments for Neurofibromatosis (NF). NF causes tumors to grow on nerves throughout the body and can lead to blindness, bone deformities, cancer, deafness, disfigurement, learning disabilities, paralysis, and disabling pain. NF is rarely talked about, but affects about 1 in every 3,000 births and millions of people around the world. The Foundation is leading the way in drug discovery for the disorder, with 50 drugs in the pipeline today and more to come in the future. We are always evolving, as can you.

Some of you may have heard of Nick Gilbert, son of Cavs owner Dan

Gilbert, who was highlighted on the news during last year's NBA draft when he was hosting a fundraising event on Twitter. Nick is this year's youth ambassador for the CTF. Nick's role, as well as ours, is to bring more awareness to how widespread Neurofibromatosis is. Nick said at last year's benefit dinner, "No there is nothing to like about NF, nor all of the things that can happen to people with NF. I don't have to like it. But I don't also have to be a 'victim' just because I was born with NF. I do not choose to live with NF. But I do have a choice in how I live. And I choose my life by enjoying every moment and to look at the bright side of everything."

One of many inspirational NF stories is that of Matt Hay, who had successfully completed the Ironman competition on September 11, 2011 in 15 hours

and 41 minutes. Matt has had two brain surgeries, a spinal surgery, and five eye surgeries. He is also a husband and family man. Another one is my daughter Amie of Avon Lake. She was diagnosed in 1997 and since then has had two cyberknife treatments for brain tumors and two spinal surgeries. Her most recent spinal surgery was in late February. Amie is planning on participating in the Cleveland Marathon on May 20, 2012. This will be her fifth half-marathon.

Amie's time will not be the fastest, but her drive and motivation to complete the course were inspired by both Nick and Matt. They all have the same

desire not to let this condition hamper their goals. I hope that they, as well as many others with NF, can be an inspiration to you.

We are looking for both teams and individuals to participate in the upcoming Cleveland Marathon on Sunday May 20, 2012. If interested in joining, please contact Ron Petras at Clevelandendurance@hotmail.com. Anyone looking for more information, please go to ctf.org or <http://ctf.kintera.org/NFECleveland2012>. You can also check us out on Facebook at Cleveland Endurance and if you would like to make a donation, please visit <http://ctf.kintera.org/nfcleveland2012/amiepetras>.



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Inner Ring Conspiracy Rocks Lakewood

by Bill Rouse

So what compels four, middle-aged guys to embark on an original music project, replete with weekly practices, selling & playing gigs and recording? For 40- & 50-somethings with families, putting forth effort to play in a band has seemingly more downsides than upsides. Spouses are thinking you are losing it (at least at first), your kids are thinking you are way not cool (this doesn't go away) and many others are wondering, "Why are you doing this?!" Many assume that I am going through a midlife crisis. Maybe so, but I don't know how to shake it if that's the case. And then there is the constant struggle to fit weekly practices among other workplace and family priorities.

The upsides? For us, writing and playing music is not just fun - it's sort of a calling, an itch that needs to be scratched; it's even cathartic. I feel most healthy when I'm playing music.

With that said, Inner Ring Conspiracy was formed in the winter of 2010-11 by Lakewood residents Mark



The cover of the Inner Ring Conspiracy's debut CD

Bluhm (bass), Paul Nickels (drums), Tim Pursifull (lead vocals) and Bill Rouse (guitar). As musical genres go, we play "power-pop". Our music is

bona fide electric rock music, with writing influences ranging from Buddy Holly to the Rolling Stones to the '90s Seattle sound. We ride that fine line

of taking our music seriously while trying not to take ourselves so. I love the question, "Are you any good?" We think so, but of course we better think that. But you can decide for yourself, and what better way to find out than by attending our next concert at The Winchester Music Hall in Lakewood (www.thewinchester.net) on Saturday, May 12. We will be releasing our debut CD, "Gray Day in Cleveland," at the show, performing it in its entirety, as well as playing some other favorites. A copy of the CD and a buffet are included with the price of admission. We really hope to see you there!



Classic Fairy Tale "Sleeping Beauty" Comes To Life

by Fran Storch

Beck Center's Dance Workshop and Dance Education program proudly present an encore production of a condensed version of Tchaikovsky's

classic ballet "Sleeping Beauty" April 27 through 29 in the Recital Hall of the Music-Armory Building at the Beck Center for the Arts. Show times are 7 p.m. Friday, 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday,

and 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are on sale now at beckcenter.org.

This romantic fairy tale tells the story of the beautiful princess Aurora who is cursed at birth by the wicked fairy Carabosse to prick her finger on a spindle on her sixteenth birthday and die. The Lilac Fairy cannot break the curse but casts a spell so Aurora will not die but sleep for 100 years until awakened by the kiss of a prince. The ballet concludes with a wedding celebration visited by fairy tale characters.

Beck's production, specially choreographed for children, includes a cast of 65 students including 12 male dancers. Princess Aurora will be danced by Julia Horner, age 17. Taylor Gerrasch, age 17, will dance the role of the wicked fairy Carabosse and Abby Schneider, age 16, is featured as the Lilac Fairy. Toryon Abner, a student from the Cleveland School of the Arts, will dance the male lead role of the Prince. With original choreography by Marius Petipa, Beck's

"Sleeping Beauty" includes additional choreography by Melanie Szucs, associate director of Dance Education and artistic director of the Dance Workshop at the Beck Center.

Tickets are \$12 for adults/seniors and \$10 for students/children 18 and under. (Ticket prices include service fees.) For tickets, visit beckcenter.org or call the Beck Center box office at 216.521.2540, ext. 10. Beck Center is located at 17801 Detroit Avenue in Lakewood, just ten minutes west of downtown Cleveland. Free onsite parking is available.

Beck Center's production of "Sleeping Beauty" is sponsored by Cuyahoga Arts and Culture and the Ohio Arts Council.

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.

Lakewood Recreation Ready For Next Season

by Mitchell Robida

Lakewood Recreation congratulates the following winter adult basketball champions: T/TH B-High Third Place Tavern, T/TH B-Low Smink Electric and Riverwood Café, Six Ft & Under Harry Buffalo/Mike and Sinagra/McGinty. With winter leagues concluded, we're ready for spring...

Spring Volleyball

Registration is now underway for spring adult volleyball. This Coed volleyball program is conducted by experienced player and coordinator Pat Lewis, and designed for intermediate players. Participants register on an individual basis. The goal of the program is to build on base of players from winter session. The program will take place at Hayes Elementary School on Thursday nights beginning April 12.

Summer Volleyball

The summer adult volleyball season will feature 4 vs 4 sand volleyball at the recently renovated Lakewood Park sand volleyball courts. Tuesday evening and Saturday morning coed divisions are offered. Team registration for either division is \$99.


Spring/Summer Softball

There are weekday and Sunday men's and coed leagues, and a Sunday senior league. All leagues are sanctioned by the Amateur Softball Association. Team registration fees vary. Individual roster fees of \$15 per resident and \$25

per nonresident apply for most leagues, as well as a \$27 game fee per team per game. Uniform jerseys are required for all leagues; uniform pants and hat are required for men's AA leagues.

Summer Adult Kickball

The summer season will "kick off" in June. Returning team registration begins April 9, open registration begins April 23. Leagues are offered on Thursday and Friday evenings. Team registration is \$75. Individual roster fees of \$15 per resident and \$25 per non-resident apply, as well as a \$10 game fee per team per game. Uniform jerseys are required. Team registration deadline is May 11.



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Cleveland Orchestra Presents PNC Musical Rainbow Concert At Beck

by Fran Storch

In partnership with The Cleveland Orchestra, the Beck Center for the Arts proudly presents Percussion Partners, the second concert in its series of PNC Musical Rainbow concerts specifically designed for preschool children, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 28, 2012, on the Mackey Main Stage. Percussion Partners features percussionist Mell Csicsila who will share the wonderful world of percussion with preschoolers. Tickets are on sale now.

Children ages 3 to 6 years and their families will enjoy this fun, interactive way to learn about the instruments of an orchestra. Young listeners have the chance to sing, clap, and move to the music as

they have fun learning all about a featured orchestral instrument. Actress and singer Maryann Nagel hosts the 30-minute programs for young children, which includes narration, demonstration, short solo selections, and audience participation. The Cleveland Orchestra's PNC Musical Rainbow concerts are sponsored by PNC and the PNC Musical Rainbow Series is endowed by the Pysht Fund.

Concert tickets are \$5 per person. Purchase tickets online at beckcenter.org or call Beck Center Customer Service at 216.521.2540, ext. 10. Beck Center is located at 17801 Detroit Avenue in Lakewood. Free onsite parking is available.

Wellness Watch

It's Time For Spring Cleaning!

by Rachel Anzalone

Between the holiday season, shorter daylight hours and the cold, damp of winter, it's not unusual for folks to have gained a few pounds and to be feeling a little sluggish and congested this time of year. If you're feeling a little funky or just not your usual energetic self, it's likely that doing some spring cleaning would do you

good. There are lots of ways to cleanse and it's important that you find the method that suits you best. Here are a few cleanse suggestions to help you figure out what's the best option for you.

If you're generally a super healthy eater and you've just fallen off the wagon as of late, The Clean Food Cleanse might be a good program for you. Pick a day to start and commit to

21 days of super pure eating - load up organic fruits and veggies, wholesome grains and lots of purified water. Cut out caffeine, sugar and limit your protein intake for greater ease of digestion.

If you're craving the carbs big time and you're experiencing "emotional eating," sticking to your intended program can be a challenge, so you might want to try a low glycemic cleanse pro-

gram designed to stabilize your blood sugar and kick the sugar cravings to the curb. You can do this by following a program such as The Zone Diet by Dr. Barry Sears or the Healthy for Life Program by Dr. Ray Strand or with low glycemic meal replacements to make it super easy. To ensure your success you'll want to make sure you get through the first 5 days by planning out your meals and making your usual trigger foods unavailable until the cravings have gone bye-bye.

If you want to take your cleanse up a notch, you can add an herbal supplement program to your cleansing efforts. These can be customized to rid your body of candida (yeast), parasites (yuck!), to promote weight loss, flush the body's fluids, cleanse the lymph system, or to support and nourish the liver.

And for the truly adventurous (brave?), Juice Fasting or The Master Cleanse might be up your alley. Both are said to be physically and spiritually cleansing but neither should be entered into lightly. Do your research and seek guidance if appropriate. Both programs can induce some major cleansing which can be uncomfortable or dangerous if you're not well prepared.

If you're not quite there yet, but you're ready to make some subtler changes, commit to cut out one of your vices - whether it's a whole group like sugar or caffeine, or a single food that's your weakness (doughnuts perhaps?) for two weeks. Once you've reached your goal you can dig a little deeper and make the next change.

Fairview And Lakewood Hospitals Receives Outstanding Achievement Award

by Liza LoParo

As one of only two networks honored by American College of Surgeons' Commission on Cancer Fairview/Lakewood Hospital Integrated Network Cancer Program is proud to have received the Outstanding Achievement Award from the American College of Surgeons' Commission on Cancer.

The Cleveland Clinic cancer programs at Fairview and Lakewood hospitals are fully integrated into the Cleveland Clinic Taussig Cancer Institute, which is the No. 9-ranked cancer program in the nation and the highest rated cancer program in Ohio, according to U.S. News and World Report.

"It's an amazing achievement for

the Fairview/Lakewood Hospital Integrated Network Cancer Program to be one of just two networks to receive this distinction," said Timothy P. Spiro, M.D., FACP, Chairman of Regional Oncology at Taussig Cancer Institute. "This honor is a testament to the work of our caregivers and the state-of-the-art care they provide, including access to clinical trials that are integrated with Taussig Cancer Institute."

For a look at the Fairview/Lakewood Hospital Integrated Network Cancer Program's outcomes, community outreach and survivorship program, more information is available in its 2010-2011 annual report.

The Commission on Cancer was established by the American College of Surgeons in 1922 improve survival and quality of life for cancer patients through prevention, research, education, monitoring of comprehensive quality care and the setting of standards.

Nature's Bin Turkey Loaf

by Josie Duennes

with Live Well Lakewood

Here's a favorite from the Nature's Bin Deli.

- 2 lbs. ground turkey
- 1 med onion, chopped
- 2 bell peppers red, orange or yellow, chopped (don't use green)*
- 2 stalks celery, with leaves, chopped
- 1 med carrot, peeled and shredded
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- 1/3 cup milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- salt and pepper
- 1 tbs. oil

Heat the oil in a skillet and preheat the oven to 350 F. In a large bowl combine the bread crumbs and milk. Saute the vegetables in the oil til they soften but don't brown. Add them to the bowl with the meat, eggs and at least 2 tsp. salt and 1 tsp. pepper. Using your very clean hands, squish everything together until well combined. Line a baking dish (at least 9" by 12" with foil and spray with non-stick coating. Plop your meat mixture on the foil and form it into a loaf about 3" wide. Bake for about an hour or until the juices run clear when you poke it or it hits 160 degrees on the meat thermometer. Let it rest for at least 15 minutes and serve. Great with mashed potatoes and gravy! This should serve 6 adults or 4 with a sandwich for the

next day. You can multiply this by up to 4 if you need to feed a crowd.

This is the kind of recipe you can personalize by adding the herbs and spices of your choice. Turkey takes well to thyme, sage, basil, oregano (just not all at once). Don't like garlic? Skip it. Add a little Worcestershire or ketchup. Ours is a basic recipe ready for variations to suit your tastes.

*If you use green peppers, their flavor will overwhelm the other ingredients and they will be all you can taste.

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Business News

Cerny Shoes Changes With The Times

by Andrew Harant

Near the rear entrance to Cerny Shoes hangs a sign that reads “then and now, service and integrity.” Once upon a time, downtown Lakewood boasted four major shoe stores. Among Lakewood Juvenile Shoes, Walker Shoes, Endicott Johnson Shoes and Cerny Shoes, only the latter is alive and well on Detroit Avenue.

Since 1903, the Cerny family has outfitted the feet of Lakewood families. William P. Cerny was the president of Zak Brothers, which operated 11 stores in Northeast Ohio. Only the Lakewood store survived the Great Depression, and its name was changed to Cerny Shoes. Store ownership eventually transferred to Robert Cerny, William’s nephew. For the past 30 years, Don Cerny, son of Robert, has owned the store with his wife Marlene.

Though the store has maintained

its presence on Detroit Avenue, it hasn’t always been in its current location. When Robert Cerny owned the business, he rented space from Geiger’s. The store then moved into its own space near where Five Guys Burger and Fries resides today, before settling into its present location.

Its selection and focus has changed

through the years as well. At different times in its history, Cerny has sold shoes for the whole family, sold shoes for men only, and even ran a satellite store at Parmatown Mall. Today, they sell shoes for men and women. Mainstays of Cerny’s selection of shoes include Florsheim, Hush Puppies, New Balance, and Red Wing, which they

have carried for the past 50 years. Don and Marlene’s current business model is to keep their inventory clean and fresh in a wide variety of styles, sizes and widths. But if Cerny’s needs to change anything in the future to remain viable and in downtown Lakewood, they’ve certainly proven they can do so with “service and integrity.”

Northwesterly Celebrates Dr. Seuss’s Birthday With Grant Elementary

by Annette Kelly

Residents of Northwesterly Assisted Living celebrated Dr. Seuss’s birthday on March 29 alongside Grant Elementary School’s first and second grade classes. The children, accompanied by teachers and chaperons came to Northwesterly to partake in the festivities which included a

“green eggs & ham breakfast,” The Cat in the Hat Video, and story time in the afternoon where our residents read Dr. Seuss stories to the children. The kids of Grant Elementary shared with residents what they were learning in school prior to being treated

with a Dr. Seuss-style Cat in the Hat cake! Michael Saunders, Northwesterly Assisted Living’s Life Enrichment Coordinator said, “This was such a fun event, children and adults of all ages enjoyed themselves throughout the day.”



Grant Elementary School students and teachers listen closely to Northwesterly residents reading from Dr. Seuss classics during their joint celebration of the legendary author’s birthday.

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Lakewood Opinion

Do We Really Need A 2013 School Tax Levy?

by Woody Calleri

Why should you care about the recent “Community Engagement” meetings?

If you have kids they deserve to go to an “excellent” school for years to come. If you have no kids in the Lakewood schools, you still own property or rent and pay school taxes. If you own property - your property value can be affected by the school where you live. People like to live in cities with strong schools.

I care, so over the past 6 weeks I attended 7 of the Community Engagement meetings our school administration held concerning school funding and the looming 3 year \$16.5 million deficit. I am very familiar with our financial concerns since I ran for School Board on just that issue.

At these meetings our Superintendent/Administration has been warning that our schools face a financial crisis and that there is no solution to the crisis that does not include significant cuts to staff and a tax increase. As a result, the administration will have to come to the Lakewood residents in May 2013 for an additional tax increase (school levy).

This begs the question: is there any way to close the budget gap without significant cuts and a tax increase?

Since I have a background in finance and I have run a small business for the last 9 years, I thought I would give it a try. To that end, I reviewed the last 4 years of our school’s financials, read the auditor’s reports, reviewed several contracts for both our administration and teachers (do we really need a 240+ page teacher’s contract?), and met with members of our administration, principals and teachers to get their views and solutions.

As a result, I feel confident that we can address our budget shortfall without raising taxes, cutting programs or slashing teaching positions. It won’t be easy but I believe that we can clearly do better than significant staff cuts and a tax increase.

What Should A Plan Look Like?

I believe that any plan to address our financial shortfalls needs to do so while addressing the most important concerns of our residents. Therefore, any plan put forth should be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. No Tax Increase/No New Levy

Residents noted that they are paying more in taxes than in mortgage. Other residents indicated that they are struggling to pay their bills because of the rising cost of gas, utilities (water/sewer bills just jumped 10%), food, etc. The participants at the engagement meetings made it clear that residents of Lakewood are tapped out. We are not the only community feeling this way as levies are failing across Northern Ohio (e.g. Rocky River).

2. No Non-Performance Based Teacher Layoffs

Our residents were just as clear that slashing huge numbers of teachers was also unacceptable. Yes we could just cut

25% of the teachers but where would that leave us? Our community respects and believes in our teachers and any plan that imposes significant cuts just to balance the budget is dead in the water.

3. Limit The Program Cuts/Limit The Impact On Teacher - Student Interactions

One of the things that makes Lakewood great is the depth and breadth of our school offerings. From the Gifted/Talented program, to West Tech, to the Ranger Café, to our ESL program our citizens are rightly proud of what we have to offer. Therefore, any solution needs to be aware of this and have the smallest possible impact on our school offerings.

4. Everyone Must Be Impacted (No Favored Groups)

The residents of Lakewood want to know that any proposal has turned over every stone looking for ways to solve the financial crisis. There is no magic bullet and any plan built on just one pillar just will not work.

Where do we start?

First we need to make clear a couple of facts. First, the school’s financial projections show that our revenues are projected to be approximately \$68 million for the next 4 years and our expenditures are projected to increase from \$70 million this year to \$80 million in 2016. The vast majority of this increase is healthcare costs with increases of 12% this year, and projected increases of 14% in 2013, 2014 and 2015. Second, it is assumed that for every \$50,000 in annual cost savings or increased revenue we save 1 teaching position.

So How Do We Solve Our Financial Crisis?

Based on my review of our financials, meetings with our treasurer and administration, knowledge of finance, and experience running a small business I am putting forth the following proposal:

1. Change Our Healthcare Plans To HSA/HD Plans

Rising healthcare costs are the biggest driver of our budget shortfall, so it is the first place to look for savings. We currently spend approximately \$7.1 million a year (up almost \$1 million from last year). That amount is expected to increase by 14% a year for the next 5 years. Given that we spend over \$15,000 a year per family plan (The National average is less than \$8,000) there is certainly room for improvement and significant savings.

To combat the dramatic increase in healthcare costs many businesses have switched over to HSA/HD plans. These plans change the way healthcare is delivered by putting the consumer in charge. Businesses have found that they can reduce their healthcare costs by approximately 30-40% with minimal impact to their employees. Several Ohio school districts have already made the switch to these accounts and they have reported similar savings. I can also speak from personal experience. My own family switched to this

type of plan three years ago.

Assuming 30% savings (low end), a switch to HSA/HD plans would save us \$2.4 million next year, \$2.8 million in FY 2014 and \$3.2 million in FY 2015 or \$8.4 million in the next 3 years. **A projected 3-year cost savings of \$8.4 million or 56 teachers a year.** (Obviously our savings would be greater if we save a higher percentage or if our annual cost increases are lower than the 14% our current plans are forecasting.)

2. Improve Our Collection Of Delinquent Taxes

Our schools are currently owed over \$4 million in delinquent taxes. While we may never recover all of these taxes, an improvement of just \$500,000 a year will bring in \$1.5 million over the next 3 years. **A projected 3-year revenue increase of \$1.5 million or 10 teachers a year.**

3. Stop The Use Of Financial “Pick-ups” In Our Administrators’ Contracts

I was able to review what I believe to be a typical contract given to a member of our administration. The disconcerting portion of the contract is that it calls for our school budget to pay for this administrator’s portion of Social Security/Medicare (\$7,500), STRS retirement contributions (\$17,000) and a separate Tax Shelter Annuity (\$16,000) or \$40,500 a year. These financial pickups are exactly what had taxpayers up in arms when it came to light that teachers in some school districts had similar sweetheart deals. If teachers need to pay their FICA taxes, contribute 10% toward their own retirements and not get secondary retirement accounts funded by the taxpayers then so does the administration. Open up the contracts and change them to reflect this. Assuming that this contract is not the exception but rather the rule, we should see 3 to 6 times the savings noted above. **A projected 3-year cost savings of \$300,000 or 2 teaching positions a year.**

Side note to the School Board: Why did you approve a contract like this at a time when our residents are struggling to make ends meet, unemployment is high and expenses are rising?

4. Improved Use Of Our Balance Sheet And Cash Position

In the current low interest rate environment we have to do everything possible to be the best possible fiscal stewards of the money we have. According to our financials we currently have approximately \$5,000,000 invested in short term repurchase agreements earning 0.0%. At the same time we have several million invested in money market accounts and CDs earning 0.3%. Just moving repurchase agreement money to the money markets accounts will bring in an additional \$15,000 annually. But that is just the tip of the iceberg. I believe that better financial management of our cash could increase that amount to \$50,000 a year. **A projected 3-year revenue increase of \$150,000 or 1 teaching position a year.**

5. Ask Our Teachers For A Salary

Freeze

Our teachers recently signed a contract giving them a 2% base pay raise in 2013. Based on emails I have reviewed this is expected to cost an additional \$775,000 annually. Our teachers also receive annual longevity increases of between 1.5% and 2.0%. If instead the teachers agree to a two year base pay freeze (0%), an education credit freeze and no longevity increases for anyone with more than 10 years of experience we could save over \$1 million a year. I am not saying this would be pleasant, but if the alternative is layoffs it may be reasonable. A projected cost savings of \$1,000,000 a year or 20 teaching positions.

Side note: This contract was passed without public commentary last May and after a single School Board meeting instead of the normal two meetings that Board rules require. The emails I have reviewed make it clear that our School Board did this on purpose to avoid a public backlash.

6. Stop The Losses At The Recreation Department

Our Recreation Department is losing approximately \$100,000 a year. There is no reason for this. I happen to run a business in the recreation field and can tell you from personal experience that not only should we not be losing money but we should have a nice profit. Maybe we don’t want to make money but at the very least we need to ensure that they break even. A projected cost savings \$100,000+ a year or 2 teaching positions.

7. Change How We Do Payroll

Our payroll methods are incredibly inefficient and ripe for cost savings. In addition, we can reduce the number of times a year we run payroll from the current 26 times a year. Do we cut it to 12 (monthly?) or somewhere in between? I don’t know. I do know that when I taught we were paid 20 times a year. It costs thousands every time you run payroll, so the cost savings of 6+ fewer payments a year could be substantial. Since the alternative is cutting teaching positions, I say we try this first. A projected cost savings of \$50,000+ a year or 1 teaching position.

8. Limit The Accumulation Of Sick Time

Based on our financial reports, the accumulation of excess sick days cost us approximately \$100,000 in 2010. Before anyone thinks I am suggesting we take away our staff’s sick days I want to clarify that I am not. Our staff currently gets 15 sick days a year (state mandate). Our State also mandates that they can accumulate up to approximately 120 sick days and cash them in at retirement. The problem is that our School Board has changed that policy to allow our staff to accumulate over 350 days and cash them in. If 2010 was a typical year than we could save approximately \$100,000 by capping sick day accumulation at the State mandate. A projected cost savings of \$100,000+ a year or 2 teaching positions.

continued on page 17

Minding The Issues

Reflections From The Political Prism

by Gordon Brumm

“Everyone deserves world-class care”

Those who champion our existing health-care system, i.e., those who don’t want to change it, often point out that the Cleveland Clinic, along with other leading health facilities, draws patients from all over the world (Saudi Arabian sheiks, for example) because the Clinic offers them the best care in the world.

Yes, the sheiks look to the Clinic when they need the very best life-saving care. But if that is true of the sheiks, it is true also of the citizens of Peoria and millions of other Americans who would benefit from the Clinic’s world-class care. Obviously they can’t all be treated by the Clinic, even apart from financial considerations, because the Clinic can only accommodate so many. These millions of Americans must turn to whatever care is available to them, which may be far less than the Clinic offers. Why should we extol the care afforded Arabian sheiks, while ignoring the quality of care available to American citizens?

If we are judging the quality of a national health care system, we should focus not on the best instances, but on the overall picture. What kind of care does the average person get and (most of all) what kind of care does the worst-off person get? Elite institutions, such as the Clinic, can enter the picture as possible sources of ideas for improving the system as a whole. In making this sort of judgment, the quality of delivery systems, including insurance systems, must be considered along with the quality of medical care itself.

And on this score, the US ranks poorly. Compared with other industrialized nations on indicators such as infant mortality, our system is simply mediocre. Furthermore, the nation pays a shockingly high price for this mediocre result.

So the next time you hear of the Cleveland Clinic and its sterling record, think about extending that record to the nation as a whole. Think opportunity to receive care. Think delivery systems. Think insurance. Think cost containment. These are the important issues.

The Constitution?

Those who followed the Casey

Anthony trial on TV may remember her lawyers, at the end, rejoicing in the fact that the Constitution had prevailed. They were alluding to the principle that had saved their client—the principle that a defendant must be presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond reasonable doubt. Note the words the lawyers used: “the Constitution”. To put it plainly, her lawyers implied that the presumption of innocence, which had been decisive in Casey Anthony’s trial, is a provision of the Constitution.

This raises the question: Where in the Constitution is the presumption of innocence prescribed or mentioned?

You can save yourself the trouble of looking. Presumption of innocence does not appear in the US Constitution. That is, it does not appear in the written Constitution. It arose in the common law of England and other countries, and was adopted into US common law through court decisions serving as precedents.

So like Casey Anthony’s lawyers, in talking of the Constitution, we are usually referring not merely to the written Constitution, but rather to that document itself plus an extensive system of principles set by precedent and custom, which may or may not have a direct relationship to the written document. In addition to the presumption of innocence, for example, the right of the courts to overturn legislation (judicial review) is not mentioned in the written Constitution. Neither is the Miranda rule. Yet both are counted as essential parts of our Constitutional system.

Clearly, the Constitutional system changes with time, as new precedents are set. There was a time when presumption of innocence was a non-entity. Then it was asserted and taken as a precedent, and now it is unquestioned.

There is an important political point here. A theme often found in conservative argument is that we have departed from the Constitution—meaning the written document—and must return to its pure form by trimming away all the illegitimate functions of government that have proliferated

with no basis in the written Constitution itself. But clearly, if we trimmed our system of laws down to those directly sanctioned by the Constitution, we would have a mere skeleton of the system we live under, the system on which our well-being depends.

So let’s not be taken in by the arguments of the Originalists, as they are sometimes called. I don’t think they want to strip our legal system bare. I don’t think they want to discard the presumption of innocence. Instead, I think they use their appeal to the written Constitution selectively, as a way of nullifying the rights and the policies they don’t like, those that through the years have increasingly brought justice and equality to our nation.

Who Needs to Think When Name-Calling Will Do?

The principle of progressive taxation is thoroughly ingrained in our conception of social justice and of democracy itself. It is supported by our basic feelings of justice, as well as by specific arguments. It can be argued that everyone depends on the society at large for protection and support, and therefore those who gain the most from that protection and support should give back the most. And it can be argued that no one has a moral claim to wealth beyond the average, since it is the result of circumstances, including market conditions, that have nothing to do with the moral worth of the individual. In any case, progressive taxation is a principle that occupies a firm place in our common conception of a just society.

But lately the principle of progressive taxation has been battered and torn. We find instances and situations in which taxation is actually regressive instead of progressive, in which high-income individuals pay a lower effective rate than those with lower incomes. In the absence of a specific explanation justifying the low rate, this is clearly unjust. Various individuals and groups--Warren Buffett and the Occupiers, to give just two examples--have called attention to the injustice.

A number of persons in the conservative camp, most notably some of the Republican candidates, have answered these calls by labeling them as “class warfare” or the product of “bitter envy” and the like. These complainers don’t argue against the principle of progressive taxation. They don’t have any concern for principle at all. They personalize the controversy, seeing it merely as an attack by one group against another group who have something they want, as a conflict between individuals living not in a society governed by principles but in the proverbial jungle, motivated by nothing but naked self-interest. Is there any better definition of a barbarian?

Yes, the barbarians are at the gates. Let’s make sure they are repelled.

One More Round of Bishops vs. Contraception.

No commentary would be complete without some consideration of the unfortunate behavior of the Catholic bishops in the recent contraception controversy. The situation has been well massaged in news stories, editorials and letters-to-the-editor, and probably in every other kind of media, including the social. I would like to reiterate just two basic points:

1) The Bishops cannot be speaking for the lay membership of the Catholic Church, for at least two reasons: The great majority of Catholic women (reported as 95% or 98%) use or have used contraceptives, and opposition to contraception is based on a moral theory, or moral theology, called Natural Law, which holds that morality is determined by goals set into human nature, e.g., procreation as the goal of sexuality. It strains credibility to believe that this theory is understood by the Catholic laity overall (I also have my doubts as to whether the hierarchy has subjected it to critical examination, but that’s another story). In any case, Natural Law is a bankrupt theory with no room for human sympathy and no foundation in fact or logic.

2) The administration’s requirements do not cover the personal life of anyone, Catholic or otherwise. It is directed only toward hospitals and other healthcare organizations, including those under Catholic auspices. These organizations are formed to serve the public; in Constitutional language, they are in commerce. They must perform their function fairly, without allowing their functioning to be affected by their tastes or beliefs. In this they are analogous to the public accommodations that are governed by anti-discrimination laws. Or to give a different analogy, Catholic hospitals refusing contraception would be like a hospital refusing to admit a gay person because its governing body believed homosexuality to be immoral.

The Catholic bishops refuse to recognize the public function of Catholic hospitals and attempt to impose their own dogmas on the public at large. And when this attempt is rebuffed, they accuse the administration of, “waging war on religion.”

Let’s be clear: The administration is not waging war on religion. It is waging a defense of fairness and equality.

Which brings up another dimension. It has been suggested that some political figures have taken up the bishops’ cause not for reasons having to do with religion but because they want to use the controversy to bludgeon Obama’s health care plan in toto. This makes it all the more important to resist and rebut the attacks.

It is probably too much to hope that the present moral theology of the Catholic Church be replaced by one that is more in touch with humanity. Failing that, I can only hope that more reasoned heads prevail in the current controversy and that the bishops come to realize their proper place in the American political system.

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Pulse Of The City

Racism? Prejudice? Bullying? In Lakewood? Perhaps We Need To Talk...

by Gary Rice

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"

- 1 John 1:8

This verse from the Bible reminds us that in the Christian tradition, the Lenten period is a time of soul-searching and repentance. As I write these words, the time of Lent is concluding, and as you read these words, the time of Easter will have begun. Easter, for the Christian world, marks the transition from repentance to a time of renewal.

Whether or not you are a Christian, if you are reading this you are probably a Lakewoodite. Maybe it's time for a little secular repentance and renewal for all of us, particularly regarding the topics of racism, prejudice, and bullying.

At the time of this writing, the national news has been filled with the tragic story of the unarmed black teen wearing a "hoodie" who was shot and killed by a neighborhood watch person in Florida. While the details of that encounter and the outcome of that investigation remain to be seen, at the same time there have been many similar encounters in our country, and, I would suspect, more than a few of them in our own community. Also at the same time, a Lakewood teacher is hoping to bring a movie about bullying to our community for an early screening.

Let me state at the outset that I know of no person in Lakewood who openly speaks in racist, prejudicial, or bullying tones. Most people around Lakewood, I feel certain, would probably deny they have any racial or prejudicial dislike, or hatred, towards "other kinds" of people, or have bullied anyone.

Perhaps the least prejudicial people in Lakewood are our students. As volunteers in the schools, Dad and I have seen many positive interactions and friendships between students of all races and ethnic backgrounds. As we have driven by our parks and playgrounds, we have often seen young people laughing and playing while displaying their rainbow of ethnicities. When bound together in a common cause of academics, sports, or music, most young people tend to get along surprisingly well.

But not all, of course.

As a person who was once referred to as having "multiple disabilities," I can give many first-person accounts of prejudice and bullying in Lakewood's past. The thing is, prejudice and bullying are very seldom overt behaviors. Like all things evil, prejudice and bullying comprise back-alley stuff, spoken in low breath, or sometimes not spoken at all. Sometimes in my case, it was a small push or a shove, or a condescending "look," or a raising of eyebrows, a clucking of tongues, a squinting of eyes. Sometimes it was institutional in character, denying me the opportunity to do what other kids could do. And yeah, sometimes it was right out in the open... being the butt of jokes, the class punching bag.

I suppose what hurt me the most

was that even some teachers could ignore the obvious, or even be so intent on their own agendas that they didn't want to modify their world to accommodate my own. The simple act of changing an alphabetical seating chart so that I could sit up front to hear a lesson became a major drama for a few of them. My parents (and Dad was even a teacher in the system) had to endure comments like "He hears when he wants to hear" and "He's a daydreamer."

To those teachers today? I'll just say "May God forgive you...you knew not what you did."

Oh, some might now say this is just "liberal" Gary with his social agenda. Let me tell you something, Lakewood: Growing up back then, my politics were as conservative and Republican as a person could get. It was a conservative Republican "handicapped" kid who took all of your bull-oney Lakewood, until I could take it no more. In fact, it was that timeless "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" Republican thinking that was probably my saving grace back then, as well as having a few martial arts lessons thrown in. Those thoughts and actions helped me to determine at a very young age that you, Lakewood, WOULD accept me for WHO I am, whether you liked it or not.

In those days, before there was widespread acceptance of people having "disabilities"... in those days, when people having special needs were relegated to broom-closet sized rooms at the end of school hallways, if they were allowed into school buildings at all....in those days, it was a miracle that people having differences survived. Hopefully, for many people having physical challenges, things are better nowadays in our schools and in our society. "Better," however, does not mean "perfect" by a long shot. Statistics show that even now a disproportionate number of incarcerated young people have some sort of disability or difference. The more things change, the more they sometimes stay the same, unfortunately.

Politics, whether liberal or conservative, should have nothing to do with all of this. I know, because I saw teasings, bullyings, put-downs, and all manner of evil towards others coming from all sides of the political spectrum. No one has clean hands here when we talk about racism, prejudice, and bullying. Those are not liberal or conservative issues. They are human issues, and it's time that we recognize their cancer among us here in Lakewood and around the world. They need to be addressed face-on, and destroyed face-down. It is important to realize that in the early 20th Century, right-wing fascists and left-wing communists killed millions of people for the simple crime of disagreement, and yet the very same seeds of evil that germinated in those systems were planted long ago with tribal and religious groups going back to the Stone Age, when they started to reject and persecute the dissenters among them.

These days, we claim to be past all of that, and yet... just try to be an individual in an organization. So many organizations STILL tend to despise and disparage individual initiatives in favor of group-think and mindless teamwork. It gets worse when individuals CAN'T change what makes them an individual, whether that would be the color of their skin, or the disability (I prefer the word "difference") that they have.

It has been written that prejudice is defined not by the status quo but by the person offended. When Native Americans protested offense at the Cleveland ball club logo, many people had not a clue as to why any offense should be taken. Many felt that Native Americans should be honored by that caricature. What people failed to understand was the perspective of the Native Americans. Perhaps the most offensive part of that logo was not the cartoon itself, but the red feather. To many Native Americans, the "blood feather" represented the highest honor that could be accorded a warrior. For some Native Americans, that red feather adorning a cartoon character amounted to a sacrilege of the highest order. Were any other ethnic group to be caricatured in such a public way in America, I sus-

pect that old cartoon chief would have been gone long ago. Since ethnic cleansing and genocide have obliterated the Native American population, there are few, however, left to raise their voices.

Teasing, bullying, and racial and ethnic prejudice do indeed continue in our world, sadly. When people discuss the early closing of public parks, or the removal of basketball hoops, or even the disproportionate number of people of color being identified as having "learning disabilities or behavioral disorders" (federally recognized "handicapping conditions") who regularly get "in trouble" in schools and communities around the nation, there seems to continue a latent, hard-to-discover but very real disconnect between peoples, cultures, and individual identities. Whether these things rise to a level of institutional discrimination in communities like ours depends very much on the perceptions of those affected.

None of us look alike, act alike, or think alike. We have a natural right to be different, but that very allegation has been attacked by many societal institutions and governmental bodies for centuries. So far as this writer is concerned, the litmus test for the pulse of this city will always be the manner in which we treat those having "differences"--for you see... bottom line...that includes all of us!

Do We Really Need A 2013 School Tax Levy?

continued from page 15

9. Listen To Our Staffs' Recommendations And Employ Them Across Buildings

Every one of the principals and administrators I was fortunate enough to meet with had several of their own ideas on how to improve efficiency, improve operations and save money. (e.g. electronic delivery of notices, etc.) These ideas could easily save us \$50,000 a building. Implementing these ideas across all our buildings could save us multiples of that. If we low ball the savings at \$30,000 per school we could see \$270,000 a year in savings. A projected 3 year cost savings of \$810,000 or 5 teaching positions per year.

So Where Do We Go From Here?

None of this will make anyone happy with me. My teacher friends will be upset, those I know in administration will be unhappy and those in the back office may want me to crawl back under my rock. However, if the alternative is laying teachers off, reducing program/curriculum and negatively impacting the quality of our schools and the quality of the life of our residents, then someone has to step up and make sure we are doing everything we can to solve our financial problems.

I have just laid out approximately \$15 million in cost savings and revenue increases over the next 3 years. I have done it without laying-off a single teacher, cutting any program offerings

and without raising taxes. Can we realistically achieve all these projections? I am not sure, but even if we only get half of them or just the HSA/HD account savings aren't we better off than the alternative? I know that we can come out of this a stronger, more vibrant community but only if we work together to demand that our leaders work harder to find solutions that address our financial concerns without taking the easy way of lay-offs and tax increases.

It is now up to our Administration/School Board. From my perspective, they can do one of three things: 1) Pursue the recommendations I have laid out and save approximately \$15 million over next three years, 2) Improve on my proposals and save Lakewood even more (great outcome), 3) Fail to act and come to Lakewood with a levy and teacher layoffs. This alternative will only prove what I heard at each of the community engagement meetings I attended, which is that the School Board is just setting up the community for a levy rather than doing the heavy lifting needed to balance the budget.

Finally, are there more opportunities for cost savings or revenue increases? Absolutely. I would never suggest that this is even close to a complete list. If you have a recommendation please email me with it at gcalleri@yahoo.com. I will compile them for my next article and forward them on to our administration.

Lakewood Living

Lakewood Old House Fair Set For May 5

by Mel Page

Are you gearing up for that big home improvement project or continuing the never ending process on your Lakewood home? Have you been putting off that repair because you're not sure whom to call or you need advice on how to do it yourself? Maybe you'd love to get some ideas for that outdated kitchen or bathroom. Wouldn't it be nice if all

of Lakewood's resources that help with planning or servicing home-related projects could be gathered at one easy event? Lakewood's going to do just that! The fourth annual Lakewood Old House Fair will be on Saturday, May 5 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Harding Middle School, 16601 Madison Avenue. In its fourth year, this annual spring event helps residents find the resources, services, and products that

will best help care for and beautify your home or living space. Special emphasis is on the unique needs of Lakewood's older homes. Over fifty local home-related businesses and nonprofit services will be on hand to share their expertise on everything such as plumbing, remodeling, painting, and landscaping. Admission is free. Stay tuned to upcoming Lakewood Observers for more information on the

presentation schedule and home improvement door prizes. Local businesses of home repair, improvement, and/or most any beautification of home or property are invited to participate as exhibitors at the Old House Fair. Exhibitor information and registration forms are at Lakewood Hardware, 16608 Madison Ave. or at www.lakewoodhardware.com.

Spring Severe Weather

by Mark Hofelich

Last week was Spring Severe Weather Awareness week. With the nice weather we have had, I am sure a lot of you already did a lot of the preparations that this week is all about. For those of you that did not or those who still have more to do, let me tell you why we have Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week.

The purpose of Spring Severe Weather Awareness week is two-fold, 1 (the obvious) to make people aware that we do have severe storms in the spring and we need to use the nice weather days to prepare so we can minimize or prevent damage before it happens. Secondly, we in the insurance industry want to let you know what you can do to help prepare for the high winds, hail, and rains that come with the vicious spring storms like we had last May.

For those of us who were fortunate enough to not be directly affected by the storms last May, I will tell you that according to the Ohio Insurance Institute, that storm ranks third in Ohio's history for severe weather devastation. Multiple insurance companies paid out over a billion dollars each to help our members/clients rebuild.

Even though we all have insurance, I think we would all prefer to avoid the damage as opposed to having to deal with and fix it. Here are some tips that may help you avoid damage to your property in the event of severe weather again this spring.

Keep trees and shrubs trimmed. Weak and dead branches can fall on your home or car as well as your neighbors'.

Clean your gutters and downspouts. Our homes are designed to deal with the weather in our area but the designs will fail to move the water away from our homes if we do not keep the pathways for water clear.

Secure or store outdoor furniture and decorations. If high winds could move the object, have a plan on how to secure the item in advance of the storm.

Check your home's interior and exterior for cracked or missing caulk and repair where needed. It never ceases to amaze people what water can do if enough of it is able to find a small hole into your home.

With your home clean, clear and protected, it is a good idea to take a look at what else is at risk during these storms: our belongings and our family. Both can be protected by taking a few steps to prepare for power outages and possible injury. A lot of these may seem overboard, but in the case of a tornado, taking a few extra precautions will

prove worthwhile.

Prepare a small emergency kit. Have flashlights, a small first aid kit, some basic tools, and other supplies you may need in the event you are unable to go anywhere for a couple of days. One item that is now being recommended to add to that kit is an air horn. Just in case you need something louder to let people know where you are.

Also, add insurance carrier's claims number as well as your agent's into your cell phone.

I also strongly recommend taking an inventory of your belongings so if something is lost, you can document it easier for replacement. Sites like www.knowyourstuff.org have more information and a downloadable worksheet to help make this process much simpler and quicker.

Now that your home is prepared, and you are prepared, I recommend talking to your agent about your con-

cerns, and how to address them with insurance. It is these times of high claims activity that expose the coverage we have chosen to be insufficient in dealing with what matters most to us. Make sure to ask about your homeowner's insurance as not all coverage is the same and some policies may need to be changed to cover certain causes of loss. While you have your agent on the phone ask for a flood quote as well, it may be a concern that your policy does not currently cover. Finally, check on your auto coverage, deductibles, and whether or not you have coverage for a rental car in the event of a claim. Many multi-car households choose to not carry this coverage since they have multiple cars. This may leave you having to pay for two rental cars in the event both cars are destroyed in a severe storm.

Thank you for reading, and look for my next sprintime topic... Umbrellas!

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Lakewood Living

A Souped-Up Laundry Room Can Make A Difference

by Chris Bergin

One of the most dreaded chores around the house is laundry. Maybe that's why when selling a house, the laundry room is one of the most forgotten areas to get in shape. The machines are often dusty, with detergent dripping down the sides and lint and old socks on the floor.

Yet it's an area that doesn't take too much time to clean and can really make a difference when showing your house to prospective buyers.

The easiest way to make a statement with a laundry room is by adding more energy-efficient washing machines and dryers. Recent statistics by the U.S.

Department of Energy show that installing machines with the ENERGY STAR label will decrease water costs by up to 50 percent. There are also machines that automatically adjust the water temperature and the amount of water used for each load to prevent excess and waste.

Many new models are available with designer colors, pedestals and sleek designs, which can make a bold statement. When purchasing a new washer, you're also going to need to choose between a front- or top-loading machine. While a top-loading machine requires enough water to cover all the clothes in its drum, a front-loading washer needs

only a third of that amount because its drum is set horizontally in the machine. It requires less water and allows for larger loads, and it looks great.

On the downside, a front-loading washer is more expensive and can develop mold because it doesn't empty dirty water as efficiently as a top-loading machine.

When it comes to dryers, new sensor technology is the rage. Dryers with moisture sensors recognize when laundry is dry more quickly than traditional machines and shut down sooner. This saves energy, cash and wear and tear on your clothing.

The use of steam washers and

dryers for greater energy and water efficiency is also a growing trend. Steam machines offer enhanced clothing-care options such as short, steam-only cycles that help to reduce wrinkles and remove odors from clothing without using water and detergent.

Laundry rooms used to be relegated to the basement, but today, people are finding space for washers and dryers in more convenient areas of the house like the kitchen or upstairs, near bedrooms. Housing experts agree that installing a laundry nook will raise the value of a home, and make it more convenient as hauling baskets of clothing up and down flights of stairs become a thing of the past.

Why Pay A Landlord With Homeownership In Reach?

by Brian Salem

Homeownership is in reach now more than ever, especially for first time homebuyers. Interest rates are extremely low and most people can purchase a home and have a monthly payment similar to a rent payment. As an added bonus, interest, property taxes and mortgage insurance are all tax deductible. Plus, you are your own landlord. There are no leases to sign so you can stay as long as you please!

Don't know where to begin? First, find a trusted realtor to guide through the process. The realtor will discuss with you your financials and once your down payment is discussed, the realtor will refer you to a lender. Many first time homebuyers think they have 20% to put

down on a new home. In reality an FHA loan only requires 3.5% down and on a \$120,000 home, that's about \$4200.

At this time, your lender will then run a prequalification, which includes credit check and running debt to income ratios. This will determine what you can qualify for and most importantly what you can comfortably afford.

Now the fun can begin! Once a realistic budget is established, it's time to look at homes. Your realtor will help you find a home that suits your budget and needs!

Nothing beats the pride of having a home to call your own. With interest rates at a record low, there is no better time for first time buyers to explore purchasing a home so contact a realtor today!!!

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Friday, April 20: Donegal Dogs @ 9:30pm
Saturday, April 21: Westside Steve @ 8pm
Friday, April 27: One More Pint @ 9pm
Saturday, April 28: Whiskey Island Ramblers @ 10pm

THE PATIO IS OPEN!

\$1 dogs & \$1 Bud Light from first pitch to last during every Indians game on Sunday!

Sunday Brunch starts at 10am every Sunday beginning April 8 featuring Our Traditional Irish Breakfast Buffet: scrambled eggs, rashers and bangers, black and white pudding, grilled tomatoes and mushrooms, hash browns, corned beef hash, boxtie and cheddar, Irish egg rolls, Irish soda bread and dessert - **\$14.99**
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