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Volume 16, Issue 20, October 21, 2020

Cuyahoga County Goes Red, Lakewood Schools Stay Remote

by Betsy Voinovich

This past Thursday, Cuyahoga County was placed into Public Emergency Level 3, red status in the Ohio Public Health Advisory System which is described as “Very high exposure and spread. Limit activities

as much as possible.”

Due to this change, Lakewood City Schools postponed the October 19th partial, in-person return to school buildings, notifying families that PreK through 12th grade students will remain in their

current instructional model to start the second quarter.

While some LCS families accepted this news with relief as it has become obvious that COVID19 cases are climbing, others were frustrated that the long-awaited plans for students

to be back in the buildings, albeit in the hybrid mode, were postponed.

At Monday’s Board of Education meeting, the Lakewood Civic Auditorium was full of (socially

distanced) attendees who were there to make their concerns known.

The crowd was divided

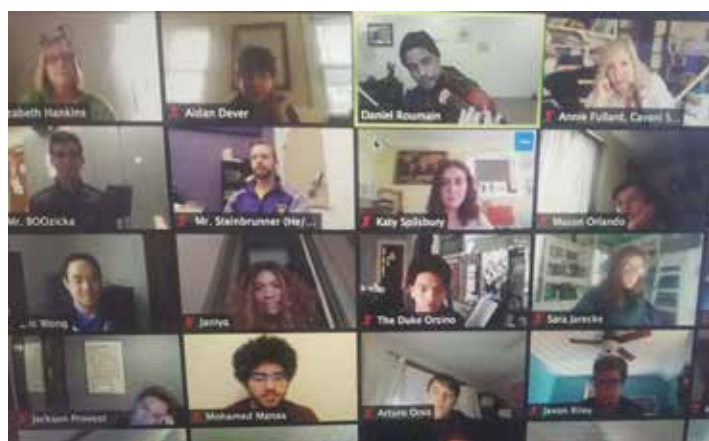
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Violinist DBR Engages Wth LHS Music Students

by Christine Gordillo

The students in Lakewood High’s Chamber Orchestra and AP Music Theory classrooms were fortunate to spend a virtual hour with acclaimed violinist, composer and social justice advocate Daniel Bernard Roumain. Roumain, known professionally as DBR, was recently the featured performer in New York at the Lincoln Center 9/11 tribute. He is a classically trained violinist who infuses a myriad of electronic, urban, and African-American music influences (like Hip-hop, and funk) into his music. Roumain uses his music to partner with others in projects that speak to social injustice issues. Some of his artistic partners include famed composer Phillip Glass and Lady Gaga.

The students and Roumain were joined by members



of the nationally recognized Cavani String Quartet, who have been working with the Chamber students this school year thanks to a grant by the Lakewood Rangers Education Foundation. They talked about how one can use their art to help heal some wounds in the world. Roumain explained how he uses his violin as his “weapon of choice” in his social activism. “You can use

music to change the world,” he told the students. “You can change the menacing in magic and you can change the mundane into magic.”

LHS Orchestra Director Beth Hankins has her Chamber students studying the life and music of Dmitri Shostakovich and the ensemble will partner a Shostakovich

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Looking For Many More Families To Award



Margaret and Sam Engle hold up this year’s prize, \$50.00 in fine dining at Melt. Seen any great Halloween decorations? Let us know and we will demonstrate our appreciation by giving them a gift certificate to one of our amazing Lakewood restaurants. Go to: <http://lakewoodobserver.com/daily-question/2020-10-20> and submit your favorite address. Both you and they could win!

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The Mayor's Corner

Americans With Disabilities Act

by Meghan George
Mayor, City of Lakewood

The Americans With Disabilities Act passed in 1990, thirty years ago this past July. In that time, the City of Lakewood has focused on its commitment to be an accessible community of people with varying levels of ability. Specifically, at City Hall and other buildings, we have made improvements to stairwells, restrooms, doorways, lighting, and even our website among

many other changes to ensure everyone has equal access.

One requirement of the ADA is for city governments to create an ADA Transition Plan which will be created through the work of the newly created ADA Task Force. While we have made great progress and expect to continue finding ways to accommodate our fellow citizens, the new ADA Task Force will formally establish rules and standards to be implemented citywide to ensure that the City meets the highest

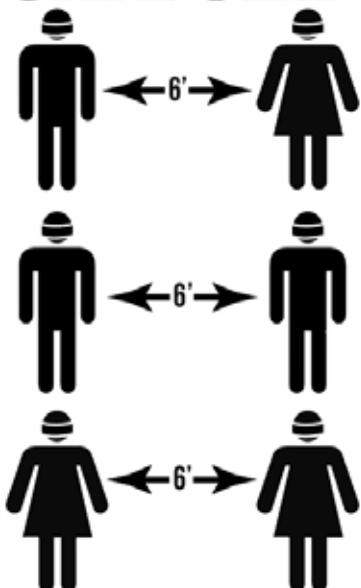
needs of its residents and visitors with disabilities. The Task Force will be responsible for developing a citywide plan to oversee the upgrade and compliance of City properties and facilities and to identify properties, buildings, and facilities that require upgrades to become ADA compliant.

My office is seeking resident participation to help identify necessary physical infrastructure and technology upgrades, to assist in the development of the ADA Transition Plan, and to work to ensure that citizens with disabilities have accessibility and are included in the City's community life.

There are seven positions on the Task Force. Anyone interested should share a passion for this work and have an interest in serving our community. These individuals should possess knowledge and or experience as it pertains to ADA regulations and standards, public safety, community engagement, and advocacy.

If you or someone you know is interested in participating in the City of Lakewood's ADA Task Force, please visit <http://www.onelakewood.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ADA-TASK-FORCE-APPLICATION-1.pdf> for the application and submit it along with your resume and a cover letter to mayor@lakewoodoh.net by Friday, November 6, 2020.

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Greg Orosz



Gregory Orosz is a 63 year-old retired teacher who has written humorous poetry and essays, as well as producing cartoons for the last 40 years. His passion for cartoons led him to create a cartoon calendar for over 30 years and has distributed over 400 copies annually. In the last 4 years, he added stand-up comedy and storytelling to his repertoire. Recently, he developed a humorous visual presentation, which incorporates all of these aspects.

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When and where to get help for your child’s anxiety.



Molly Wimbiscus, MD
Cleveland Clinic
Center for Behavioral Health

“Take time to simply explain how the pandemic may affect them, listen to their concerns, and give them a chance to ask questions.”

Being sad or worried is a normal reaction when routines have been disrupted. However, Dr. Wimbiscus advises parents to watch for signs of more serious anxiety or depression, including:

- Skipping meals.
- Hiding in their room.
- Prolonged irritability or sadness.
- Not engaging with the family.
- Losing interest in things they once enjoyed.
- Having trouble falling or staying asleep.

All kids have emotional ups and downs, and the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic may be causing alarm, worry or confusion in some children.

“Having an open and honest conversation with your child may help them better understand and cope with this unprecedented situation,” says Cleveland Clinic psychiatrist Molly Wimbiscus, MD.

- Big changes in emotional or behavioral functioning.

For children struggling with these feelings or behaviors, there is help close to home at Cleveland Clinic Lutheran and Fairview hospitals, Lakewood Family Health Center, Avon Pointe Medical Outpatient Center and Strongsville Family Health and Surgery Center.

“Our interdisciplinary team evaluates each patient’s needs and develops a specific individualized treatment plan,” says Dr. Wimbiscus. “Depending on the plan, the child may receive treatment from a child psychiatrist, child and adolescent psychiatric nurses, clinical social workers, and occupational and recreation therapists.”

If inpatient care is recommended, Fairview Hospital has an inpatient unit. The unit is designed to be secure, safe and calming, and all patients have their own bedroom and bathroom.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Wimbiscus or another specialist in the Center for Behavioral Health, please call 216.636.5860, or visit ClevelandClinic.org/BehavioralHealth.



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Don’t put off your mammogram.

We know that there are a lot of questions when it comes to having a mammogram, but even in these uncertain times, your health should be a priority. And, rest assured that Cleveland Clinic – Ohio’s leader in breast health – is one of the safest places in healthcare today.

For your convenience, Cleveland Clinic offers screening mammograms at 30 convenient locations, including:

- Lakewood Family Health Center (includes walk-in mammogram)

Our walk-in screening mammography locations provide annual screening mammograms for women ages 40 and older who have no breast symptoms (such as pain, nipple discharge, or have felt a lump). A prior doctor’s order is not required, except for at Lakewood Family Health Center.



Learn more about the steps we’re taking to keep you safe at ClevelandClinic.org/Coronavirus.

Visit ClevelandClinic.org/WalkinMammo for all locations and hours.



Our goal remains the same – we care for everyone. And safety is our top priority.

From extra safety measures at all locations, to virtual visits with our specialists. We’re here for you.

Visit ClevelandClinic.org/Access



Politics Local And State

One Lakewood Progress:
Your COVID-19 Voter Safety Questions Answered

by Laura Rodriguez-Carbone

With the 2020 Presidential Election fast approaching, I asked community members to submit questions and concerns about voter safety for in-person voting on election day. After speaking with representatives at the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, I have compiled an FAQ in-person voter packing checklist.

As a public health professional, I have strongly recommended that patients and community members vote early and/or by mail since the beginning of the year. However, with time running out and the public health situation surrounding COVID-19 changing rapidly, I cannot stress enough that in order to ensure greater infection safety while voting in-person this year, you should consider voting early at the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections office.

See the voter pocket guide for early in-person voting hours and other useful information on voter rights and voter safety.

Election Day Voter Packing Checklist and Safety Tips

There is a shortage of election poll workers across the country this year. Because of this, wait times may increase at your voting location. Make sure to allow yourself some extra time for a possible wait in line and dress appropriately for the weather when voting in-person. Remember, if you are in line

by poll closing time at 7:30pm, you still have the right to cast your vote.

Make sure you bring these things with you when you go to vote in-person:

Must Haves:

Ohio Driver's License, Voter ID or other acceptable form of identification;
Cloth mask or face covering (bring two so you have a backup in case you lose one);

Several disposable cloths or paper towels for grabbing door handles;

Hand Sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol);

Snacks and Water;

Warm, comfortable clothes;

Pen (in case they don't have sanitized ones at your polling location); and

Nice to Have:

Fully charged cell phone and power bank;

Portable chair;

Portable blanket; and a

Plan for rain (umbrella, hat or poncho).

Tips for Staying Healthy While Voting in Person

Make sure to wear your mask, and have hand sanitizer, snacks, and water available.

Follow signs and instructions for healthy voting at your voting location.

Don't try to clean the voting booth

yourself. Ask an election worker.

Sanitize your hands before and after voting; Wash your hands after you get home from voting with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Refrain from touching your face.

Consider going to vote when your polling location will not be as busy (usually mid morning or just after lunch).

Practice social distancing and stay at least 6 feet away from poll workers and other voters.

COVID-19 Voting FAQ

Question: Will my polling location check for a fever like they do at the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections Office? If I have a fever, will I still be able to vote?

A. As of this writing, representatives from the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections (BOE) were not able to provide a guarantee that temperatures will be taken at every community polling location on election day. If you vote early at the BOE, you can guarantee that temperatures for all voters will be taken. The BOE has designated a quarantine area for those with elevated temperatures to cast their vote, and also offers curbside voting.

Question: If I test positive for COVID-19, will I still be able to vote on election day?

A. I was transferred to an election official to ask this question and as of this writing, have not yet received a response. A representative at the BOE did confirm that curbside voting can be an option for a COVID positive patient if voting early at the BOE office. If you suspect that you might have COVID-19, please disclose this information in advance so accommodations can be made for you to vote. Call (216) 443-VOTE (8683) to talk to a representative before traveling to the BOE office. Don't wait.

Question: If I don't receive my vote by mail ballot by Election Day, will I still be able to vote in-person?

A. Yes! If you choose to vote early at the BOE office your vote-by-mail ballot request will be converted to a regular ballot. However, if you choose to vote at your local polling location on election day you will have to cast a provisional ballot. If you are worried about receiving your vote by mail ballot in time and do not want to cast a provisional ballot, it might be best to consider early in-person voting at the BOE, located at 2925 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115.

Question: If I mail my absentee ballot back, how much postage should I attach?

A. It costs 70 cents, or two first class postage stamps, to mail back a vote by mail ballot. One stamp will not do. Save a stamp by dropping off your vote-by-mail ballot in the dropbox in the BOE parking lot, or at the second designated ballot drop off location.

Question: I didn't know there was a second ballot drop off location. Where is it?

A. The second drop-off location is across the street from the BOE on East 30th and Chester at Campus International High School parking lot. The site will have teams of bipartisan election workers taking ballots as voters drive through. Voters must enter through the school's parking lot on East 30th Street, stay to the right and drive up to the collection site to meet the team members and drop off their ballot. Voters will exit by making a right turn onto Chester Avenue.

The auxiliary drop-off location will be open weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m on October 13-16 and October 19-23. It will be open on Saturday, October 24 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday, October 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The location will then be open from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. from October 26-30.



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State House

Senator Nickie Antonio
Commemorates Women’s
Suffrage By Voting

by Nickie Antonio

Election Day 2020 is only a couple weeks away, but with early and mail-in voting, you can submit your ballot today. The Cuyahoga County Board of Elections is open for early in-person voting now through Monday, November 2nd at 2:00 p.m. You can also request your absentee ballot up until three days before the election. Once you have received and completed your ballot, it must be postmarked and sent to the BOE or placed in the ballot drop box prior to election day; however, voters should submit or send their ballots as soon as possible.

This year has been momentous for numerous reasons, but one significant milestone worth commemorating is the 100-year anniversary of the ratification of Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution which gave women the right to vote. This allowed women to make their voices heard and represented one ballot at a time. In 1920, only about 36 percent of eligible women voters cast their ballot, compared to 68 percent of men. Now, women voters outnumber men at the polls 63 percent to 59.

I am extremely proud of our very own city of Lakewood for its contribution to the suffrage movement. Three years before the Nineteenth Amend-



Senator Antonio casting her vote early at the Cuyahoga County BOE drop box.

ment was added to the Constitution, Lakewood extended the right to women to vote on municipal issues and to run for local office. I know this community’s commitment to equality, civic duty, and efforts to support women continue today. This dedication is evident in Lakewood’s female city council members, Tess Neff and Sarah Kepple; our wonderful Mayor Meghan George; and, because of this community’s support, I am the first woman to represent Ohio’s 23rd Senate District.

While we commemorate the success of the women’s suffrage movement,

continued on page 7

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Vision changes after age 40: What’s normal?



Claudia Perez-Straziota, MD
Cleveland Clinic
Cole Eye Institute

Noticing subtle changes in your near vision? There’s a name for it.

“The medical term for this inevitable rite of passage is presbyopia, and it describes how our vision changes as we age,” says ophthalmologist Claudia

Perez-Straziota, MD, who sees patients in Westlake and Lakewood.

Presbyopia is the loss of the eye’s ability to change its focus to see objects that are near. It is part of the natural aging process.

“Our eyes are like a camera – the lenses inside automatically focus on whatever we need to see,”

explains Dr. Perez-Straziota. “That process works through the contraction and relaxation of certain muscles that move our lens forward or backward.”

When we’re young, our eyes can ‘accommodate,’ or focus at different distances, without the help of glasses or other aids. But as we age, our eye muscles start losing their ability to adjust and accommodate.

Common signs of presbyopia – difficulty focusing up close and slower focusing ability – typically start to appear around age 40.

“Presbyopia is treatable,” says Dr. Perez-Straziota. “From glasses and contacts to implants and surgery, there are many options to help you see clearly again.”

Another age-related condition are cataracts, which are the clouding of the lenses inside your eyes.



Symptoms may include:

- Vision that is cloudy, blurry, foggy or filmy
- Sensitivity to light or glare (such as from oncoming headlights when driving)
- Poor night vision
- Double vision

In the early stages, you may simply need a stronger prescription for glasses or contacts more frequently than you did before; however, surgery may be needed if cataracts start to interfere with your daily activities.

Cataracts are treated surgically by removing the opacity from your eye and replacing it with a specialized lens placed inside your eye to help with focus. Different types of implants are available and a discussion with your doctor to determine if you are a good candidate for any of these is essential.

To help keep your eyes healthy, the American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends a yearly eye exam for adults ages 40-64; more frequent exams if you have diabetes or a medical eye condition.

Dr. Perez-Straziota conducts patient visits in English and Spanish. For more information or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Perez-Straziota or another Cole Eye Institute provider, please call 216.444.2020. Virtual visits may be an option for new and existing patients.

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Lakewood Cares

The Rotary Clubs Of Lakewood Rocky River Celebrated World Polio Day October 24

by Larry Faulhaber

When Rotary and its partners launched the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988, there were 350,000 cases of polio in 125 countries every year. We’ve made great progress against the disease since then. Today, polio cases have been reduced by 99.9 percent, and just two countries continue to report cases of wild poliovirus: Afghanistan and Pakistan. Rotary remains committed

to the end.

With polio nearly eradicated, Rotary and its partners must sustain this progress and continue to reach every child with the polio vaccine. Without full funding and political commitment, this paralyzing disease could return to polio-free countries, putting children everywhere at risk. Rotary has committed to raising US\$50 million each year to support global polio eradication efforts. The

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has pledged to match that 2-to-1, for a total yearly contribution of \$150 million.

Local Rotary Clubs have special fund-raising events to support Rotary’s program to eradicate polio world-wide. The Rotary Clubs on the northwest part of Cuyahoga County and eastern Lorain County held a special fund raiser at the Melt Bar and Grilled Restaurants.

The Lakewood Rocky River Sunrise Rotary Club promotes support of this Rotary International program through individual donations and funding from its Club Foundation. It is currently conducting a Non-Event Fund Raiser to provide Funds for this and the Club’s many other community, youth and international service projects.

Contact the Sunrise Club President, Eric Jolly, to get information how you can support this World-Wide effort to eradicate polio - ericjolly@gmail.com. You can mail a check to the Lakewood Rocky River Sunrise Rotary Foundation, P.O. Box 16684, Rocky River Ohio, noting “Polio Plus” or ask Eric how to donate through PayPal.

The Sunrise Club is one of two Rotary Clubs in Lakewood and Rocky River. The Clubs are currently meeting on Zoom. Normally, one club meets on Mondays at Noon and a second meets on Wednesdays at 7:30am. Both meet at the Umerley Hall of the Rocky River Civic Center at Hilliard and West 210, behind Rocky River City Hall. Both Clubs follow the motto of Rotary – Service Above Self. The Books for Kids project in partnership with the Kids’ Book Bank is just one of Rotary’s Community, Vocational, Youth and International projects in the area.

You are invited join with the men and women of Rotary and add your time and talent. Contact Kathy Berkshire at sloopyohio19@gmail.com for current meeting information.

Larry Faulhaber is the PR Committee Chair for Sunrise Lakewood Rocky River Rotary Club.

Grace Lutheran Church Donates Backpacks To Garfield Middle School

by George Hansell

For twelve consecutive years, Grace Lutheran Church has provided backpacks and school supplies for students at Garfield Middle School at the beginning of the school year. In year's past, the members of the congregation would be informed of the supplies needed, and on a des-

ignated Sunday, backpacks would be filled with the supplies.

This year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the congregation solicited financial donations so that a limited number of people could purchase the supplies for the backpacks. Approximately 16 people donated \$1100 for the supplies. In

all, a total of 50 backpacks with school supplies and 14 surge protectors were gratefully received by Garfield Middle School.

Grace Lutheran Church is grateful to those who provided financial donations and to Thrivent Financial which provided seed money for the project. The congregation looks forward to being able to continue this ministry in the next academic year.

Grace Lutheran Church is a member congregation of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Located across from Madison Park at 13030 Madison Avenue, the congregation offers worship service on Sundays at 9 AM with a Christian Education Hour following at 9:45 AM. On September 20th, the congregation began live-streaming its services on Facebook.

For more information about Grace Lutheran Church, go to their website at www.gracelutheranlakewood.org.

Rotary Seeks Grant Applications

by Lynn Donaldson

The Rotary Club of Lakewood and Rocky River is seeking grant applications from non-profit organizations that serve our youth, adults and community within Lakewood and Rocky River.

Each year, the Rotary club, through its foundation, gives back to the community nearly \$70,000 in grants, scholarships, and financial aid.

Applications must be submitted by November 14. The application process has changed this year as completed forms and materials should not be mailed but instead be submitted via email to lrrrotary@gmail.com. Grant

awards will be announced in late December.

Grants requests can be for seed money for new endeavors, or to grow, enhance or sustain existing programs. Applications should emphasize activities that focus on job training, youth leadership, and health and hunger services.

Organizations are not limited to the number of applications they may submit.

Additional information and the grant application form can be accessed on the club’s website, www.lakewoodrockyriverrotary.org.

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Education

Cuyahoga County Goes Red, Lakewood Schools Stay Remote

continued from page 1

into three groups: those who wanted to encourage the District to open the schools, those who wanted to support the District’s decision to stay remote, and make sure they stuck to it, and the Lakewood Teacher’s Association who wanted to make sure their recently signed MOU was honored. The first group highlighted the difficulties of remote learning, the toll it has been taking on families, and the example the District is setting by “being scared” of the virus. Several people made it clear that they thought that Lakewood students were up to the challenge of staying safe in the buildings by following safety protocols that other school districts have been using.

The second group praised the Districts decision to stick with remote learning because it guarantees the health and safety of the students, staff and families, saying that this way will lead to the desired goal for all: the day when the virus is fully under control and everyone can return to school together.

Members of the LTA were there to make clear the commitment the teachers have to educating their students and to make sure that their own health was

protected.

One audience member addressed the “return to the buildings” crowd saying that it was not the parents who would have to come in, but the teachers, and that it was “remarkably easy to volunteer someone else for danger.”

While strong opinions were expressed, everyone in attendance was respectful and were clearly concerned about the community as a whole.

Afterwards Lakewood parent, Ahmie Yeung, who attended with her husband and son had this to say: “I feel the need to publicly acknowledge the grace and compassion I saw on display with our elected school board tonight, and especially the current board president. Also deep gratitude to all the educators who showed up tonight... I am so grateful to live in a community that puts the needs of the whole over the wants of a few. I believe in our abilities as adults to find creative solutions & work-arounds to the unsatisfactory aspects of this situation if we can all keep our selfish aspects in check. Everyone in that room or watching the video or taking the time to write in absolutely wants what is best for the kids in our community. Figuring out how to best achieve that will take us working together in innovative ways. The children are watching.”

Senator Nickie Antonio

Commemorates Women’s Suffrage By Voting

continued from page 5

we must also acknowledge that this right was not extended to all women. Due to state and local laws, loopholes, poll taxes, literacy tests, and violence, women of color were not guaranteed the right to vote. In fact, Black women and Native American women were not fully enfranchised voters until the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Even now, voter suppression tactics seek to disenfranchise people of color

and low income communities.

Despite these challenges and those associated with the pandemic, I am hopeful that women voters will turn out in droves to vote this year. This election is so important and women remain an essential part of our electorate. In this year of uncertainty, voters, especially women voters, should feel confident and more empowered than ever in asserting their voices at the ballot box.



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Lakewood Cares



Carl Lishing in front of his storefront on Detroit.

The Three P's Of Medicare

by Carl Lishing

This years Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) for Medicare began on October 15th and runs through Monday, December 7th.

This is the time of year people can shop their Medicare Advantage or Medicare Prescription Drug plans and make changes if there is room to improve. Medicare Supplement insurance is not subject to AEP, people can apply for that any time of the year.

I have been helping people in our area navigate the Medicare Maze for over twenty years. At HealthMarkets we represent hundreds of carriers so we can be unbiased when helping people find the best fit. People often tell me they are confused and do not even know where to start! We take a complex topic and make it simple by evaluating what I call the three P's of Medicare. These are prescriptions, providers and plan design.

Each person has prescriptions and providers that are unique to them. So, what might be a good plan for their neighbor may not be the best fit for them. Each case should be evaluated individually to help ensure you have the best fit.

Each year I spend hours analyz-

ing the strengths and weaknesses of each carrier and all the different plans they offer. There are sweet spots within the plan design where one product may fit a person better than another. For instance, if someone sees a lot of specialists, they may like a plan with a lower specialist co-pay. Some plans have stronger dental and vision options than others. So, if dental and vision is important this could make that plan a better fit. There are lots of little variables like this that can tip the scale one way or the other.

I work with each of my clients one on one to help assess their needs to see if there is room to improve. If they are already enrolled in the most appropriate plan, I will tell them to stay. If there is room to improve, I will point it out and help make the change if that is what is desired.

There is no charge for our service, we are compensated by the insurance companies when people enroll.

Licensed insurance agent Carl Lishing's consultative, problem-solving approach has garnered him the Best of Cleveland Award for 2020 in the insur-

continued on page 11

Senior PenPal Program

by Rachael Mathes

As we start to adapt to this "new normal," our senior community is still experiencing pandemic isolation and loneliness. Almost all senior activities have been put on hold, common gathering areas are closed, and trips have all but ended except to the doctor's office. While physical distance has been an important precaution to keeping our elder community safe, the lack of social interaction and human connection brings new health risks, especially to one's mental health.

This is where kindness and compassion have to happen. We're launching a city wide Pen Pal Program in order to bring joy and social connection back to our seniors. Studies show that the simple act of letter writing has many positive benefits. By having a Pen Pal, it will help our elderly stay connected, give them something to look forward to, and provide them with a way to initiate contact if they're feeling isolated. Even more, they can reread the letters at their leisure for ongoing comfort and support.

Letting our seniors know how much they're thought of and that the community cares for their well-being can make all the difference. Here's how you can get involved.

Send a handwritten letter or note of encouragement to a senior and send it to:



Attention: Barton Senior Center
C/O Pen Pal Program
14300 Detroit Ave.
Lakewood, Oh 44107

If you are a senior and would like to be matched with a Pen Pal, you can also send in a letter and we will match you with a member of the community.

Once paired, your new Pen Pal will write a letter back, so keep an eye out in the mail.

You can also email Leah Kubiak at leah@bartonseniorcenter.org with any additional questions. Happy writing!

Rachael Mathes is a Branch Manager with Citizens Bank in Birdtown and an avid Member of the Community.

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Lakewood Observer



The audience prepares to watch the film.

Lakewood Kid Filmmakers Walk The Red Carpet

by Eric Swinderman

That's a wrap! Lakewood Young Filmmakers Academy hosted the premiere of the latest film produced by their students on August 22 at Harding Middle School. The gala event featured all the glitz and glamour of a Hollywood premiere, complete with a red carpet, paparazzi, SWAG bags and, due to COVID-19, and outdoor screening of their new film "The Other Side of the Line," an allegory about racism and prejudice.

For three hot weeks in July, area kids and teens, ages 8-17, spent their days writing, filming and editing their masterpiece with the guidance of film industry professionals. The award-winning mentors, who have worked on some of the biggest Hollywood films ever made, assist the aspiring young Spielbergs in helping them ready their film for the big screen.

The film tells the tale of two feuding towns separated by a blue line that

no one ever dares to cross. That is until the children of the neighboring cities realize that their hatred for one another is silly and decide to do something about it.

"The Other Side of the Line," LYFA's fourth film produced by area kids, has already been accepted into the San Diego International Kids' Film Festival. LYFA's Executive Director, professional filmmaker Eric Swinderman is very excited about the kids' achievement. "Last year's film got into the Brooklyn Film Festival in New York, and this year we've already gotten into San Diego," said Swinderman. "We can't wait to see what other festivals the kids get into and where this could take them."

LYFA, which was formed in 2017, is located on Madison Avenue in Lakewood and hosts the Summer Filmmaking Camp annually as well as after school classes throughout the year. The next class, The 8 Week Film School, begins on October 6 and runs through November 24. For information or to enroll your child into this one-of-a-kind experience visit www.lakewoodyfa.com.

Eric Swinderman is an Emmy nominated and award winning filmmaker and TV producer from Lakewood, Ohio. A graduate of Cleveland State University, he also worked as a producer at NewsChannel 5. His most recent film, "The Enormity of Life," starring Breckin Meyer ("Clueless," "Road Trip") and Emily Kinney ("The Walking Dead") was filmed last year in Lakewood.



Fourth year student Evelyn Smits stands in front of the movie's poster.

Union Wants Councilman Bullock's Over The Top Behavior Addressed

by Jim O'Bryan

In a letter to the Mayor and City Council, Mike Piepsny, Lakewood City Employee's Staff Representative and Union Leader wrote:

Dear Honorable Council President O'Malley:

I am reaching out to you to bring to your attention to the unwarranted and unacceptable behavior of Councilman Tom Bullock. I have copied this letter to Lakewood Mayor Meghan George as well as all members of Council.

On the afternoon of October 15th, Mr. Bullock approached and confronted a City of Lakewood Public Works crew and demanded that they cease the work they were performing on behalf of the City of Lakewood and its residents. The Crew, members of AFSCME Local 1043, were performing their duties at the direction of the City of Lakewood Department of Public Works. As the Staff Representative from AFSCME Ohio Council 8 responsible for representing approximately one-hundred and fifty members of AFSCME Local 1043, I am appalled with this behavior and am writing to ask you and your fellow council members to hold Mr. Bullock accountable. My President of Local 1043, Michael Satink, joins me in asking for your assistance to assure that actions such as these are not tolerated.

Mr. Bullock, upon approaching the crew, immediately began to confront them over what he felt was work

being completed in violation of a City of Lakewood agreement. He (Bullock) took it upon himself to lambaste the workforce, using profanity while ignoring all social distancing and mask requirements. I am both disappointed and horrified that a sitting Council member would take unilateral and unprofessional action against a City Service crew performing their jobs. Ignoring safety protocols related to Covid-19 further exacerbates the unfortunate action.

My Local President has met with and taken statements from the members of the Public Works crew who were present during the incident. We are willing to share them should Council wish to investigate further. Actions such as these cannot be tolerated, and should face consequences.

On behalf of the men and women that I am proud to represent, I respectfully request that you look into this incident and take any action that you feel is appropriate and necessary.

Sincerely,
Mike Piepsny

Staff Representative
AFSCME, Ohio Council 8
1603 East 27th Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44114
(216)241-4554 x17
CC: Mayor Meghan George
Council President O'Malley
Members of Lakewood City Council

Wear A Good Mask

by Julia Kompier

With COVID-19 still being a very big thing, wearing a mask will help prevent the spread, but it can't just be any mask, a big part of mask-wearing is wearing an actual protective mask, otherwise there's not much of a point to wearing one. There are good masks like the cloth ones you can get from almost any store, or the blue medical masks, however there are masks--or things that pass as masks-- that don't or hardly work. Some scarf masks marketed as breathable don't work/or are not as effective as the other type of masks. Some masks come with inserts which

need to be used. If the insert is left out, the mask may let droplets through.

One way to check is by using a spray bottle and noting how much, if any, spray gets through, or you can just hold it under running water and watch how easily the water flows through. You can also check by trying to blow out a candle while wearing your mask. You shouldn't be able to blow it out.

Another thing which goes without saying is you have to wear it correctly, over your mouth AND nose.

Make sure your mask is working for you, and everybody else.



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Lakewood Fiction

The Rockport Miracles-Part 4: Episode 35: “The Ballad Of Derecho Dan” Continues:

by Scott MacGregor

“Wake up, Little Dan,” said the reassuring voice, “Wake up, dear.” It was the voice of Wilmena Newman, Little Dan’s mother. Against her doctor’s orders, she’d left her own sickbed to be with her critically injured son.

‘Little’ now ‘Derecho’ Dan was in rough shape after blowing up Storm 5.6 with a bomb-laden boat. His injuries included a severe concussion, a badly broken right leg, and a broken left arm. Wilmena was aghast when she found him handcuffed to his bed as mandated by the Rockport Police, the ATF, FBI, CIA, the Jacques Cousteau Society, and the River City Rotary. Despite being the biggest folk hero in Rockport since the Flying Owego Brothers, Derecho Dan Newman was in BIG trouble with every kind of law there was. If he’d recovered from his injuries, he’d be facing decades of imprisonment for his anarchy on Lake Erie.

Meanwhile, Mickey Mars had troubles of his own. After rowing his small boat onto the lake, his vessel had been seized upon by a mysterious force that pulled him through the water before flipping him into the water. As he held onto his upturned boat, a VERY LARGE thing circled around him. When the mystifying creature suddenly rose out of the water, Mickey (a natural falsetto who sings in the Cleveland Orchestra Chorale) let out a scream so shrill that circling gulls became confused and fell from the sky like soup dumplings.

Fortunately for Mickey, the Rocks of Rockport had been observing the creature from their clifftop perch and

were already on the way. They arrived on the scene just as Mickey let out his bird beguiling bawl. “HELP ME!!!” screamed Mickey, “IT’S GONNA EAT ME ALIVE!!!” Rockport Police Chief Tom Graber was on the boat and pulled Mickey a b o a r d . “Take it easy, Mickey,” said Chief Graber, “We’ve been observing and photographing the thing for hours. We think it was knocked silly by the explosion.”

M i c k e y was shaking like a leaf as he towed himself off. “Well then,” he blurted, “What the hell is it?!” As they sat on the deck observing the creature rolling around in the water, Chief Graber shrugged and nonchalantly replied, “It’s a dinosaur. What do you think it is?”

Mickey was bug-eyed while the rest of the crew all nodded in agreement. “There’s plenty of eyewitness accounts of these creatures going way back to the days of Gitchee-Goomi and Oliver Hazard Perry,” said the Chief. He added, “No one really knows what slithers and slides through the depths of these ancient lakes.”

Mickey was exasperated. “Imagine that...a friggin’ dinosaur...IN ROCK-

PORT?” Chief Graber nodded, “And, by tomorrow,” he said, “the whole world will know it. The Cleveland Museum of Natural History is contacting every marine expert and paleontologist IN THE WORLD!”



Back at Rockport Hospital, the scene was somber. Derecho Dan was not doing well at all. He was still unconscious and the doctor’s prognoses were increasingly grim. “We can’t help him if he’s lost his will to live,” said the doctor, “the next 24 hours will tell the tale.” Wilmena sat alone with him until the Three Joes

showed up. The three Italian bricklayers Little Dan had hired to build a barrier wall around the Gas & Lube came bearing gifts of pasta and pastries from the kitchens in Little Italy. Then, Rowena Gridley appeared with Little BD, who she’d smuggled past security inside her very large purse.

The room took on the appearance of the last scene in the “Wizard of Oz” when all the farm hands had gathered and waited for Dorothy to snap out of it. But, Derecho Dan wasn’t snapping out of it and Wilmena grew increasingly despondent. As the Three Joes hugged her, Rowena pulled two items

from her purse, a tuna salad sandwich and a Boston Bull dog. She laid Little BD on top of Derecho Dan who immediately began licking his face. Wilmena grabbed the tuna sandwich and held it up to his nostrils before shoving a tuna blob into his opened mouth. “If my tuna salad doesn’t wake him up,” said Wilmena, “then nothing will.”

Sure enough, Wilmena’s famous tuna salad worked its magic and went where no doctor could...straight into her boy’s soul. Derecho Dan’s fingers and toes began to move. Little BD kept licking his face while everyone rubbed his shoulders and gently called out his name. Suddenly, Wilmena felt her son’s grasp on her hand. “Little Dan,” she cried, “please wake up...my poor boy.”

And just like that, he opened his eyes. “Mama?” he whispered in a woe-ful voice that brought everyone to tears. The Three Joes simultaneously did a sign of the cross and Little BD let out a joyful bark. A demonstrably relieved Rowena turned toward the window and quietly prayed.

“We got this, Ma,” he whispered in a weak but hopeful voice. Wilmena dabbed her tears away with the wad of Kleenex she’d been holding. Then, she cradled her son’s face in the palm of her hand and delivered her favorite words of wisdom. “You betcha’ we got this, darlin’ boy,” she said, “we Great Lakers are a tough breed. Don’t you ever forget it.”

Next Episode: The Finale of "The Ballad of Derecho Dan"

Illustration ©2020 Greg Budgett
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When Will They Learn: Reviews Of Recent Releases By Local Bands, Pt. 107

by Buzz Kompier

Gills - Dried Clothes - self-released - 4 songs - 7"

I don't know anything about this band other than I've seen their name on shows for a couple years and they're from Youngstown, I'm pretty sure. This record is a really good hardcore record. Nice garagey production and pretty straightforward, no frills stuff. There's a bit of the Cruelster sound here, though less weird both musically and lyrically. The singer kinda reminds me of the guy from Fried Egg. There's a part on "Bird Rage" where I'm not certain whether the drummer skips a couple beats for dramatic effect...or he just missed the beats. Dropped a stick or something? Either way, it sounds cool. "TUFF/M.B.T" reminds me of a Cider song, though I cannot quite remember which one. The no frills thing carries over to the packaging here: hand-stamped labels, not even a full folded cover, hardly any informa-

tion about the band or anything. Maybe it's all best left a mystery. One other thing definitely done right by Gills here: Nathan Ward cover artwork (another thing in common with Fried Egg, now that I think about it). Worth seeking out. 4/5

(try a local record store)

Rat F*%*^r - Rat F*%*^r - self-released - 7 songs - cassette, digital

Here's the first studio release from Rat F#%*r, following up on their live tape from last year. I guess this one is a cassette "for now" with plans of pressing it as a 7" at some point in the future.



It's pretty ripping hardcore. I can't quite remember what other bands these guys are in- Spike Pit and Weed Whacker are at least two of them, I'm pretty sure. It's good stuff. Topic-wise, this is a serious band (there's good messages

here about the environment, distribution of wealth, and inclusiveness, if you can believe all that from a band called Rat F#%*r, but vocalist/lyricist Kellar presents the songs in a cartoonish enough way (and I mean this as a compliment- I saw someone say this band is wrestling-themed, which is not at all the case as far as I know, but they do have that kind of energy) that they're not overly serious to the point of being boring. Overly serious

bands don't have lines like "destruct is dumb." And the band rips, too. Check out the bass lead that pops up throughout "CCCCP." Or the drum break at the end of "Fist Of The North Shore." Or any of the slightly ridiculous but simultaneously awesome guitar solos throughout this thing. On "Cosmic Fire" they're all really on fire...no pun intended. The only complaint I'd have is that a lot of the lyrical flows, metrically speaking, are kinda the same. But hey, even if it does all sound the same, at least it sounds pretty cool. I'd buy it as a 7". 3.5/5

(ratfucker.bandcamp.com)

Are you a local-ish band? Do you have a record out? Email vaguelythreatening@gmail.com or send it directly to the Observer: PO Box 770203, Lakewood, OH 44107.

Lakewood Is Alive

Things Will Not Change

by Steven Piekutoski

Or, will they? Been recently reading an article by Rahm Emanuel, an old article, meaning before the virus, May 2019- what said? He's sick and tired of elites running things, it seems. How nice of him to say. But, what does it mean? He's an elite guy with a bug, somewhere. There is a massive break between what we think and what people tell us what to think. It's so massive that the only thing we can perceive is attitude and demeanor and a few vague talking points. Okay, so all this is quite obvious to us. But, what if we cannot connect between what education is and what it means to be a human being? There is a massive virus afoot but there was one before it came-- education thinking it must tell people what to do, that education is power. A man concretely yelling middle class, Rahm Emanuel, when there is nothing in his thoughts but political power, as in, how to tame the middle class. Not to mention, Mr. Emanuel, the Democrats have decided to dismiss the poor.

So, so much for the rant-- but a better point, why is it that our elites fail us? Why is the government a disaster yet day-to-day life can seem to proceed without fail? Why do we live through each day when our cultural elites tell us we are a disaster?

Education, if it has a footing, is never to be, and this an educated goal, a nudge of things-- also, any educated goal that tells us that the fiscal policy of trickle down works is a stinking lie. Where were we-- oh

yes, the idea that there can and must be a combination of standing for oneself and admitting that standing for oneself doesn't come in a vacuum. Also, education. All education must ever be the goal of telling ourselves that being alone is a tragedy-- plus, acting as if we are much worse than the original tragedy.

What we teach? Not as important that we teach that education is not a tool of power but a means of understanding, each. Yet, this comes from the great vault of knowledge-- who shall we teach? Here's something-- I would say Octavia Butler's Lilith's Brood should be taught with Herman Melville's Moby Dick. But, none such matters in terms of the goal of education. Find your books and teach them with this to the minds-- you do not own anything of anyone else, your knowledge is not power.

I remember the Public Service Announcements of the 1990's telling all that knowledge was power-- they got it way wrong. Elites, all colors and affiliations, are built on the idea that knowledge is power and they have a power of the books you did not read. Also, the idea they take from life information you could not possibly think of. This is not to say do not read-- the Lakewood Public Library has many books to offer.

Elites are a congratulatory bunch-- this will not change. But, I am honestly flummoxed as to how we can get them to say, "I'm not as important as I think I am. And, also, what is the function of my being

on television, the internet, the vast array of communicative devices that exist?"

We watch and listen to people with a voice but it ever strikes me that we have no way to say, "Stop." This might be a tragedy worse than we thought.

And yes, the article at the beginning, something about how Democrats should condemn, something about accountability and responsibility, some set of elites that did something wrong with college admissions. Oh how the elites love to mention their own crimes-- they think that they're their own, for some reason. Or, does class, in multiple forms, exist?

Violinist DBR Engages With LHS Music Students

Continued from page 1

composition with a modern piece by Roumain in order to expose the stu-

dents to the music and composers who use the art of music to express significant historical times and feelings that may help to bring more empathy and unity to our community.

The Three P's Of Medicare

Continued from page 8

ance agent category. You can reach him at 216-228-0765. HealthMarkets Insurance Agency is located at 16506 Detroit Avenue, in Lakewood. Office hours currently by appointment. Find out more at ClevelandInsurance.info. HealthMarkets Insurance Agency, Inc.

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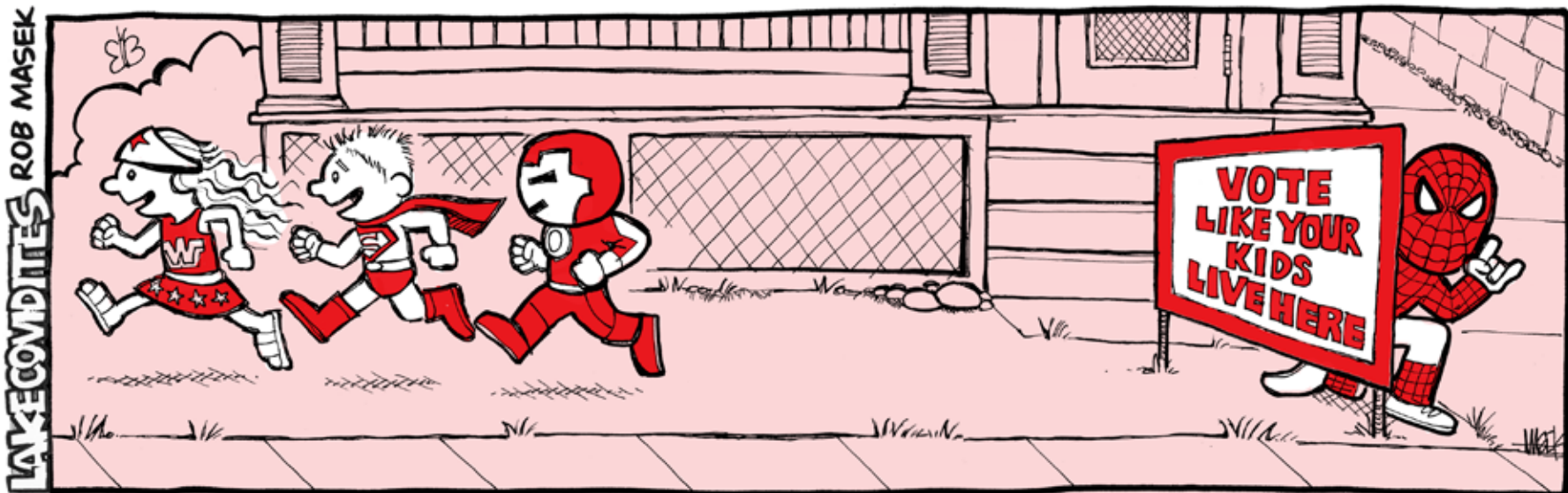
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