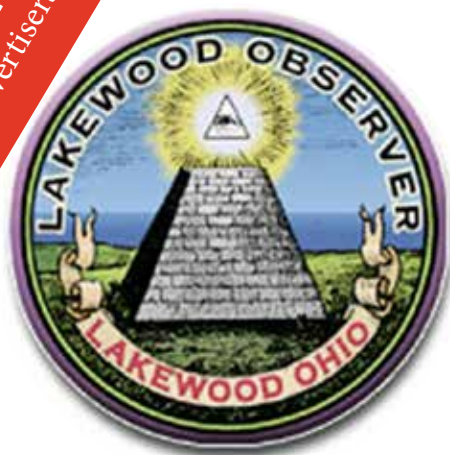


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THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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Volume 17, Issue 11, June 2, 2021

“It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are.” - e. e. cummings



Lakewood Schools with the help of Westshore Technical Students built this beautiful memorial garden in honor of Max Close and Alejandro Mercado. Both students were killed by a drunk driver last winter. **The Marker reads:** In Loving Memory, Max Close, Alejandro Mercado, Class of 2020, Always a Ranger, Forever in Our Hearts. You can read more about this special garden on page 7, and see all the photos from the ceremony online at: lakewoodobserver.com/photoblogs.

City of Lakewood 2021 Summer Events Update

from City of Lakewood

Based on the most recent guidance from the CDC and the Ohio Department of Health, the City of Lakewood is pleased to announce this updated list of events that will be taking place in Lakewood this summer

Fourth of July – The city will hold its annual fireworks display, as originally stated, on Sunday,

July 4th at Lakewood Park.

Friday Night Flicks – Our regular Friday Night Flick schedule will resume this summer. There will be four movies at Lakewood Park and one at Madison Park. More information on dates and movies to be shown will be announced soon.

Concerts in the Park – We are hoping to have modified concert series starting later in

the summer provided we can secure the necessary vendors.

Cleveland Shakespeare Festival – The Cleveland Shakespeare Festival will return to Lakewood Park this summer. On Friday, August 6th at 7:00 PM, the Cleveland Shakespeare Festival will perform Romeo & Juliet.

Lakewood Arts Festival – The City of Lakewood and the Lakewood Arts Festival Board are pleased to announce that the Lakewood Arts Festival will return this summer. The festival is set for Saturday,

August 7th from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Detroit Avenue in Downtown Lakewood. For more information, click [here](#).

Block Parties – Neighborhood block parties will resume this summer. To get more information about holding a block party on your street, click [here](#).

Pavilions at Lakewood Park – Reservations for the Kiwanis Pavilion and the Gazebo at Lakewood Park will begin on June 10th. Due to an HVAC System Replacement Project, the Woman's Club Pavilion will remain closed at this time. As

soon as the HVAC upgrades have been completed, reservations for the Woman's Club will begin. Click [here](#) for more information.

For all of these events, the city will be following the regulations and guidance from the Ohio Department of Health and the CDC that are in place on the event date.

For the most recent summer event updates, please visit the Lakewood 2021 Summer Events page by clicking [here](#).

When there isn't planned

continued on page 10

District Receives \$15,000 Kiwanis Centennial Gift

by Christine Gordillo

Part of the tradition of the Lakewood Kiwanis is to have a signature project to mark important anniversaries of the organization. For the group's 75th anniversary in 1996, the Kiwanis gifted an announcement sign for the Lakewood Board of Education property located then on Warren Road. A quarter century later and in conjunction with its centennial celebration, the Kiwanis have graciously given the Lakewood City Schools \$15,000 to place a new sign at the Board's new home at the Taft Center for Innovation (formerly Taft Elementary).

“We are extremely grateful for the longstanding partnership the District has with the Kiwanis and appreciate the many ways they serve our students, whether it be through

scholarships for seniors, service clubs at our school buildings, or now this generous gift for our community,” said Superintendent Mike Barnes.

The Kiwanis marked their 100th anniversary with a gala on May 14 where Board President Betsy Bergen Shaughnessy accepted the \$15,000 gift on behalf of the Board.

Kiwanis Centennial Gala chairman and past president Tim Mohr said choosing the schools for the centennial project was a natural fit. “Kiwanis has an ongoing commitment of serving the community through the schools. Our focus has always been on kids,” he said.

The District hopes to have the new sign in sometime during the next school year.

What A Race Weekend



Charlotte Koehler finished 5th place as a first time racer in the 2021 Cleveland Soapbox Derby! Charlotte and her race team, sister Macie and Dad Firefighter Mark Koehler, continued their winning tradition by taking home some podium hardware! Lakewood Firefighters Local #382 has been sponsoring young women and girls in Soap Box Derby for five years!

City Hall

The Mayor’s Corner: Moving Forward

by Meghan George, Mayor, City of Lakewood

It’s hard to believe that 2021 is nearly half over. This year is flying by, but I am excited to share all that the City of Lakewood has been up to this past month.

On May 18th, Shawn Leininger, Director of Planning and Development, and I delivered our final Virtual State of the City Addresses in each of Lakewood’s four wards. My goal with these Addresses was to discuss events of this past year, COVID-19, objectives for 2021 and beyond, current and future infrastructure projects, and certain ward specific items. I would like to thank everyone who attended and I look forward to seeing you all face-to-face again very soon. If you missed them, you can watch the recordings on the City’s YouTube channel.

The City of Lakewood is slated to receive \$47 million as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. On May 10th, the U.S. Department of the Treasury released initial guidance on the use of the American Rescue Plan Act funds. The initial guidance indicated that these funds may be used in the following areas:

- Support public health expenditures, by, for example, funding COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral healthcare, and certain public health and safety staff
- Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health

emergency, including economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector

- Replace lost public sector revenue, using this funding to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic
- Provide premium pay for essential workers, offering additional support to those who have and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical infrastructure sectors
- Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet

In June, I will be introducing to City Council a plan to allocate \$25 million of the funds towards needed water/sewer upgrades. This allocation will be a major investment in one of the largest infrastructure projects in this City’s history. This necessary investment of ARPA dollars will benefit every water/sewer user in the City as to reduce future rate increases. We will be discussing this proposal as well as the Impervious Surface Fee at a community forum on June 16th at 7pm. The format of the meeting will include the ability to facilitate small group discus-



Downtown Lakewood at sunset.

sion and to address questions.

On May 13th, I was honored to attend a ceremony recognizing the efforts of Lakewood Police and EMS. I am immensely proud to have a proactive and experienced team of first responders, as their efforts contribute greatly to the safety and wellbeing of Lakewood’s citizens. I am humbled to serve this city next to these honorable men and women.

As we look at improvements at Lakewood Park’s Foster Pool, we sought input from the community on the facility and what you think could be improved via a short survey. That feedback has been valuable and will be incorporated in future discussions. I look forward to continued public

meetings and feedback to ensure that this project meets the needs of our community.

Lastly, I would like to remind everyone that as of May 28th, Lakewood’s website is transitioning from OneLakewood.com to LakewoodOh.gov. The .gov domain is a top-level government domain restricted to use by government entities. Having all U.S. government websites at the federal, state and local level on a .gov domain is a top national security issue.

I would like to personally thank you for all of your support during this last month. I am proud of the direction we are moving in and look forward to continuing this momentum throughout June.

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City Council

The View From City Council

by Jason Shachner Ward 2 Councilperson

Lakewood Pools and Foster Pool Survey

With summer right around the corner, it's time for Lakewood pools to open for the season. Madison Park's Becks Pool opens on June 2nd and Lakewood Park's Foster Pool opens on June 9th. For more information about Lakewood public pools, please visit the Lakewood City Schools Recreation Department's website: <https://www.lakewoodrecreation.com/news/summer-2021-outdoor-pool-information/14527>.

As I mentioned in the last issue of The View from Ward 2, next year Foster Pool will be undergoing renovations/redesign. Lakewood is interested in hearing your vision for the Pool, and wants to incorporate your ideas into the final pool plans. Please share your thoughts and ideas by completing the Foster Pool survey go here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Lakewood-ParkFosterPool>?

Public Art Advisory Board Applications

Interested in creating a strategic direction and having a voice in public art in Lakewood? The City is accepting applications for the Public Art Advisory Board. The PAAB is responsible for "collaborating with City officials regarding its public art policies and practices, promoting the City's public art programs and educating residents

Letter To The Editor

Keep Kepple On Council

by Cindy Strebis

Dear Neighbors:

This is a letter of support for Sarah Kepple for Lakewood City Council. As I expected when she was unanimously chosen to fill Mayor George's council seat, Sarah Kepple has risen to the occasion. Her knowledge of computer communication systems has allowed all of us in Lakewood to continue to actively participate in our local government during the COVIC-19 reduced capacity and stay-at-home orders. In her first month on the job, Sarah wrote an emergency ordinance upgrade software to run live meetings AND allow people to interact with e-comments. This is an improvement on the in-person city council meetings. Her Express Parking Resolution has been beneficial to residents and businesses alike; a welcome addition for busy Lakewood residences juggling many responsibilities. Sarah Kepple's perspective as a business owner, educated woman, and concerned neighbor is why I am supporting her for Council At Large in 2021. I hope you'll join me. Peace.

Cindy Strebis

Community activist and concerned citizen

on the benefits of public art on public and private properties."

To apply please complete the Public Art Advisory Board (PAAB) application and submit it along with your resume to mayorsoffice@lakewoodoh.net. Applications are due by 4:00 PM on June 7th.

Andrews Avenue Block Club Meeting

I recently attended the inaugural

Andrews Avenue Block Club meeting. Andrews Ave resident Jason Weiner organized the meeting and was able to publicize the event with the help of his neighbors. There was an excellent turn out. Residents received updates about Kauffman Park and the Lakewood Traffic Calming Program, and were able to discuss other day-to-day issues on Andrews. The meeting concluded with an activity called The Marketplace. During this activity, each participant either offers a skill or item to the group or articulates a need and, at the end, the participants connect

with the people by either taking them up on their offers or by offering to fulfill their need. For example, one participant offered her extra perennials and to plant them if needed and another offered their kayaks and paddleboards for neighbors to borrow. I thought this activity was a unique and constructive way to learn more about neighbors and conclude the meeting.

If you are interested in starting a Block Club on your street please contact John Storey at John.Storey@lakewoodoh.net. Email me at: Jason.Shachner@lakewoodoh.net



A recent storm blows into Lakewood from over Lake Erie.

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Lakewood Public Library

June’s Virtual Meet The Author Events

by Andrea Fisher

Lakewood Public Library will feature three new virtual Meet the Author events during the month of June. You can watch these programs on facebook.com/lakewoodpubliclibrary and twitter.com/lakewoodlibrary on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m.

June 10

Raechel Anne Jolie, author of "Rust Belt Femme" shares her story of how she survived growing up in rural Ohio against a backdrop of poverty and tragedy, covering a lot of ground with vignettes of love, punk rock, gender and addiction.

June 17

Watch local author Susan Petrone talk about her latest book "The Heebie-Jeebie Girl." Set in 1977 Youngstown,

the year that the city’s largest steel mill closed, eight-year-old Hope has the eerie ability to pick the winning lottery numbers. This supernatural power leads to an unfortunate crime, and Hope sets out to find the perpetrator.

June 24

Akron author David Giffels discusses "Barnstorming Ohio," an account of his travels around the state, visiting people and places to try to better understand America, and why Ohio has long been considered the bellwether state.

If you miss the premiere, the videos will also be available on the Library’s website lakewoodpubliclibrary.org

Make sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter to stay up to date on library news, programs and events.

Children/Youth Events At Lakewood Public Library

by Nic Starr

Library Pen Pal

For children three years old through sixth grade

Do you miss the Library? We miss you too! Write a letter to a Library staff member telling us about anything from the last book you read to your favorite animal or even include a drawing. A staff member will read your letter and write you back.

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Virtual Local Children’s Author Event – Keith Allen

For all ages

Join local author and illustrator Keith Allen virtually as he reads his children’s picture book "What a Mess: a pop-up Misadventure."

View this exclusive video from our website at lakewoodpubliclibrary.org or through our Facebook at facebook.com/lakewoodpubliclibrary.

Virtual Storytime

For all ages

Join Lakewood Library staff members virtually as they read children’s picture books and share songs, rhymes and finger plays.

View these exclusive videos from our website at lakewoodpubliclibrary.org or through our Facebook at facebook.com/lakewoodpubliclibrary.

Virtual Woke Book Club

For students in sixth through twelfth grade

In this bimonthly book club for teens, inspired by the Read Woke book challenge created by Cicely Lewis, we will read and respectfully discuss books selected

Imagining A Better World: The Artwork Of Nelly Toll Now On Display At Lakewood Public Library

by Andrea Fisher

Lakewood Public Library is pleased to host "Imagining a Better World: the Artwork of Nelly Toll" on display now through July 31 in the Main Library Second Floor Gallery. This exhibition was organized by the Massillon Museum, with support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The exhibit features the artwork of Nelly Toll, who was a young Jewish girl living in Poland during World War II. Nelly and her mother hid from the Nazis in the home of a Catholic family for over a year. While in hiding, Nelly’s mother encouraged her to paint and write, and she created nearly sixty watercolor paintings imagining what life would be like outside of hiding.

Nelly and her mother were the family’s only survivors and eventually immigrated to the United States in 1951. Nelly went on to become an artist, therapist, professor, and lecturer.

In 2003, "Behind the Secret Window: A Memoir of a Hidden Childhood During World War II" was published, featuring Nelly’s artwork and journal entries.

Massillon Museum has created this traveling exhibition with a collection of high quality reproductions from Nelly’s original works. The orig-



inals are being held in the permanent collection of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Museum in Israel or with private collectors.

Nelly spent her life speaking about her experiences in the war, teaching a Holocaust class at the University of Pennsylvania and sharing her story with others. Sadly, Toll passed away earlier this year at the age of 88.

"Imagining a Better World: the Artwork of Nelly Toll" is free and open to the public Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Friday and Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m

to inspire change, embrace diversity, and promote inclusivity. Each month will focus on a different topic and you will choose which book(s) you would like to read from a diverse list of titles. Registration is required and you will receive a Zoom link upon registration. Attendance at both monthly meetings is not required.

June: Gender Nonconformity
July: LGBTQ+ Stories
August: Immigration and Refugees
Wednesdays, June 9, July 14, August 11, 2021, 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. via Zoom.
Thursdays, June 24, July 22, August 26, 2021, 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Virtual Special Friday Performance – Lake Erie Nature and Science Center: Reptiles

For children in pre-school through early elementary

Join animal ambassadors via Zoom from Lake Erie Nature and Science Center and discover the world of reptiles. Meet different kinds of snakes, turtles, and other scaly creatures and learn what makes these animals unique in this thirty minute live program. Registration is required. The Zoom link to this program will be emailed one day before the program.

Friday, June 11, 2021, 3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Virtual Didgeridoo Down Under Show

For all ages

The Didgeridoo Down Under Show is a high-energy, Australia-themed show that combines music, culture, comedy, storytelling and audience movement/participation. You’ll learn about Aussie culture, animals and more, all while moving and grooving to the pulse in rhythms of the didge! Watch this program from the comfort of your home any time from Monday, June 21, 2021 through Sunday, June 27, 2021. No registration is required.

Monday, June 21, 2021 – Sunday, June 27, 2021.

Virtual Solar System Step-Out – Armstrong Air & Space Museum

For children four through ten years-old

Join the Armstrong Air & Space Museum virtually for this fun and engaging program. Children will get an idea of how far apart the planets are by taking steps (pretend) between each planet, while learning cool planet facts. This hands-on educational program will be delivered by an experienced educator and is designed for children to explore and learn together. Registration is required. A Zoom Link will be emailed one day before the event.

Wednesday, June 30, 2021, 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. via Zoom.

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Lakewood Observer

Lakewood Progress: ADA Accessibility Will Ensure Inclusive Economic Recovery

by Laura Rodriguez-Carbone

Economic recovery is on the minds of most Lakewood residents and businesses. Local economies all around the country face an uncertain future due to the continued presence of COVID-19. As we look to the future of Lakewood’s local business landscape, it is important that we remember to support our small business owners. It is also important to ensure that every person in our community can equitably access the goods and services we have to offer. Not only is it the right thing to do for our neighbors with physical limitations, but it makes good business sense.

The total taxable income for working-aged people with disabilities in the U.S. every year is about \$490 billion with a discretionary income of about \$21 billion per year. People with disabilities are not just a solitary market; they are surrounded by family members and friends who also recognize

the value in products and services that accommodate all people. One of the biggest barriers for accessibility to goods and services for people in wheelchairs, scooters, walkers and canes in Lakewood is the step landing present in a good majority of storefronts.

Many storefronts pre-date the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Under the law, buildings built before then are granted safe harbor and not held to the same standards as newly constructed or renovated buildings. Businesses in existing facilities are only required to make changes that are “readily achievable,” or “easily accomplishable without much difficulty or expense.” Determining what is “readily achievable” is up to individual businesses and will vary greatly based on the resources available.

Increasing access to our local shops, restaurants, salons, and boutiques provides a twofold opportunity

for Lakewood’s businesses and industry. First, businesses will benefit from an increase in favorable public perception. Second, people with disabilities represent a vast consumer market for high-quality services and products, which can bolster local revenue generation.

In 2020, Mayor George established the Americans with Disabilities Transition Task Force for ADA Compliance. The Task Force is charged with developing a citywide plan to upgrade and bring city properties/facilities into compliance, as well as identify properties, buildings and facilities that require upgrades to become ADA compliant.

The good news is, there are already some great conversations going on with ideas on how to support expanding physical access to small businesses. According to Tracy Marie Greenberg, who co-chairs the ADA Transition Task Force, “There are some ideas in the works regarding possible assistance for funding at the city level to help... businesses become more accessible.” In addition to this, small businesses making less than \$1 million per year or which have 30 or fewer full-time workers can also qualify for up to \$10,000 in tax credits for improving accessibility.

As for what small businesses can do now to help become more accessible to patrons with physical disabilities, Tracy says that awareness matters. “The first step would be awareness...the second... compassion. It’s not always easy to make some of these older buildings more accessible. But, just starting this conversation can make a difference. Many people lack awareness of inaccessibility until they themselves or a family member cannot gain access to people, places, and things.” Businesses could begin to plan for the return of patrons by doing an ADA checklist audit of their business. They can also “consult with someone who specializes in accessibility and ADA compliance.” Says Tracy, “In some cases, it is about compliance and in other cases it is about just doing the right thing.”

And, in a post-pandemic Lakewood and world, we can’t afford to leave any person behind.

Laura Rodriguez-Carbone is currently Co-Chair of Lakewood's Anti-Racism Task Force and serves on the Board of Directors for the Fedor Manor Senior Living Community. She and her husband, Christopher have been residents of Lakewood for five years and own their home on McKinley Avenue.



Emerald Canyon Bald Eagle Update - Mom looks over her single eaglet. Right now it is the size of a small turkey, by July 4th it will have a 5’ wingspan and be flying.

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4 Items	\$9.50	\$12.00	\$16.00	\$19.00
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Lakewood Education

Dr. G's Lakewood Rangers' Baseball Round-Up

by Dr. Charles Greanoff

MAY 20

The Lakewood Rangers Baseball season ended today (16-11) with a loss—the way seasons end for the overwhelming majority of teams. The future is bright with many underclassmen getting significant playing time this year (5 of 9 starters today were sophomores). Senior Jameson Supinski (pictured setting up for his last at bat), who had one of the best seasons of any Ranger in recent memory, will be headed off to Division II Findlay to continue his playing career. It was also the last day of school for Jameson and his senior teammates, including starting shortstop Carlos Cintron and reserves Patrick Burke, Zack Krost, David Coleman and Hubert Carlin, all of whom made valuable contributions this year.

The guys from the 44107 lost today to an excellent Brunswick squad, the champions of their league. It was a fun and rewarding season, with an all-state candidate like Supinski, the emergence



of junior Will Hyatt as a bonafide starting varsity pitcher, the twin Jablonski sophomores improving as the season went on, the solid two way play of sophomores Sully Stojs and Mason Ivinskis, who will likely be pitching mainstays next year. Cintron was a

strong leadoff hitter who played well at shortstop. Junior Lucas Winters had many key hits and was a tough out all year. Sophomore Emmett Frantz joined the varsity mid way through the season and played solid defense in center and had some timely hits. The return

of sophomore Eli LaDue from injury happened just in time for big help in the tournament win over Cleveland Heights. Freshman Keegan Schroeder logged valuable time at second base, playing sound defense and collecting his first varsity hits.

Kudos to Coach Mike Ribar and his staff for building a community-based baseball program that we can all take pride in. See you next year at the corner of Bunts and Franklin.

MAY 18

The Lakewood Rangers Baseball (16-10, 12-5 GLC) squad opened OHSAA Tournament action with a hard fought 5-3 win over the Cleveland Heights Tigers. Reminiscent of the old LEL of Coach Ribar's day, the Rangers had to travel to the corner of Cedar and Lee, given that Lakewood was the lower cede. The Tigers grabbed the early 1-0 lead and held off the Rangers until the 5th, when Lucas Winters and Emmett Frantz had RBI hits sandwiched around a run scoring fielders choice by Will Hyatt. The Rangers tacked on two more in the 6th on a two RBI single, again by Lucas Winters.

The winning formula was as old as baseball itself—strong pitching, solid defense and timely hitting. Senior southpaw Jameson Supinski was the pitching star, hurling 6 innings, allowing one hit and one earned run. Junior Lucas Winters was the hitting star (2-4, 3 RBI), and sophomore Eli LaDue, playing his first game since an early season injury, made two stellar plays at second, including one that helped snuff out a Tiger rally in the 7th. Sully Stojs finished for the Rangers, allowing just one run in his one inning. Carlos Cintron had two hits and scored two runs. LaDue reached base twice and also scored two runs.

This is a satisfying win. Cleveland Heights has a quality team, their enthusiastic fans were out in high numbers (as were our traveling Lakewood loyalists). The fans, players and coaches for both teams were fine representatives of their schools. These two community based teams played a great game—very happy that the guys from 44107 won this one.

Dr. G's Mugs:

Congratulations LHS Class Of 2021

by Dr. Charles Greanoff

Seventy Four! I now have 74 mugs, representing about 65 different schools, all from former students. How did it start? One day, after having once again treated/bribed/rewarded my students with premium chocolate, I made an off handed remark that, for all my generosity, they should bring me a mug from their college. Well, one day to my surprise, Annalisa Perez and Derek Dashiell (both '12) had actually taken me seriously, and showed up with mugs from OSU and Kenyon, respectively, and the mug collection was off to the races. Now, 9 years and 74 mugs later, I look forward to one day in the distant future sitting in my retirement den with my cat, books and fond memories of all the fabulous LHS students who I had the honor of teaching.

For the record, we are all equally proud of those students who have chosen to pursue work via our fabulous WestShore/Career Tech programs such as Construction Trades, Electronics, Culinary Arts, Auto Mechanics, etc. The magic of LHS is that we aspire to serve the entirety of the community and the myriad interests/goals of our citizens.

Try to find a school around here whose curriculum matches ours—AP classes, CCP classes, electives, career tech...

Anyway, I've mostly taught advanced classes, and many of my students have gone off to—and many have now graduated from—these wonderful colleges. Among the "mug givers" are attorneys, engineers, graduate students, teachers, forensic investigators, translators, etc. So, here goes: Akron, Alabama,



Allegheny, American U, Appalachian St, Ashland, Baldwin Wallace, Barnard/Columbia, Bowling Green, Boston University, Brown, Butler, Cedarville, Champlain College, U Cincinnati, Cleveland St, Cornell, DePaul, Drexel, Duquesne, Duke, U Evansville, Findlay, Fordham, George Washington, Hawai'i Pacific, Harvard, U Indianapolis, Iowa St, Kent St, Kentucky, Kenyon, Marywood, Macalister, Mercyhurst, U Michigan, Michigan St, Muskingum, Mount Union, Northwestern, Notre Dame, Oberlin, Ohio St, Ohio Wesleyan, Ohio U, Oregon St, Penn St, U Pennsylvania, U Pittsburgh, Rhodes, U Richmond, U San Francisco, Smith, St Mary's, Syracuse, Tiffin, U Toledo, Ursuline, U Virginia, U Washington, Western Washington, Wittenberg, U West Virginia, Xavier

The classes of 2020 and 2021 are or are soon to be in college, in the armed services and/or working. Despite all

the heartbreaks and challenges they have faced, I found them to be tenacious and empathic. They have risen to the occasion.

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Lakewood Education

Seckers Earns National Merit Scholarship

by Christine Gordillo

Congratulations to Lakewood High School senior Nina Seckers, who has earned a \$2,500 scholarship from the National Merit Scholarship Corp. National Merit \$2500 Scholarship winners are the National Merit Finalists in each state judged to have the strongest combination of accomplishments, skills, and potential for success in rigorous college studies. The 2,500 Merit Scholar winners were chosen from a talent pool of some 16,000 outstanding Finalists in the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program.

These Scholars were selected by a committee of college admissions officers and high school counselors, who appraised a substantial amount of information submitted by both the Finalists and their high schools: the academic record, including difficulty level of subjects studied and grades earned; scores from the PSAT/



Nina Seckers

National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test; contributions and leadership in school and community activities; an essay written by the Finalist; and a recommendation written by a high school official.

The Rebirth Of Lakewood Rangers Softball



by Dr. Charles Greanoff

The myth of the Phoenix is so enduring because it goes to the deepest of human wants—that is, the hope of rebirth, of coming back from the dead, of recapturing long lost glory. Well, the once proud Lakewood Rangers Softball program was already all but dead, and then we entered into Covid-19 dystopia—a lost season for all spring sports. Low point, rock bottom.

But thanks to dedicated parents, a fresh approach to coaching/program building, and of course a bunch of hard working players, the Ranger Softball Team rose off the ash heap, posting a 12-6 record in the GLC (13-12 overall). First year coach Lucas Yousko, who had been an assistant in previous years, brought an upbeat, positive, fun approach, that included Saturday afternoon cookouts between games but at the same time put forth some serious, focused work on the field. Softball is once again an event at LHS. Coach Yousko concurs. “We tried to make softball an event that could attract girls back to the sport. The Saturday tailgate parties seemed to be a big hit and we are hoping next year gets even better.”

Of course, the main actors in the drama are the players, and this year the Rangers had many strong contributors. Junior Inga Wilhelmy, (1st Team GLC

/3rd team all Cuyahoga County), led the offense, while freshman Mia Carroll-Greeves (2nd team All GLC) and sophomore Jordan Rossen (Honorable Mention GLC) were stalwarts on the mound. Junior Alesha Hanna-Kotula also earned an Honorable Mention with timely hitting a solid defense. Yet, the success of the the season also depended upon many others.

Junior Mia Condosta played multiple positions and provided offensive punch. Sophomore catcher Charlotte Beno was steady behind the plate and hit well. Sophomore Lauren Barber played center, 3rd and 1st and was an offense threat as leadoff hitter and an aggressive baser-runner. Junior Addison Miller hit well and played multiple positions. Sophomores Annette Doran and Grace Hart contributed admirably as outfielders and freshman Emily Potoczak did the same at 2nd. Senior Jocelyn Barth unfortunately played sparingly due to injuries. Key reserves also included sophomore Olivia Pickens who played outfield and freshman Aubrey Seguire, who filled in at catcher.

Coach Yousko sees even better things ahead. “We are excited for the future. Our team is young, graduated. **Read the rest of this article online at: lakewoodobserver.com**



Alejandro and Max’s families take a moment of silence at the garden.

LHS Honors Max Close And Alejandro Mercado

by Christine Gordillo

The Lakewood community gathered on May 25 to honor Lakewood High Class of 2020 graduates Max Close and Alejandro Mercado with a dedication of a memorial garden at Lakewood High School and the awarding of two scholarships in the names of the two young men who tragically died in a car crash in February.

The Close and Mercado families were joined by more than 100 family, friends, LCS staff and community members as the garden was unveiled as what Principal Mark Walter called “a place for family, friends and community to sit, reflect and find solace for those we have lost and as a place for renewal and hope.”

The garden was created by support from the Lakewood Council of PTAs, West Shore Career-Tech, teacher Shan-

non Snare and her Horticulture classes, the LHS maintenance and custodial staff, the City of Lakewood’s Forestry Manager, Sam Bonvisutto, and Volkswagen of Streetsboro. It is anchored by two spring-flowering trees, two benches and a memorial plaque.

Emerson Elementary and Garfield Middle School, where Max and Alejandro also attended, had their own memorials, two bushes planted at Garfield and a bench at Emerson.

The memorial scholarships were awarded to seniors Mason Orlando and Gabriel Surovey.

Both the Mercado and Close families expressed their gratitude to the community. Alejandro’s mother, Johany summed it up: “Thank you everybody for standing by us and supporting us...It has been a privilege to be a citizen of Lakewood.”



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Lakewood Cares

It Is Okay Not To Be Okay

by Tess Neff

May was Mental Health Awareness month. If you know someone who suffers from mental health disorders, and chances are you do, the awareness of their own mental health is every day. Over the past 15 years I have learned about and experienced the effects of mental distress on various levels. Through my work as a magistrate at the Juvenile Court, I dealt with children and families who suffered from mental health disorders. If untreated, the disease can break a family and utterly ruin a life.

On a more intimate level, I have lived through my brother's journey with mental health disorders. It has been a painful, devastating, frustrating, frightening, sad and sometimes happy ride. Our childhood was chaotic with seven kids in a small three-bedroom house. My brother and I have always been close and growing up he seemed "normal" to me. He was popular in school, a great athlete, and very intelligent. However, when I rewound the video of his life as a young adult, I realized I (and my family), missed all the signs that were readily apparent to anyone with a little education about mental health disorders.

We did not know at the time my brother was suffering from severe mental health issues. He lived with me, my husband and three children on two separate occasions. Those times were life lessons that taught us first-hand how mental health can break a person. For all the things my brother has lost due to his mental health issues, he is still a winner in my eyes. I admire his perseverance and tenacity to push through the challenging cycles. There



are too many to count. Through my brother's efforts and together with family support he is in a good place today. It has taken us years to get to this point. I am very proud of him. He completed all his "sweat equity" hours and other requirements to earn the privilege to own a home. We are grateful to Habitat for Humanity's patience and guidance during the process. The lessons I learned through my brother's battle with mental health are invaluable and useful tools in my daily life and work experiences. Yes, people with mental health disease may be different. Different should always be acceptable. Tess Neff is a 32-year Lakewood resident. She and her husband Rich raised their children here and love being a part of the community. Her public service career expands 28 years and she is grateful for the opportunity to continue to help people and have a positive impact on their lives.



Susannah Selnick with Artistic Director Richard Cole.

A Heartfelt "Thank You" To Susannah Selnick And Friends Of Madison Park

by Jon Kozesky

An Open Letter to Susannah and the Friends of Madison Park: As I reflect on the past two Sundays of music in Madison Park, I want to express my deepest gratitude for allowing us to rehearse with you and share our passion with the people of Lakewood.

You and your fellow citizens welcomed the North Coast Men's Chorus with open arms, and we found your community to be welcoming and accepting, as you promised. Our performers were deeply touched by the outpouring of support from those who came and heard the rehearsal. The words of kindness, applause, and sincere gratitude that was expressed mean a great deal to our group.

We are grateful for the effort you and your team put in to bringing us to Madison Park, spreading the word, and ensuring that our group and the attendees had an enjoyable experience. You and the Friends of Madison Park provided us with a first class experience! I know the community of Lakewood has experienced many challenges in recent weeks and months. It is our hope that these two Sunday afternoons brought a measure of relief. We look forward to an ongoing partnership with you, the Friends of Madison Park, and your great community. With Gratitude, Jon Kozesky Executive Director – North Coast Men's Chorus



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JUNE ARIES:

Cool your Jets Ram! If you don't slow down, you may end up with "foot-in-mouth" disease. Be patient, (yes, I know that's challenging for a Ram). However, remember the Tortoise wins the Race.

TAURUS:

Double-check your bank account Bull...I also wouldn't advise jumping on board with any "get-rich-quick" scams. Stay away from the stock market & don't play the ponies.

GEMINI:

It's about the Twins, the Rx is hitting your first house, time for a make-over, maybe a new do, one from the past perhaps? Hit the gym, even if mental exercises are more your speed.

CANCER:

You can run but you can't hide is the Crab's motto for this Rx. You find yourself digging up bones from the past, an old sailor shows shore. It's a good time to heal old wounds.

LEO:

The Lion may have to look to his/her friends for support, you've got enough of them in that Jungle of yours, time to re-join a club or organization that you belonged to in the past.

VIRGO:

Mind your Ps & Qs at work, if you're up for a promotion, just be patient, things need to be worked out behind the scenes. If a past employer contacts you, it might be a good idea to listen.

LIBRA:

You have a couple of options this Rx, I know making a decision puts your scales all off-balance...you may find yourself hitting the books & studying something you've been putting off.

continued on page 9

Lakewood Is Art®

Tracy Marie Releases New Album, “A Dark Place”

by Walter Wright

"A Dark Place" is a breakthrough album – raw, authentic and powerful. I sat down with local Singer/Songwriter, Tracy Marie at her Lakewood home on Thursday afternoon to talk about her new release.

My first question: what was the inspiration for the title song, “A Dark Place”?

Tracy described a time she was just feeling crushed. “There is something in that space of doom that just makes way for creativity. I thought about what a dark place I was in at that moment. The song manifested from that thought and feeling. “

Tracy seems to have the ability to inhabit many musical genres, her catalogue includes blues, folk, and jazz. A Dark Place is different. It’s a really hard sound, but also very melodic. The instrumentation and production are top notch.

Tracy, whose career spans 20+ years admits that early in her career she was experimenting and learning, playing many different genres and roles as a keyboard player, guitarist, and vocalist, whatever fit the bill. “I was often playing in venues where some of the darker stuff I’d been comfortable writing might not have fit in. I worried about alienating some of my fans, but the response has been so enthusiastic.”

But for Tracy, this isn’t a different path. “I have always had this music in me, but I was afraid, I think, to be fully myself. At this point in my life, I realize that my art is at its best with me being my true self.”

Tracy decided to embrace her distinct voice and just run with it. She pulled various songs from early years



A still from Tracy Marie's music video for "A Dark Place."

of her songwriting and got booked with Jim Wirt, a well-established producer working out of Superior Sound Studios. “He had produced albums I had in my collection, bands I was influenced by. I walked into the recording studio ready with the songs, song order, the musicians, and the instrumentation.”

Tracy attended the Recording Arts Program at Tri-C in 2008. “I have worked myself as a producer and engineer, and one of the things I realized from being on the other side of the board is that the artist needs to establish a strong blueprint for their vision but then trust the producer to produce.”

Tracy was born with a life-long rare genetic condition called Morquio A Syndrome that presents many

challenges. “It’s been tough. I’ve had orthopedic problems including 6 hip replacement surgeries over the years and I’m preparing for another one. This means that setting up equipment, touring, and all the things that might come with the life of a musician can’t happen. It has also sometimes made me afraid to keep it going. What if I pursue an opportunity and I couldn’t meet the demands? It’s been a challenge.”

As she continues to meet that

challenge however, Tracy’s immediate goal for this new album is simply to have the opportunity to connect. “I hope that when someone listens to it, they’ll feel a connection to me.”

Tracy Marie will appear with her band for the release of A Dark Place on Friday, August 13th at The Beachland Ballroom. Tickets and “A Dark Place” on CD are on sale now at TracyMarie.com

A few of Tracy’s favorites (musical and otherwise):

Top five iconic albums:

- Sarah McLachlan, Fumbling Towards Ecstasy
- Led Zeppelin IV
- The Eagles, Hotel California
- Heart, Little Queen
- Alice In Chains, Dirt
- And (add one) Prince, Purple Rain

Favorite gig?

Performing my original songs with the Contemporary Youth Orchestra (CYO) at My Gift Is My Song.

Favorite club: The Barking Spider - I miss it so much! There’s really no other place like it and Martin was so kind to the artists.

Favorite food and where to get it?

Pho from Minh Ahn. Fantastic!

Walter Wright has been a Lakewood resident since 2006, and is current chair of the Lakewood Community Relations Advisory Committee.

continued from page 8

SCORPIO:

The Rx falls in the Scorpion’s 8th house, you’ll feel right at home, dealing with sex, death, & taxes (not necessarily in that order). You don’t have all the info yet, so sit tight, & wait.

SAGITTARIUS:

Centaur, the focus is on relationships, business & personal. Don’t be surprised when a blast from the past, comes riding in on that white horse, don’t bite off more than you can chew.

CAPRICORN:

The Goat wants to spend some time reorganizing your workspace, especially if you work at home. It’s all about service, your daily routines & habits. Pets may be a concern.

AQUARIUS:

What creative project did you put on the back burner? It’s time to reignite the Spark. definitely consider past hobbies, something that lights your fire, that you put aside.

PISCES:

It’s all about the Fish’s Pond, it’s time to redecorate, get the fishbowl out of the basement...Start small, some plants, a splash of color, I’m thinking sea-green...

Eva Starr, local astrologer, has been studying the moon & stars since she could read. Starr can be reached at evastarr.com

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One Reporter's Stance:

Reviews Of Recent Releases By Local Bands, Pt. 116

by Buzz Kompier

Part-Time Lover - Living In The Past - Just Because Records - 17 songs - cassette, digital

"Living In The Past" collects the complete recordings of Part-Time Lover— that's two cassette EPs, two 7"s, one digital single, and one entirely unheard song. I've reviewed almost all of this before, but it's actually really interesting to revisit it in this context. Speaking of living in the past, a lot of this came out when I was in high school and it does kinda take me back. By and large, I would call Part-Time Lover a psychedelic pop band. Their songs are catchy and sunshiny but with a sense of haziness and some fuzz guitar leads courtesy of Mandy Look. I think probably a lot of this material has grown on me over the years— I really enjoy most of this tape. I'm not saying every song is completely fantastic, but there are a lot of genuinely good tunes collected here. Within their sound, they also cover a decent amount of ground— sometimes

it's the pure laid back psych (the title track, "Everything In Season"), sometimes (particularly, in two different ways, on the driving (no pun intended) "Motorist" or the semi-soulful "What's So Good About His Love") singer/guitarist Jason Look ends up in full Greg Cartwright/Reigning Sound territory. "Kelly Cruise Kelly" is Beatlesque (particularly with its "around round round" part right out of "Dear Prudence"), "Magic Child" sounds like Neil Young, and weirdly enough, something about "It Stresses My Beast" reminds me pretty strongly of "Don't Tell A Soul"-era Replacements. My favorite Part-Time Lover song, though, would have to be "Day Glow Lemon Yellow Colored Tongue." I don't know what it is about it, but I once played it for a local record guy known for being...particular about his tastes and even he thought it was really good, so there you go. Pat O'Connor and Roseanna Safos are a great rhythm section and Aaron Terkel's keys always provide a nice layer on the songs— a good band

all around is what I'm saying. I have a sneaking suspicion that this is the final statement from Part-Time Lover based on some vague things I've heard. That would be pretty sad if it's true, but this is a darn solid legacy to leave if it is. **4/5 (justbecauserecords.bandcamp.com)**

Spike In Vain - Death Drives A Cadillac - Scat Records - 13 songs - LP, digital

This is the famous third album by Spike In Vain, following the classic debut LP "Disease Is Relative" and the cassette-only "Jesus Was Born In A Mobile Home." The difference between this one and the previous two is that this one has never actually been released (I'm not exactly sure of why it ended up getting scrapped other than I think the band broke up sometime relatively shortly after it was recorded, maybe?) There's a definite change in style on this one: while most of the weirder elements are still around, they've left behind most of the hardcore sound and dug deeper into the post-punk and deathrock styles. The opening "Too Cool" particularly shows off the deathrock influence. They also seem to have gotten very into the Gun Club and other sort of swampy bands like that— "Rattlesnake's Wedding" could be the Gun Club if not for the fact that it has an abrupt intense and dissonant part that could only be Spike In Vain. "Big Black Locomotive" and the closing "Gospel Motel" (which, indeed, has a gospel-style interlude where the band chants "Jesus is the man that I've

been looking for— can't you tell me where he's gone?" while Robert Griffin (the singer on this song) rants and occasionally joins in) both also have that kind of feel. The songs that have the most in common with the earlier stuff are probably "Abysmal Child" (an excellent song) and "Escape From The Zoo." I've thought before that in these songs it's evident that this band will splinter, half into Prisonshake and half into Soul Vandals, and I'll stand by that— you can hear nascent versions of both of those bands present here. I don't say that as a bad thing, either— I quite like both of those bands. My favorite song on here is probably "Party In The Ground," which might be the most un-Spike In Vain sounding song they ever did. I might almost call it jangly, although Chris Marec's unique vocal stylings set it well apart from anything else you'd describe that way (listen to how quickly he spits out that line about the military recruiter). Here's my conclusion: maybe it isn't as good as "Disease Is Relative," but taken on its own it is still a very good album. "Disease" may be one of the most unique, insane punk albums I've ever heard, but this one's pretty out there (in a good way) too. So when is "Jesus Was Born In A Mobile Home" finally gonna get released on vinyl? **4/5**

(realscatrecords.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.

City of Lakewood 2021 Summer Events Update

continued from page 1

summer event taking place, there is still plenty to do in Lakewood. Try out these safe summer fun ideas!

- Run through the sprinkler
- Follow a historic walking tour
- Ride your bike
- Rent a kayak on the Rocky River
- Read a book on a park bench
- Create a piece of art with chalk
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When Ronald Reagan Came To Lakewood Park (And Jimmy Stewart Too)

by Jeff Fritz

Ronald Reagan came to Lakewood Park on Saturday June 5, 1976, forty-five years ago. He appeared along with the great actor Jimmy Stewart and Ken Curtis, who played Festus on the Gunsmoke TV series. He was campaigning for the Republican presidential nomination which he didn't win. Four years later he was elected president of the United States and served for two terms.

It was nice weather for the crowd of about 1,000 people gathered around the band shell as they heard speeches by Reagan, Jimmy Stewart and others. Politics aside, it was fun seeing and hearing these celebrities up close and personal.

When it was over and everyone was gone I headed for home along a path that took me behind the band

shell. There I found a small bag filled with Reagan campaign buttons. It made a nice addition to my collection and a souvenir of a fun event.

Jeff Fritz enjoys exercise, politics, economics, writing jokes and songs, and reading non-fiction.

Rotary Inducts Baran As Its Newest Member

by Lynn Donaldson

Corbin Baran has been inducted as the most recent member of the Rotary Club of Lakewood and Rocky River.

A resident of Lakewood, Baran is area vice president for Arthur J. Gallagher. He serves on the board of the Children's Hunger Alliance and is a member of the Western Reserve Association of Health Underwriters.



Harley-Davidson Toy Run Benefiting Fairview Hospital Pediatrics Needs Riders

by Maria Estes

Calling all riders! Community West Foundation announced that the Harley-Davidson Toy Run benefiting Fairview Hospital Pediatrics will take place on Sunday, July 11 at 10 a.m. After a year hiatus due to the pandemic, the ride will start at Rock-n-Roll City Harley-Davidson located at 4985 W. 150th and parade through town ending at Fairview Hospital in West Park.

Riders participating typically have toys such as stuffed animals strapped to their massive bikes during the event. Once at the hospital, the toys are collected

and donated to the hospital for placement in the pediatric playroom where the littlest patients can enjoy them.

This larger than life event is fun for the whole family! Crowds typically form along the route to celebrate dozens of riders as they make their way for a good cause. Single rider participants are \$30 while double riders are \$50. All pre-registered riders receive an event t-shirt, breakfast prior to the ride and more!

Sign up today at www.CommunityWestFoundation.org/ToyRun.

Sponsor inquiries should be sent to Clare Brim at events@cwfc.org.

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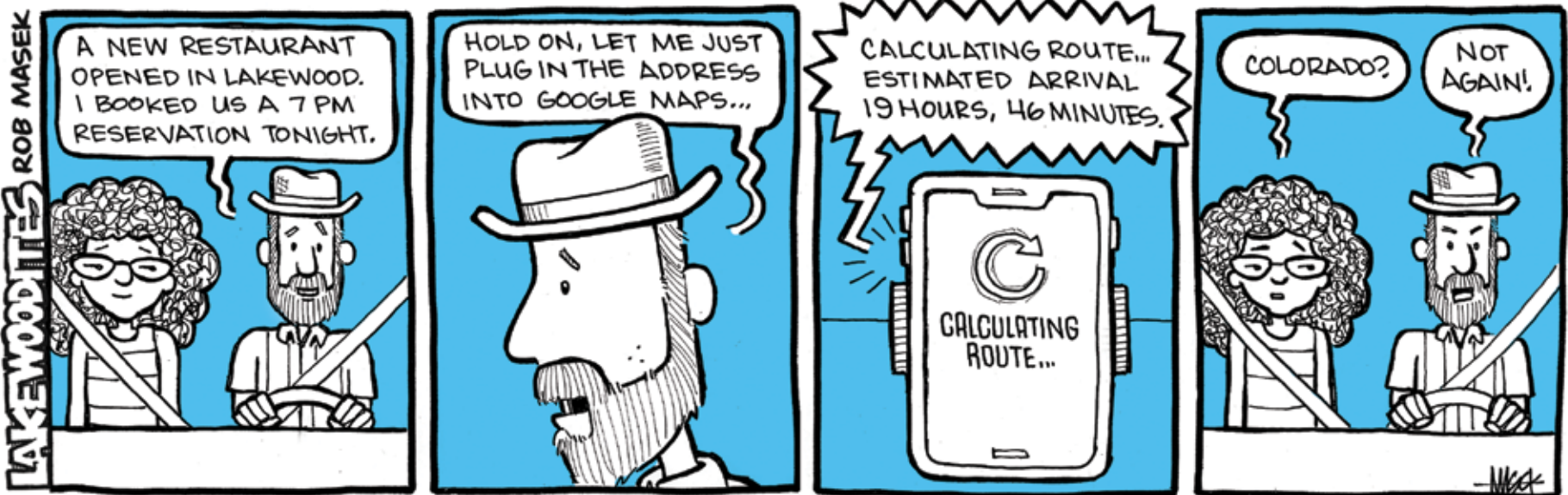
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