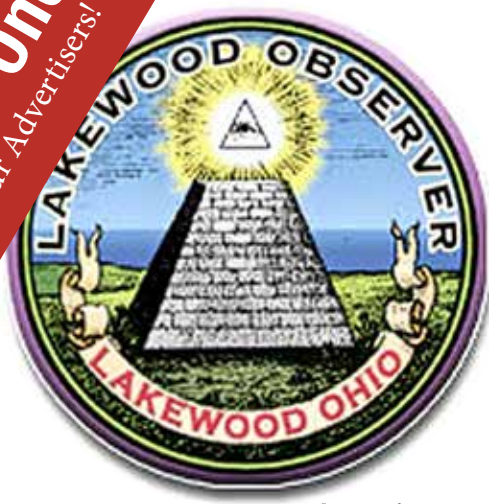


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THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Founder of Award Winning Observer Community Newspapers & Websites

Volume 19, Issue 3, February 1, 2023

"Life is the flower for which
love is the honey." - Victor Hugo



OPERATION **warm** | more
than
a coat

Operation Warm

by Trish Rooney

Lakewood Community Services Center (LCSC) and the City of Lakewood Department of Human Services are pleased to invite you to the second distribution of winter jackets and tennis shoes at Cove Community Center, 12525 Lake Avenue, on Friday February 10th from 2:00pm – 4:30pm. Jackets range in size from 3T to 16 and shoes are available for toddlers and kids up to size 5.

Operation Warm, founded in 1998, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that manufactures its own winter jackets and tennis shoes for distribution to families with children who qualify

for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. In 2022, Operation Warm and the Ohio Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives provided 7,160 coats and 5,000 pairs of shoes to children through 66 organizations located in 38 different counties throughout Ohio, according to a release from the Governor's Office

To qualify for TANF, there must be a minor child or children in the household, and families need to meet the following income guidelines:

continued on page 9

Outgoing And Incoming Lakewood School Board Presidents' Remarks

by Christine Gordillo

Outgoing Board President
Betsy Shaughnessy's
Comments – January 3, 2023

Thank you to my fellow Board members. They have operated in the best tradition of Lakewood Boards by demonstrating commitment to and respect for our students, staff and the Lakewood community. Each member of the Board brings unique skills, experiences and perspectives that enable the Board to operate in the very best interest of all our students and the school family that supports them. School board members must work together if they are to be effective, and individual members must work hard to understand all aspects and



Outgoing Board President
Betsy Shaughnessy's

all implications of the actions being considered or adopted. Mutual respect has been a hallmark of successful Lakewood Boards, and the members of this Board have certainly met that standard.

Thank you to Superin-

tendent Niedzwiecki for her leadership and for the superior team she has assembled. The Superintendent and her team have maintained a consistent focus on the goals of the organization – on academic rigor and excellence and the well-being of each individual student. They have kept the District on target while navigating the multiple issues that arise on a daily basis. They have worked every day to make each child's life better, happier and safer.

Thank you to Treasurer Zeman and the excellent team he has assembled. His integrity and his determination to support District initiatives while maintaining fiscal stability has been invaluable. He

has provided oversight of the utilization of the federal relief funds. These funds have been very helpful to us in addressing pandemic-related expenses including those programs addressing learning loss. The installation of a new payroll system by his staff has benefitted our staff and improved operational efficiencies.

This year has been a year of District action on numerous fronts. A strategic plan has been developed with significant input from the Board, staff, parents and community; and during the past year, specific measurable goals were identified and initiated. We continued to communicate with the City Council and

continued on page 5

LakewoodAlive Announces Award Honorees To Be Recognized At "Loving Lakewood: Out Of This World"

by Jacqueline Bon

Team LakewoodAlive is inviting you on a Space Mission of major importance. LakewoodAlive will host Loving Lakewood: Out Of This World on Saturday, February 25, 2023, from 7:30 to 11 p.m. at the Lakewood Masonic Temple. As always, this event, eclipsing all others, will have you over the moon, enjoying force field foods, Big Bang beverages and more meteoric fun than you can fit into an entire solar system. For more information and to buy tickets visit, LakewoodAlive.org/LovingLakewood.

LakewoodAlive proudly announces Jarrell McAlister as the 2023 Founders Award recipient and fellow community members Amy Chodzin, Rob Holland, Emmie Hutchison, Carlos Ramos, Amanda Santa and Danielle Zann as the 2023 Community Leaders award honorees to be recognized during Loving Lakewood: Out Of This World. Each individual will be honored as part of the evening's festivities in recognition of their exemplary service to LakewoodAlive and the



Lakewood community.

Each member of this honoree group has made a long-lasting impact on LakewoodAlive and our community. The Founders Award, recognizing one honoree annually, celebrates individuals who exemplify the vision of LakewoodAlive's founding members to foster and sustain vibrant and welcoming neighborhoods. Community Leader Award recipients represent

LakewoodAlive's most dedicated volunteers and partners who have supported the organization's work in the community.

Founders Award

Jarrell McAlister -
Founders Award

Jarrell and his wife Andi have been Lakewood residents for 20 years. Jarrell is an innovation consultant and facilitator at Progressive Insurance and enjoys working with non-profits like LakewoodAlive. Prior to Progressive, Jarrell worked as a TV Producer in Chicago and his hometown of Knoxville, Tennessee. Jarrell and Andi have two children, Ellie and Jonah, and love exploring Lakewood and traveling the world.

As LakewoodAlive's past board president from July 2020 through July 2022, Jarrell led the organization forward through challenges and change. He showed incredible leadership throughout the pandemic and led the organization through multiple strategic plans. Jarrell is supportive in every sense of the word, including volunteering for all of LakewoodAlive's events and board projects.

"I grew up in a small-business family, so I love that Lakewood is mostly locally owned businesses. It's a unique

continued on page 11

THE MAYOR’S CORNER

Focusing On Housing Affordability

We in Lakewood often refer to our community as the City of Beautiful Homes. It’s a well-earned title that we work to maintain and build upon. But another focus for our team at City Hall is to keep Lakewood’s status as a place where people can find a home they can afford, whether they are owning or renting. That focus on affordability is important for a city that takes pride in welcoming people from all backgrounds, in all stages of life, and of all incomes.

That focus on affordability takes many shapes for the team at City Hall. One key aspect is maintaining high quality housing stock while continuing to offer diverse housing options. Our planning department continues to implement our affordable housing strategy, which was recognized with a Vibrant NEO Champion Award.

The City recently established a relationship with the Lincoln Institute

by Mayor Meghan George

of Land Policy, a national nonprofit dedicated to improving quality of life through the effective use, taxation, and stewardship of land that provides research, training, education, and policy solutions. The Lincoln Institute selected the City to pilot an exploratory scenario planning toolkit developed for them by Professor Arnab Chakraborty and Emma Walters of the University of Illinois.

Lakewood’s pilot use of this toolkit is helping to develop a national model for legacy cities like Lakewood that are working to address issues impacting their communities, such as market pressures pushing prices higher and raising concerns for affordability. On January 20th, our planning department hosted a workshop session with residents to gather input and insights. The session was

led by the Greater Ohio Policy Center, who has been tapped by the Lincoln Institute to assist in the use of the toolkit. The meeting generated excellent dialogue that will continue to move this work forward, and our planning department will issues a report in the coming months. Thank you to both the Lincoln Institute and the Greater Ohio Policy Center for their guidance and support.

As we work on innovative solutions, the City remains committed to and focused on a dual track of preserving existing affordable units and adding new affordable homes through our policy making and implementation. That includes tying City incentives in new developments of scale to including affordable units, as well as the City positioning land for affordable projects like recently built owner-occupied infill homes on Plover

and Shaw and investing in the repair, rehab, and expansion of affordable housing units like the EDEN project on Nelson Court.

Our approach also includes facilitating private development of new market rate units, which relieves market pressure on our existing housing stock. By working with developers to introduce a diversity of new units – from the infill cluster homes currently under construction on the former gas station on Lake Avenue to larger scale housing projects moving ahead by developers along major corridors like Studio West at West 117th and Detroit and Solove at Bunts and Detroit.

By being innovative with our policies, aggressive with our use of limited public dollars dedicated to this issue, and creative in our work with private developers, Lakewood can continue its tradition of being a place for everyone to find a home.



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LAKEWOOD OBSERVED



Miguel, Danny, and Caitlin

A Love Letter To Lakewood, And A Plea For Real Estate

by Cait Smith

To the good people of Lakewood,
We are a family of 3 (almost 4) who are trying to sink our roots into my hometown, the great Lakewood OH. I moved away at age 18, and 3 cities later, met a New Yorker. I told him the only place to raise a family is the best location in the nation. So here we are, reminded of cross country practices at Lakewood Park, endless hotcakes from Sarah at The Place to Be, Pioneer Camp at the Old Stone House, and sewing the old Foster pool pass onto our bathing suits. The ultimate memory, though, is cruising down Rose Lane on my purple Schwinn when the seasons would change and the air was so electric; the smell of crunchy October leaves or wet asphalt in the Spring was so comforting.
This is the best community I have

ever known, but the Zillow listings are frustrating for hard-working people whose only hopeful “return on investment” is a safe, fabulous experience for their kids. We aren’t out-of-town investors or flippers. We are a family seeking community and growth, and a yearning to contribute. So we are trying to appeal to someone who is looking to move, but might not want to put the “For Sale” sign up for somebody that won’t seize our fair city.
If you or someone you know want a family to have the Lakewood experience you know and love, we are all ears! In true northeast Ohio ethic, we will leave the place better than we found it.
Cait Smith is a Lakewood gal who left for big city living, now boomeranged home to raise my family in the greatest community!

Bike & Scooter Share Community Feedback Survey Now Available

from City Hall

As a follow-up to the 2022 bike & scooter share pilot conducted last July through November, a community feedback survey is available now and will run through February 17th at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Lakewood-Scooter-Pilot-2022>.
Use the QR code on the right to go straight to the Scooter Survey..
Take it today!



Good Work, Lakewood Fire And Police



January 20th, an elderly couple were traveling westbound on Detroit Avenue heading down into the Emerald Canyon. They missed the turn and went over the cliff. During the next hour paramedics helped to get them out of the car and transported to a hospital to be checked out.

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LAKEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Upcoming Connecting for Kids Programs

by Lorilynn Wolf

Connecting for Kids will be hosting two, free programs during the month of February at the Lakewood Public Library.

Behavior Chat: Strategies to Ease Transition

Do you want strategies to motivate your child toward positive behavior? Join Ochanya McRoberts-Wells, MEd, who will lead a discussion guided by your questions on a variety of behavior topics. Submit your questions before or during the session and learn how to use the tools in our Behavior Toolkit to help your child. Each session will focus on a new behavior tool, but questions on any behavior concern are welcome. The content in this program is geared toward caregivers of children ages 18 months - 6 years (with or without developmental concerns). Each attendee will receive a free Behavior Toolkit. For more information, visit connectingforkids.org/behavior-chat

Thursday, February 2, 6:30 p.m.
Music Therapy & More

This program is designed for families and their children, ages 0 - 6 years, who are struggling in an area of development. Join us for a hands-on program designed to teach families how to use music to improve their child's academic, motor, communication and social skills as well as behavior. This program is led by a Board-Certified Music Therapist. For more information visit connectingforkids.org/music.

Saturday, February 18, 9:30 am
Both of these programs will be held at the Lakewood Public Library, Main Branch, 15425 Detroit Rd., Registration is required at connectingforkids.org/register.

Local Teacher Receives National Recognition

by Naomi Schiffrik

The National Association for the Education of Young Children featured Bonnie Sears in their Winter 2023 magazine Teaching Young Children. Bonnie is the lead teacher at Grace Preschool on Madison Avenue in Lakewood. An early childhood educator for 25 years, she has served the families of Lakewood for the past 15 years at Grace.

Bonnie wrote in the magazine, "My teaching style is relational, play-based, and focused on hands-on engagement. I believe that learning happens everywhere and that everyday moments offer opportunities for discovery and learning." And that is exactly what you find happening at Grace Preschool. Bonnie and her co-teacher, Lakewood resident Jessica Sackett, use themes to engage the interest of children while providing many learning opportunities around that theme using all their senses. One among many favorites was the study of bears. The gross motor room was set up to go on the ever-favorite "bear



Bonnie Sears on the cover of Teaching Young Children magazine.

hunt." The children went through a tunnel representing the grass, rocked in a "boat" through the river, met up with a snowstorm where a fan literally blew "snow" around them while they put on winter hats and mittens, and eventually met up with the bear in the cave (a tent) where they took his picture and made their way back home.

One of Bonnie's greatest accomplishments is having had the privilege of

Lakewood Public Library Children's And Youth Services Programs

by Jeffrey Siebert

Ukrainian Folk Tales and Craft

For Students in Kindergarten through Second Grade. Do you like stories about animals? Ukrainian folk tales and fairy tales often use animals to show us how we can succeed with the challenges life brings us and encourage us to never give up! Join us as we read The Ear of Wheat, retold and illustrated by Olha Tkachenkoa and create a piece of Ukrainian art. Registration is required.

Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 4:00pm - 5:00pm- Main Library Activity Room
Ukrainian Pysanky

For Students in Third through Fifth Grade. Ukrainian Pysanky is a beautiful tradition of decorating eggs, an art form that dates back centuries. Eggs are decorated using the wax-resist (batik) method and covered in stunning folk art motifs. Join Linda Hubert, a professional Ukraine Pysanky artist, and make your own Pysanky. All supplies will be provided. Registration is required.

Wednesday, February 22, 2023- 4:00pm - 6:30pm- Main Library Activity Room
Family Weekend Wonders

Looking for weekend entertainment for the whole family? Look no further! Drop in to the Library's special weekend story time. Your whole family will enjoy these programs full of enthusiastic stories, engaging activities, entertaining music and clever crafts. Family Weekend Wonders Drop-In Story Time is offered every weekend throughout the year and features a different theme each week to keep things engaging. No registration is required.

Main Library- Fridays and Saturdays at 10:30 a.m.
Madison Branch- Fridays at 10:30 a.m.

Tail Waggin' Tutors

For School-Age Children. Your child can bone up on their reading skills during a one-on-one session in a dog-friendly atmosphere. Students can practice reading with one of the dogs and owners that have been certified through Therapy Dogs International, an organization dedicated to regulating, testing and registering therapy dogs and their volunteer handlers. Reading to a therapy dog can provide comfort, support and happiness for self-conscious readers. No registration is required.

Saturday, February 11, 2023- 11:00am - 12:30pm- Main Library Multipurpose Room

To sign up for any program, register online at lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/youth or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 140.

mentoring interns (pre-service teachers). Currently Grace Preschool has two interns from Cuyahoga Community College associate degree program working with our staff. The interns receive excellent mentoring and our students benefit from having additional caring people to work with them.

Grace Lutheran Church through the Lutheran Development Ministry of Lakewood is blessed to be able to offer this opportunity for early childhood education to the families in Lakewood and beyond. We are grateful to the many families who have entrusted their children to us

and have become part of our family over the last 42 years. We look forward to continuing to meet the needs of Lakewood families by caring for their children.

Naomi Schiffrik was born and raised in Lakewood. She is currently administrator for Grace Preschool, 13030 Madison Ave., Lakewood. She started the preschool 42 years ago when it was in the former Lutheran Church across the street and now is held in Grace Lutheran Church. She has been happily married for 50 years, is a mother of 3 and a grandmother of 6.

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LAKEWOOD EDUCATION

Outgoing And Incoming School Board Presidents' Remarks

continued from page 1

the Mayor to identify and act in areas of mutual interest and in support of a strong and vibrant city. We continued the ongoing process of providing a safe and secure environment for our students and staff.

I am so grateful that I have the privilege of being a member of this Board and have the opportunity to continue to work on behalf of the Lakewood City Schools. I look forward to working with Mr. Callahan who I am sure will do an exceptional job as President as we work to continue to meet the needs of our students. While we will be working in the face of increasing assaults on Local Control by forces in Columbus, I have every confidence that this will not prevent us from continuing our commitment to integrate our Visions of a Lakewood Graduate and of a Lakewood Educator into our culture. The components of our Visions are integral to creating the environment needed by students and staff to assure success.

Again, thank you to all who work to create an environment in which children can thrive and excel. Special thanks to Anne Knab and Heather Burdette for all they do.

**Incoming Board President
Michael J. Callahan's
Comments – January 3, 2023**

I am truly honored to be your



Incoming School Board President
Michael J. Callahan

incoming Board of Education president. I sought a seat to this board to bring my experiences and perspectives as a community member, as a parent of three children in the district, and as a public sector professional to represent this community to the best of my ability. I am now grateful to have the opportunity to serve as President of this Board of Education and committed to the requirements of the position.

Outgoing President Betsy Bergen Shaughnessy has served as the Board's leader for two years. I believe I speak for all my colleagues in appreciation for her fulfillment of the duties of

president during that time. Her service in the role for two years allowed for needed consistency warranted by the times. Mrs. Shaughnessy's experience, poise, and advocacy for public education were and are exemplary. In her consecutive terms as Board President she was highly effective, as she has been for her time on the Board of Education.

In addition to outgoing President Shaughnessy, I would like to acknowledge colleague Ms. Emma Petrie Barcelona, who was a steady figure as Board President during a very challenging time of the pandemic, the calendar year of 2020. Ms. Petrie Barcelona brings so much experience and leadership to the table as well.

We are also fortunate for the service of now Vice President, Ms. Linda Beebe, and Board Member Ms. Nora Katzenberger. The five of us bring a wide variety of experiences and perspectives and are committed to working together with the administrative team to maintain an environment where all students can thrive.

It is a responsibility of the Board to hire and evaluate the superintendent and treasurer and to ensure they have the resources needed to effectively lead the district. In conversations with parents, teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, maintenance and custodial staff, I am continuously reminded of

how dedicated and effective our leaders are. Hiring a new superintendent during the pandemic was a challenge for the Board. I am so grateful we had such a strong internal candidate, and I am so impressed by Superintendent Maggie Niedzwiecki's leadership and her dedication to Lakewood.

The fiscal stewardship and stability in the role of treasurer that our long time financial executive Kent Zeman brings has been quite comforting, particularly in recent years. Thank you, Mr. Zeman, for all that you do.

We have a community that demonstratively supports public education and this district. We do not take that for granted, and recognize the high expectations that must be met in order to maintain that type of support. That support comes from the taxpayers and voters, but also the many volunteers who serve on commissions, committees, in booster organizations, PTO and PTA groups as well as the Lakewood Rangers Education Foundation (LREF). We certainly recognize and appreciate all of that.

We have a team of dedicated teachers and paraprofessionals that are second to none. I see it firsthand in the experiences of my children and I hear about it from so many in our community.

continued on page 6

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LAKEWOOD SPORTS

Dr. G's Ranger Round Up

by Dr. Charles Greanoff

Bakestball

January 28
Lakewood vs. Parma

The BEST that American High School sports has to offer is senior night. It helps when the home team wins—the Rangers did defeat a stubborn Parma squad 58-52—but the celebration goes beyond the final score. Tonight, Osied Albadarin, Myles Harper and Brayden Volcansek were honored not for being outstanding team players—which they are—but for being Lakewood Rangers, and for logging the endless hours of practice it takes to see varsity minutes. Both Osied (8 points) and Brayden (9 points) played key roles tonight, but more to the point they both have steadily improved their games over their four years at LHS and are part of a storied tradition. They richly earned this moment.

But perhaps the "moment" of the night was the essentially "ceremonial" start by Myles Harper, a program pillar who had his season cut short by injury less than halfway through. Here's hoping that the pain of this cruel twist of fate will be southed by the memories of the scores of classmates who chanted his name tonight.

The game itself was a microcosm of the season for Brayden and Osied. Brayden hit 3 silky smooth 3-pointers—all coming at crucial times when Parma had cut into the Ranger lead.



Osied also had clutch baskets, but as always was tenacious defensively and on the boards. Sophomore Luke Vannucci, who converted a critical driving "and one" three point play early in the 4th that stemmed Parma's momentum, was fabulous tonight, scoring 20 to lead Lakewood. Junior Drew Jablonski scored 11, grabbed 10 rebounds, and hit critical free throws down the stretch. Sophomore Lucas Seguine also his four key free throws late and scored 6. Juniors Jack Gowan and Dominic Peck chipped in two and played tough defense. The win was fun and hard fought, but was a side note tonight.

Coach Cammock summed it up best in his message to the team. "As you grow older, I hope you can look back fondly on this time as having had a significant on how to tackle life's challenges, setbacks and successes, and how to compete ethically and fairly. Athletics provide an unparalleled opportunity to understand competition as a life lesson. You will always be

part of the Lakewood High School Basketball program, and be regarded by our staff as among the most important players we have had in our program."

These excellent players are not "important" for their play alone, but for the example of hard work and commitment they set for their peers. Good luck always to Osied, Brayden and Myles. Rangers for Life. The fans did their part, as did the pep band, and the Cheer Squad. Congrats and thanks to senior Cheer Captain Izzy Reay (pictured) on four outstanding years at LHS. Having seen most of our games this year—and over the past 2 decades—I am very proud of this 44107 team. They have lost some heartbreakers this year, but then bounce back at it with great effort the next time out. OUR Lakewood Rangers are one team, from one town, that never quits. Long Live Lakewood.

January 21
Lakewood vs. Normandy

Without a strong bench, led by senior Aya McAuliffe who delivered important rebounds and 14 points—mostly on key 4th quarter baskets—the Lakewood Rangers (12-5, 9-1 GLC East) would not have won today (49-46), and Normandy would have remained undefeated in the GLC. Junior reserve guard Sophia Zarbo, who logged extra duty when a Ranger went down early with an injury, scored 8 and handled the Invaders pressure well the whole game. Juniors Ally Bookman and Lucy Henrikson, along with seniors Jacquie Hudak and Nettle Doran did not score, but all played stout defense and handled the ball well.

Junior Delaney Garcia led all scorers with 16 points, had 12 rebounds, and helped limit the output of Normandy's top scorers. Senior guard Sam Hudak scored 6, even with early foul trouble, played tenacious defense (a Hudak hallmark) and hit late free throws to secure the win. Senior Ava Carroll chipped in with 5 points. This was a great team win, led by 2 players—Delany Garcia and Aya McAuliffe (Pictured second from left with all LHS seniors) —who are a part of a rich Lakewood basketball family tradition,

each as the third "sister" to wear the Purple and Gold. (Jessica and Bridgette Garcia. Asia and Giana McAuliffe). Of course, all the sisters are frequent fans at our games, cheering on the youngest. Sophomore Stephen McAuliffe plays on the Ranger Boys team. Speaking of the boys, their overtime 2-point loss to undefeated Holy Name, combined with today's nail-biter, made for a thrilling weekend of basketball for the squads from 44107. Both teams played meaningful games on the road, showed great heart, and represented LHS with pride. A tipped ball, a call, one play here or there—made the difference in both games. One result was favorable—and the other wasn't—but the commonalty is two community based teams putting it all on the line with maximum effort. The Lakewood Rangers are one team from one town, that never quits. Long Live Lakewood. January 17 Lakewood vs. Valley Forge In what could have been the classic "trap" game, the Lakewood Rangers decided they would have none of that, and soundly defeated Valley Forge 77-32 tonight. Friday, the Rangers play undefeated Holy Name, who beat Lakewood in overtime at the New East Gym. Having beaten the Patriots earlier, it would have been easy to look ahead and stumble. Instead, a three point bombardment, led by Drew Jablonski (27 points), along with senior Brayden Volcansek and point guard Luke Vannucci ended the drama early. Senior Oised Albadaran continued his excellent play on both ends, providing energy, rebounds, points and defense. In fact, this was a game that highlighted the key roles that so many players have assumed in the Lakewood winning streak. Junior Dominc Peck did not score, but he played strong defense and set up others. Junior Jack Gowan and came of the bench to provide rebounds, score points, and play tough defense. Sophomore Lucas Seguine provided strong ball handling and again scored coming off the bench, as if sophomore Peter Checkett. Lakewood has a big hill to climb on Friday at Holy Name, and there are no guarantees that the 5 game GLC winning streak will continue. But history tells us that the 44107 guys won't back down, and will fight the whole game. Hope to see you there!

Outgoing And Incoming School Board Presidents' Remarks

continued from page 5

I would also like to recognize the work of our coaches, band leaders, and activity moderators, many of whom are also teachers. There are so many life lessons learned on the field and through co-curricular activities that help form and

influence young people for the better.

I would also like to recognize the maintenance and custodial teams as well as all other administrators, support staff, and employees of the district for the great work they do on a daily basis.

The sum of the parts, is that we are a welcoming district that meets children where they are at and challenges them to reach their potential, all guided by the community's vision of a Lakewood graduate and our vision of a Lakewood educator.

With all that positive momentum of the District, we are not without challenges. This Board will continue to work to address the challenges of the day, by supporting our leaders and giving them the tools they need to succeed, and by approving and advocating for policy that puts public education for all as a priority.

Again, I am grateful to my colleagues and to the community who allows us to serve, and look forward to serving as Board President this calendar year.

Michael J. Callahan January 3, 2023

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Deluxe	\$12.00	\$14.75	\$19.50	\$25.00
Extra Items	\$.75	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$1.75
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SPECIAL TOPPINGS: Artichoke Hearts, Tomato, Broccoli, Chicken

LAKEWOOD SCHOOLS



Roosevelt Students Honor Martin Luther King Jr.

by Christine Gordillo

Students in Mrs. Whalen’s fifth grade class at Roosevelt form a heart around Martin Luther King, Jr.’s initials to share their appreciation for the life of Dr. King-- a great sentiment that led us into the holiday weekend that honored him.

The Lakewood Recreation Cheerleaders

by Sharon Mathaios

Come to Emerson Elementary School and grab a snack to benefit a good cause!

The Lakewood Recreation Cheerleaders are holding their second annual fundraising event. Last year, they raised more than \$450 for the Lakewood Food Pantry. This year's proceeds will benefit Tabby Tails Cat Rescue in Custar, OH.

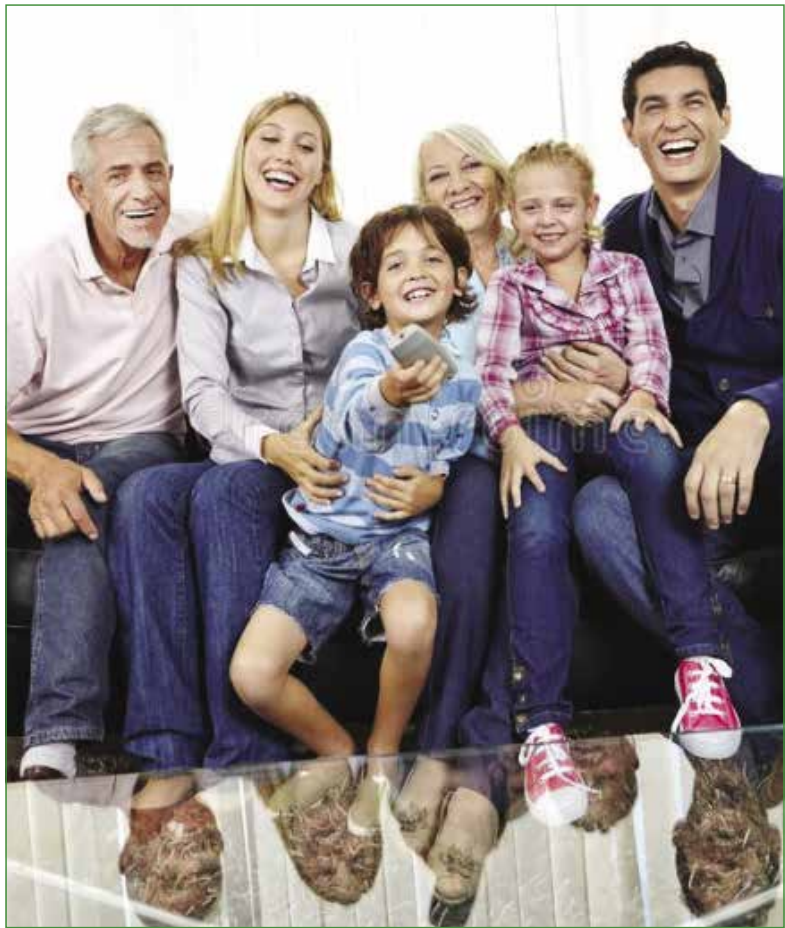
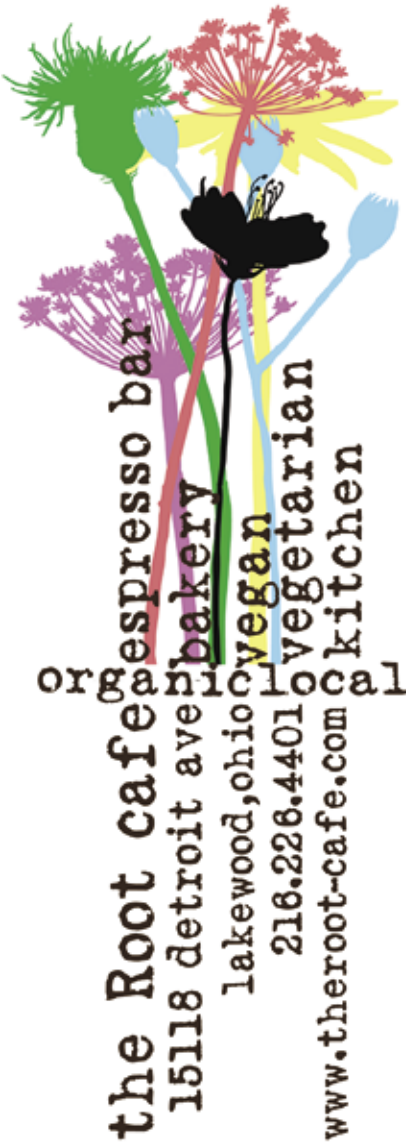
Tabby Tails is a 501c3 organization that serves as a safety net for high-risk cats. These cats are most likely to be euthanized in the shelter system. This includes feral and disabled cats. Cats with behavioral issues, hybrids, and severely ill or injured cats. Whether these cats are adopted or have to live at Tabby Tails' sanctuary, they will be safe and loved. To give cats a second, third, or even fourth chance at life.

The cheerleaders run a concession stand at the Saturday basketball games at Emerson Elementary School on Clifton Blvd selling tasty snacks that are a treat for both you and the cats.

Head Coach Valentina Teles, in her fourth season coaching with the Rec Department, is in charge of the fundraiser. "Cheering goes beyond just cheering at games; it's being a leader in your community and setting an example, thus the name Cheerleader," she says. I'm very proud of all my girls for their dedication to their squad, academics, and extracurriculars. This fundraiser would not be possible without them, the parents who help out, and the Lakewood community."

Coach Valentina is joined this year by Coach Kara Nieves, who is in her second season. Together they coordinate the Rec Cheer program.

If you have any questions, want to help, or donate, please contact: lkwdcoachvalen@gmail.com



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GOVERNMENT

Senator Antonio Assumes Senate Minority Leader Role And Shares Legislative Priorities

by Nickie Antonio

As we embark on the new 135th General Assembly, I look forward to the work ahead. I'm pleased to report that I have been elected to serve as the upcoming Senate Minority Leader. I will continue to represent Senate District 23 which includes Lakewood, Parma, Parma Heights, Cleveland, and Bratenahl. As I reflect on the activities of the state legislature this past year, I'm proud of the work that we have done on behalf of our communities, with so many members of our communities.

My legislative priorities for this upcoming 135th General Assembly include fully funding the Fair School Funding Plan, abolishing the death penalty by replacing it with life without parole in capital cases and passing the LGBTQ Fairness Bill.

Abolish Death Penalty legislation is joint-sponsored with Senator Steve Huffman (R-Tipp City) and co-sponsored with bipartisan support. There are myriad reasons to end the death penalty including the fact that executions are currently impossible to administer and use of the death penalty is flawed and has been shown to be falsely discharged as indicated by Ohio's now 11 death row exonerees. Death penalty sentences disproportionately affect defendants of color, are costly, and have fallen out of favor with a majority of the American public. For more information visit: <https://otse.org/>

As Ohio welcomes the exciting new manufacturing giant Intel and continues to seek the best and the brightest from around the country and our state, I will continue to advance the Ohio Fairness Act. This bill has bipartisan support and would provide protections in employment, housing and the public sphere for LGBTQ Ohioans. Supported by the Ohio Chamber of Commerce



State Senator Nickie J. Antonio with her sister Laurel Keenan in her new office as Senate Minority Leader.

and over a thousand Ohio businesses, it will help in statewide efforts to retain and attract the best and brightest employees and encourage our young people to live, work and raise their families in Ohio.

Another key bill that I will reintroduce is to end the statute of limitations on rape and sexual assault. Under the current Ohio Revised Code, pros-

ecution against a perpetrator of rape or sexual battery must begin within 25 years after the commission of or

attempt to commit the crime. Contained within my bill is the elimination of any instance of an offense against a victim. Now, more than ever, the public is on the side of removing the artificial line in the sand that prevents a survivor from coming forward to report such emotionally traumatic and violent experiences, especially because every survivor processes their trauma in their own time.

As we move into the new General Assembly, we will share our caucus priorities on the general fund budget and key legislation. As always, my office looks forward to continuing to serve you in the New Year. My staff are available to help and can be reached at Antonio@ohiosenate.gov and will get back to you as soon as possible. I look forward to working for you and with you to do all that we can for Ohioans, and specifically, Ohio's 23rd Senate District.

State Senator Nickie J. Antonio (D-Lakewood) is honored to be serving in the Ohio Senate, representing District 23, and in leadership as the Assistant Minority Leader. Antonio, who was elected to the Senate in 2018, previously spent eight years in the Ohio House of Representatives, where she served District 13 and was also a member of leadership. Antonio has served as a Lakewood City Councilmember, Executive Director of an outpatient drug and alcohol treatment program for women, Adjunct Professor and as a teacher for children with special needs.

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FOODWOOD

Lycamobile Gorkhali Grocery

by Pebbles Brown

I was recently craving Indian food and decided to check out a store called Lycamobile Gorkhali Grocery. This store is known for its variety of Indian and Nepalese food, ingredients, seasonings, and snacks, and I wanted to experience it for myself. From the moment I entered the store, I was impressed with the variety of products which got my mind wondering and wandering. Which products would be best for my favorite recipes? Which snacks would satisfy my tastebuds? My imagination was sparked.

Although I came armed with a list of things to shop for, I appreciated the help offered by the shop’s employee, who helped me make the best decisions. I was very glad to have encountered him, as he provided exceptional customer service and a lot of valuable information about my purchases. He shared authentic recipes with me and helped me to pick out key ingredients. For instance, he guided me as I selected dry yellow noodles, fried paneer, chowmein masala, paneer masala, lychee drink, and Badam drink with almond bits, a mixture of cow and buffalo milk known for its sweet taste.

In addition, he assisted me in choosing some traditional snacks. I picked up Rumpum Furandana and



Bhungra (some very popular, spicy snacks in Nepal and India). The way he described them made me excited to try them. As I shopped, the employee told me all about the puja nut which is often used in traditional ceremonies and offerings in many cultures. If anyone is interested in the puja nut, you can find it here in the freezer! I was thrilled to learn and immerse myself in a new cultural experience while picking up a few essentials.

All in all, I was satisfied with the items I bought, but especially with the fantastic service I received. If you’re a fan of Indian and Nepalese food and looking for a place to buy quality, authentic ingredients from a caring grocer, I recommend visiting Gorkhali Grocery. I’d absolutely encourage you

to ask questions, as they are more than happy to help you make excellent selections, introduce you to new foods, and

teach you something valuable about their culture.

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Pebbles Brown is a foodie. She is excited to share the things that interest her the most- Culture and Food. She hopes that as you follow along with her journey, she will spark your excitement and help you nurture your own passions and projects, whether that be food and culture, or something else. All of her content is entirely unique to her thoughts and experiences, and she hopes you enjoy what she has to say.

Operation Warm

continued from page 1

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You Gotta Make Up Your Mind:

Reviews Of Recent Releases By Local Bands, Pt. 130 (Part 2)

by Buzz Kompier

V-3 - No One Speaks My Language Here - Bravecloud Records - 11 songs - LP

V-3 - Hit Dead Center With My Disease - Bravecloud Records - 10 songs - LP

V-3 - The Enemy Within - Bravecloud Records - 11 songs - LP

I have mixed feelings about some of the more Nudge Squidfish-centric material on here (and I say this as a Nudge fan)—some of it is great (“Metal Or Meat?” and “The Enemy Within”), but some of it feels out of place, or more like it’s just Squidfish solo material that happened to feature someone else from the band on it so it got included in here. Who knows—I have no insight into how Squidfish organizes his tapes. Charles Cicirella (who, as far as I can tell, was never in V-3) makes an appearance

on one song here, “Game Of Sport,” and it’s pretty weird but also pretty entertaining. There are several tracks from a 1992 Jim Shepard solo project scattered throughout these—my favorite of those is probably “Swim Across The Ocean.” On “The Enemy Within” (record 3 if you go by catalog number) there’s a track of Jim talking about the formation of V-3 and it is a weird track—I noted this when I reviewed the “Heavy Action” compilation a few years ago, but his speaking style, at least when he’s being recorded, is so strange and self-conscious and though he’s just talking about the origins of the band it somehow feels like it gives you an insight into his personality.

I’m happy to have all of these, but I do wonder why they chose to release them as three separate LPs all at once—that’s certainly a harder sell than one double LP (and, while there’s nothing here I’d call unlistenable or uninteresting, I think the overall track selection could’ve been pared down to fit) and

can be kind of overwhelming going in. The liner notes for these (one side of the sheet is specific to each record, the other is a summary of the whole thing) by Nudge himself are kinda strange—it feels a lot like self-fashioning (and I know from elsewhere Squidfish does a lot of that—not that I blame him, he is an artist after all) in a strange place; there’s a sort of bitter tone when he talks about how this is the real V-3 as opposed to the later lineup with Leland Cain and Sam Brown and it almost, whether intentionally or not, reads like he’s accusing Jim of having sold out on later records (personally, I love the later V-3 stuff, so maybe that makes me some kind of normie poser). That said, I can’t fault him or anyone else for having complicated thoughts on Jim given how sadly the story ends. It is very clear, both from what Squidfish says here and from other things I’ve read and heard, that Jim really was supportive of his friends, both artistically and personally, in a way that really touched

them. It’s nice to read that and then get to hear the fruits of that support here.

I’m not gonna do a rating for these, because I don’t know how I would really work it out. Instead, I’ll give a ranking of the three. My favorite as a standalone record was “Hit Dead Center With My Disease,” so that’s the first one I would try (if you’re doing these one by one). After that, “The Enemy Within” was a good mix of a lot of different stuff. I would put “No One Speaks My Language Here” last because, though there are several excellent tracks on it, it is definitely the least consistent of the three. Long live Jim, long live Roxanne, long live V-3.

(available at your local record store or at a variety of distros: Goner, Total Punk, etc.)

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.



by Eva Starr

FEBRUARY

ARIES:

The Ram likes it hot & spicy; they’re the adrenaline junkies; for Valentine’s Day, wear fire engine red, think of something daring the two of you can do together...be spontaneous.

TAURUS:

The Bull likes to take it slow & steady; they’re more into fine wine, dark chocolates, and gourmet delicacies with a cashmere blanket laid out in front of the fireplace & a cozy night.

GEMINI:

The Twins need their minds stimulated on Valentine’s Day; plan a trip to the Science Museum, go to one of those crazy metal puzzle stores, & double it up; the more love, the better.

CANCER:

The Crab loves a stroll down memory lane; plan a recipe together, something handed down from your grandmother, put on some nostalgic music, & couple it up in the kitchen, Bam!

LEO:

The Lion/Lioness is all about roy-

alty; the Jungle does share the crown with the King, limousines, fine champagne, a night at the theater, putting on the glitz, diamonds are forever.

VIRGO:

Virgos need to do something practical & organic for Valentine’s Day; check out one of the electric organic herb, tea, or coffee shops Lakewood is loaded with; you can Vegan together.

LIBRA:

Libras need to find the balance between too much and too little; roses fit the bill, romantic candlelight enhances the romantic glow, add some classical music, & love is in the air.

SCORPIO:

The Scorpion puts the stinger away on this day made for lovers, & we know what you’re all about; chances are no one else will find out about your secret rendezvous, Shush.

SAGITTARIUS:

The Centaur likes to go overboard, they love nature & the great outdoors,

rent an Airbnb cabin in the woods with a bearskin rug and a fire pit, and make it a stargazing night.

CAPRICORN:

The Goat isn’t the warm & fuzziest Valentine; if you can get them to close their MacBook, head to the gym, get Chinese Take-Out & then go home & watch Wall Street together.

AQUARIUS:

Aquarians, this is your month; since you’re the eclectic, futuristic one, whatever you surprise your loved one with will definitely break the mold, do a paint & sip, wine, anyone?

PISCES:

The Fish are the true romantics, rose-colored glasses, the eternal dreamer; you exude compassion & love without even trying; take a trip to the Aquarium, then a seafood dinner after.

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

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OBSERVATIONS

LakewoodAlive Announces Award Honorees
To Be Recognized At “Loving Lakewood: Out Of This World”

continued from page 1

community with interesting discoveries around every corner – from quirky stuff in people’s yards to wall murals and cool little shops. We feel lucky to have excellent schools nearby. We have kids at both Lakewood City Schools and Lakewood Catholic Academy and see the great education they are receiving. We also love the community events that bring people together,” reflected McAlister.

Community Leader Award
Honorees:

**Amy Chodzin –
Community Leader Award**
Amy is the Assistant Coordinator for H2O – Help to Others, Lakewood’s service-learning program for high school and middle school youth. Amy is an impactful leader who collaborates with LakewoodAlive, to bring amazing youth volunteers to housing outreach projects throughout the summer. She is always looking for creative ways to collaborate and is dedicated to the people and beautification of the community. In addition to the volunteer work she manages with H2O, she also volunteers her time for many LakewoodAlive events throughout the year.

“I love the Lakewood community for its people. There is a bottomless pool of compassion that exists in the hearts of Lakewoodites to ensure their neighbors are safe, the children can thrive and everyone has a voice,” reflected Chodzin.

**Rob Holland –
Community Leader Award**
Rob is an amazing volunteer though LakewoodAlive’s Snow Shoveling Program. He has helped since the reboot of this snow program in the winter of 2020. He is always willing to lend a helping hand. During snowstorms, he assists elderly and disabled residents by clearing their driveways with his snow blower.

“LakewoodAlive is love; understanding, caring, helping, growing. But let’s be real too. I got roped into



this business because my kid needed ‘service’ hours on his transcripts,” Holland quipped.

**Emmie Hutchison –
Community Leader Award**
Emmie is the Coordinator for H2O – Help to Others, Lakewood’s service-learning program for high school and middle school youth. Emmie works with LakewoodAlive to find annual projects that bring together homeowners and residents in need with Lakewood youth. We are grateful to have a partnership with H2O that is truly impactful.
“Lakewood is a community that supports each other. When my kids started in Lakewood City Schools, I still didn’t know many people. Our family was thoroughly welcomed and drawn into participating in school and civic life and we’ve never looked back. Each member of my family has had wonderful opportunities to learn and grow through the schools, programs in the City of Lakewood like the Family Room and H2O, and LakewoodAlive events,” Hutchison reflected.

**Carlos Ramos –
Community Leader Award**
Carlos is the owner of The Tea Lab (14534 Detroit Avenue). The Tea Lab opened in Downtown Cleveland in 2013 and then expanded to Downtown Lakewood in 2014. Owner, Lakewood resident and tea aficionado, Carlos Ramos took over the business in 2016. He is a longtime Downtown Lakewood Business Alliance Member and brings creativity to the group while also serving as a mentor to other small business owners in Lakewood.
“I’ve lived in Lakewood for nearly three decades. Lakewood is a classic blend of unique & varied demographics, beautiful homes, great businesses,

and restaurants and conveniently located. It’s a cool place to live; It’s home,” reflected Ramos.

**Amanda Santa –
Community Leader Award**
Amanda joined LakewoodAlive’s board in 2020 and has served as treasurer since July 2022. Currently an accounting manager with 23andMe, Amanda truly goes above and beyond to support our work in the community. Whether she is orchestrating Light Up Lakewood’s Holiday Parade, serving on the Development Committee or sharing her skills as a CPA, Amanda demonstrates tremendous leadership and vision.
“There is no shortage of things to enjoy in Lakewood. The city is a diverse collection of many things - residents, architecture, and small businesses just to name a few. There is something unique in Lakewood for everyone and every interest,” Santa said.

**Danielle Zann –
Community Leader Award**
Danielle is the owner of CouCou Sentiment (17409 Detroit Avenue). Her boutique is Lakewood’s eclectic one-stop shop for cards and gifts. Her shop has become a go-to gift destination for life’s milestones, as well as a place to simply acknowledge someone and let them know you are thinking of them. CouCou Sentiment opened in the West End Lakewood Business District in June 2021. Danielle played a major role in the development of the 2022 Holiday Hopper Card which drove customers to small businesses across town. She brings enthusiasm and creativity to the West End Lakewood and LakewoodAlive’s small business meetings while working collaboratively with her neighbors to help strengthen the district.
“Lakewood is truly unique. It

allows you to be you. Everyone is welcome. It offers a balance of city and suburban feel with diverse restaurants, retail and people and it continues to improve year after year,” reflected Zann.

About Loving Lakewood
Community vibrancy is an integral part of our story, which LakewoodAlive strives for as part of our mission each and every day. It is our zenith. The 5.5 square miles comprising Lakewood may be just a blip in this galaxy, but LakewoodAlive serves a vital role in the lives of our community through our Housing Outreach and Small Business Support Programs making our organization truly out of this world.

For more information and to buy tickets visit, LakewoodAlive.org/LovingLakewood. For an experience fit for a captain, guests can set their phasers to stun and submit their request to beam up for a VIP experience. A general admission ticket permits guests to cruise this intergalactic experience for the evening. Be sure to act quickly, tickets are expected to sell out at warp speed.

Jacqueline Bon is the Communications & Design Manager at LakewoodAlive. She enjoys the people, places, and events that make Lakewood a uniquely beautiful community.

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The Back Page

LAKWOODITES

ROB MASEK

WITAM! PIOTR PIEROGI HERE AT IMMIGRANT SON BREWERY WITH SOME EXCITING FOODIE NEWS!

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