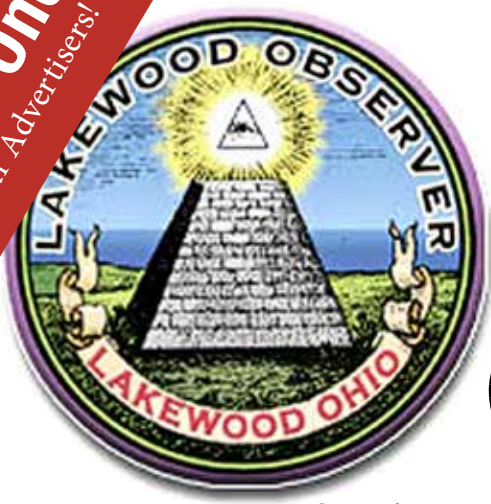


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THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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Volume 19, Issue 4, February 15, 2023

Lakewood Welcomes Five Police Officers



Last week, Mayor George administered the oath of office to five new members of the Lakewood Police Department. Congratulations and welcome to Officers Michaela Warmington, Jonathan Tucker, Manny Vega, Patrick Mullen, and Kyle Raulerson. Thank you for serving our community!

Lakewood Photographer Unleashes Pooch Playoffs National Competition and Fundraiser

by Stephen Brown

I am the owner of Stephen Mitchell Brown Photography, and have always loved pets. So when the opportunity to help Brady's K9 Fund presented itself, I jumped on it.

A group of photographers and I got together and decided to host a competition to find Northeast Ohio's Ulti-Mutt Cute Dog as a way to help out Brady's K9 Fund. When I was researching



what charity I wanted to partner with, I came across Brady's K9 Fund and was so moved by their



Reflections at the Holespital site.

Holespital Project Continues Roundstone Drops Out

This week much of the community expressed displeasure that Roundstone had pulled out of the project at the site of the former Lakewood Hospital. Lakewood thought Roundstone had a serious offer on the table, which most on Council and in the Administration thought was solid, up until last December when new conditions surfaced at Council. While some believe the deal with Roundstone can be salvaged, others are of the belief that as we have a good developer, we should continue moving ahead. My thoughts on page 11.

story and mission, I knew right away they were the ones I wanted to work with.

Brady's K9 Fund protects the K9s who protect our communities throughout the

continued on page 3

City Salutes Peter Viglianco For Achieving Eagle Rank



Mayor George and City Council saluted Peter Viglianco for achieving the Eagle rank in scouting at a recent meeting. Peter, a senior at St. Ignatius H.S., is surrounded by his family. He is a member of BSA Troop 287, which is sponsored by and meets weekly at St. James Catholic Church. He is the 61st Eagle in the history of Troop 287.

State Of The State Address Attracts Our Local Best



On a field trip of sorts. Seen enjoying their time together this week, were left to right: Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb, Lakewood Mayor Meghan George, State Senator Nickie Antonio, and Cuyahoga County Chief Executive Chris Ronayne. All stopped by the Ohio State House in Columbus for the annual State of the State Address, by Governor Mike DeWine.

THE MAYOR’S CORNER

Roundstone Out, Ex-Hospital Site Plan Shifts To More Housing

Our team at City Hall continues to work towards achieving the community vision for the Downtown Development on the former Lakewood Hospital site with our development partner, CASTO/North Pointe Realty. The City and CASTO have been diligently working through the complex layers of site planning, architecture, engineering, finance, and legislative and administrative review necessary to meet our local requirements. However, the City recently received new information from one of the intended end users of the site which will shift some of the ultimate utilization of the site.

Roundstone Insurance has informed the City that its needs and priorities have changed. Roundstone desires to fully own and be sole user of the facility for their office, which is impossible to achieve within the community priorities for a mixed-use development that advances multiple community priorities and goals. With this information, it’s clear that the mixed-use vision Lakewood is pursuing in our downtown development no longer aligns with the corporate vision Roundstone has for its headquarters.

The City is now aware that while our Planning & Development Department and CASTO methodically worked through the development process, Roundstone was actively exploring alternative options where it could establish its headquarters on a single-user site

with no shared ownership. While the City is disappointed that Roundstone’s shift in corporate priorities caused it to exit our downtown development project, and while the increases in interest rates and ongoing volatility in construction costs have also presented ongoing challenges and delays for the development, the project remains largely unchanged and our community vision remains intact. Roundstone’s exit means that the space previously intended to be office space will now be built as housing. So, despite Roundstone’s choice, our goal remains to have shovels in the ground as soon as possible.

The City and CASTO remain committed to the overall community-informed vision for the development, which includes:

- the largest construction of new, market rate residential units in Lakewood in over 50 years
- the largest development of affordable housing units in Lakewood in nearly 50 years
- the creation of a new urban community space to serve Downtown Lakewood
- the creation of new jobs and tax base to support City services
- the addition of new retail and commercial destinations in our downtown
- the preservation of the historic

presence of the Curtis Block architecture

Based on the known market demand for more new housing and additional affordable housing units, the proposed Roundstone building will likely be replaced by a 5-story mixed-use building with four floors of residential units over first floor retail and commercial uses. This allows us to further our affordable housing goals by offering more units with a mixed-income approach: with people of high incomes, middle-incomes, and more limited incomes able to find a home in the development. In addition, adding this number of units will be highly beneficial in helping Lakewood alleviate market demand and, by doing so, keep existing affordable units from being flipped into high-income units.

The Mayor’s Office and department directors continue to actively

work with Lakewood City Council, Lakewood City Schools, and the relevant City boards and commissions to ensure that the final project vision will be delivered. CASTO is currently reassessing the project financials as a result of this change, and in the meantime, we remain focused on delivering this transformative project for the people of Lakewood.



State Representative Michael Skindell with Mayor George.



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LAKEWOOD OBSERVED

Boom’s Pizza Joins “Slice Out Hunger’s” Pizza Across America Campaign

by Trish Rooney

On National Pizza Day, last week on February 9th, Lakewood’s newest and most anticipated eatery joined thousands of pizzerias across the US in the annual Pizza Across America day. Participating members commit to donating pizzas to shelters, food pantries, and kitchens in an effort to bring attention to food insecurity in our country. Slice Out Hunger is a volunteer-driven nonprofit that has raised millions of dollars to fund hunger-relief efforts around the US since its founding in 2009. Boom’s Pizza is one of only six member pizzerias in Ohio!

“We are so thrilled to be part of the Lakewood community and to have an opportunity to give back through our membership with the Slice Out Hunger program, said Ben Bebenroth, chef, and owner of Boom’s Pizza. “As we join pizzerias across the country in donating pizzas to those in need, we couldn’t be happier to work with Lakewood Community Services Center to make this happen right in our neighborhood.”

Pizza Across America is not the first connection Boom’s has made with LCSC in the short time they have been in Lakewood. As they prepared for opening day, Boom’s donated “practice pizzas” for delivery to our food clients throughout the community and Chef Ben was the second celebrity chef to participate in LCSC’s À La Cart, our



series of free cooking demos presented by popular local chefs and hosted at Cove Community Center. Taking time out of the hectic run up to their grand

opening signals Boom’s commitment to Lakewood and to our residents.

“LCSC has had tremendous support from the food service industry in Lakewood, beginning with the End Hunger in Lakewood events spearheaded by Matt Fish, chef owner of Melt Bar and Grilled,” said LCSC Executive Director Trish Rooney. “We hope

to bring that popular event back and look forward to adding Boom’s Pizza to the long list of participating local restaurants committed to supporting our work.”

You can check out Boom’s menu at <https://www.boomspizza.com/>

Lakewood Photographer Unleashes Pooch Playoffs National Competition and Fundraiser

continued from page 1

United States. We believe these working dogs deserve to be protected by a ballistic vest for their entire shift, just like their human partners, so they can come home safe together. Funds raised will benefit K9s right here in Ohio.

The bracket style competition is unleashed in March with up to 32 pooches competing for exciting prizes from local pet-friendly sponsors like Luca’s Barkery, Inn the Doghouse, Milo & Me, Pet’s General Store and Geiger’s just to name a few. Each week, the dogs will face off in an online vote. Each week’s winner advances with the goal to be voted the Ulti-Mutt Cute Dog of Northeast Ohio! The winner will move on to a national competition.

I will photograph the pooches for a \$99 donation to Brady’s K9 Fund dur-



ing the month of February. The \$99 donation includes an acrylic keychain featuring your pup and a s’Wag bag of treats from our sponsors. Call 216-273-3000 to schedule your session or visit www.stephenmitchellbrownphotography.com for more information.

It’s funny. Our pets are such important members of our families yet most of us don’t think to have a professional

photo taken of them. The Pooch Playoffs gives everyone a fun way to get a portrait of their pet made, by a professional who knows how to photograph pets, while also supporting Brady’s K9 Fund.



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LAKEWOOD SPORTS

Dr. G's Ranger Round Up

by Dr. Charles Greanoff

Basketball
February 8, 2023
Rangers vs Bay Rockets

Using only 6 players due to a spate of injuries, the Lakewood Rangers dug deep tonight and pulled out a thrilling 41-40 win over the Bay Rockets in the opening round of the GLC Tournament. With the Rangers up just 2 points with 5 seconds left in the 4th quarter, junior Jack Gowan (8 points), the only bench player used tonight, coolly sank two free throws (in a one and one situation) to seal the victory (Bay hit an inconsequential 3-pointer at the buzzer). Junior Luke Vannucci scored 11 points, but to even greater effect, never left the floor and had very few turnovers playing point guard. Junior post Drew Jablonowki (8 points) also never left the floor, and fought hard for rebounds (11) against a much bigger Bay squad. Senior Brayden Volcansek never left the floor (see the pattern?), scored 14 points to lead Lakewood, and played a solid all around game. Once again, junior Dominic Peck played strong on the ball defense and was instrumental in the win, even though he didn't score. Osied Albadarin also didn't score, but played strong defense as well.

The Lakewood student section was out in force as usual, and the large, loud and proud cheer squad did their thing. This was a home game, but we have had more students in attendance for both Boys and Girls games this year even when we were the road team. We had fewer available players, but beat a bigger Bay team that had won 6 in a row.

Assistant coach Higgenbotham



stirred the student section to a fever pitch, and Head Coach Cammock had his squad—as usual—playing a relentless, selfless style of basketball.

It's great to be a Lakewood Rangers Basketball fan, watching the 44107 boys and girls teams play with heart and focus. The Lakewood Rangers are one team, from one town, that never gives up. Long Live Lakewood.

February 4, 2023
Rangers vs. Bay Rockets

Trailing 14-8 late in the 1st quarter, the Lakewood Rangers faced a pumped up senior night crowd and a determined Medina Buckeye squad. It looked like one of those nights that would end with a strong effort, a close loss, and a long bus trip home. But then sophomore guard Luke Vannucci (27 points) buried a spate of 3's, each one deflating the Bucks crowd a bit more, until finally the Rangers built an insurmountable lead on their way to a 55-43 win. Luke dropped the hammer, but as usual Lakewood put forth a great team effort. Junior Drew Jablonowski, the only Ranger over 6 feet tall, battled taller players all night, gathering 12 rebounds, scoring 9, and displaying toughness throughout. Senior Brayden Volcansek scored 11, mostly in the second half when Luke cooled off a bit, while fellow starter Dominic Peck played his usual sold floor game and scored 2 (Dominic is

an excellent defender, something difficult to put a number on). Senior Osied Albadarin did not score, but that didn't prevent him from proving defense and rebounds. The Lakewood bench was strong once again, Jack Gowan scored 4 and played strong defense, and Peter Checkout provided solid ball handling. Perhaps the most compelling story tonight, aside from the dominant play of Luke Vannucci on both ends, was the play of Chancellor Moses. Chancellor has played limited minutes this year, with the deep Ranger bench. But with mounting injuries, his number was called tonight—and he was ready—scoring on a driving layup to thwart a Buckeye late rally and playing stout defense. Lakewood is now 8-2 in the GLC East (8-9 overall) heading into the conference tournament. I have seen more Lakewood Ranger Basketball games than any living person, and I would be hard pressed to find a team that has maximized their opportunities to a greater extent than this squad. Most of their losses have been close, and their non-conference schedule was very difficult. I admire they way they have bounced back after tough losses—such as 2 OT setbacks to Holy Name—and just go after it the next time out. These guys from 44107 represent our school well. Kudos to Coach Cammock and his staff for building

a solid community team. Long Live Lakewood.

February 1, 2023
Rangers vs. Normandy

Tonight, playing with poise and energy, the Lakewood Girls rocketed their way to a huge lead and, despite a so so 4th quarter, decisively defeated Normandy 60-42 to earn a spot in the GLC Championship game Saturday at Elyria Catholic. This road victory was extra sweet for the Rangers (15-6) who fell to Normandy early this season for their only GLC-East setback and had eked out a three point win in this gym just last week. With a large student section (we traveled well) and a spate of staff members on hand, the Rangers took command early, largely on tenacious team defense and the inspired play of junior Delaney Garcia who led all scorers with 15 points and was dominant on the glass. Senior guards Sydney Hampton (9) and Sam Hudak (8 points) handled the pressuring Invader defense well and set up Delaney and others. Senior Ava Carroll was also strong on the glass and chipped in two, while senior Nettie Doran scored 3 and played her usual smothering defense.

The bench was strong again, led by seniors Jacquie Hudak (7 points) Aya McAuliffe (6 points) and juniors Sophia Zarbo (4 points) and Ally Bookman (5 points). Sophia also held up well handling the ball vs the Normandy pressure. The squad from 44107 was all business tonight, and took apart a strong Normandy team with maximum effort and intense focus. Congratulations to Coach Work, her staff, and the entire team. Long Live Lakewood



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LAKEWOOD EDUCATION

PTA Reflections Celebrate Student Creativity

by Christine Gordillo

The creativity and imagination of Lakewood City Schools' students were celebrated at the annual Lakewood PTA Council Reflections Ceremony, held Feb. 8 at Garfield Middle School. Sixty-seven art submissions from across the District were honored. Of those 67 pieces of art, 25 were chosen to move on to the state PTA judging, with winners to be announced in late spring. Overall, 90 students entered the contest. The Reflections program offers students from schools with active PTAs the opportunity to create works of art for fun and recognition. Students in pre-school through grade 12 are encouraged to submit works in seven arts areas: literature, dance choreography, film/video production, musical composition, photography and visual arts. All entries must follow a chosen theme, which this year was "Show Your Voice."

Each school with a PTA can send up to 24 entries to the district level judging. Among works chosen for district-level recognition, the highest scoring works as deemed by a panel of judges evaluating on artistic merit, creativity and interpretation of the theme, move on to Columbus to compete with students' work from around the state.

Here are the honorees. The bold names are of students moving on in the competition.

Visual Arts

- Josette Ballou** – An Empty Room
- Maggie Barmann** – Unconditional
- Haley Benjamin** – Better Off Unsaid
- Lilly Benjamin** – Show It, Because They Won't Hear It
- Mackenzie Brown** – In Water
- Olivia Brown** – Self Sustenance
- Sam Browning** – Memory
- Kayen Bruce** – The Camera of the Eye
- Nikita Budway** -Emotion
- Izabella Chambers-Decker** - Transformation
- Cameron Crouch** – My Voice



Harrison student Safa Jabarkhil's artwork is on of the 25 pieces moving on to state judging.

- Eric Day** – Nature Landscape
- Helen Fraunfelder** – Rule by Her
- Kaydence Ginnard** – Transformation of Medusa
- Safa Jabarkhil** - Free Flying
- Ryedan Jones** – Untitled
- Molly Keane** – To See the Truth
- Sarah Kpaw** – Star Crossed
- Halla Kutkut** – Show Your Voice
- Jacqueline Lyall** – Sunset
- Madeline Magda-McKing** - Save Our Oceans
- Anna Maurer** – What Do You Think?
- Mae Mohar** – For the Sake of Tradition
- Milena Osborne** – Lovely Forests
- Marissa Parkison** – Expression Through Music
- Ler Lay Pau** – At Peace
- Alexis Perry** - Gooby
- Millie Phillips Miller** – Dark Depths
- Thay Klu Plar** - One at a Time
- Brynn Reali** – The Art Within
- Morgan Rice** – Tree of Life
- Owen Ritchie** – Life, Death. And Confusion
- Ava Schmoltdt** – Stay Connected
- Elizabeth Schuldt** – Feeling Small

- Layla Smith** – Home of Lakewood
- Kiana Tousley** – Sketchbook Spread (But Bigger)
- Hsa Eh Kpru Wah** – Show Your Voice
- Jianna Wise** – Splitting Headache
- Dance**
- Meredith Barcelona** – Juxtaposing Freedoms

Literature

- Leena Adams** – The Voice
- Meredith Barcelona** – What I Want to Be While I Grow Up
- Adam Benhaddou** – Wake Up to

- Reality!**
- Reagan Bratko** – Showing My Voice
- Rowan Brown** – The Voice of Speech
- Leah Campbell** – A Day with the Prized Puggle
- Willow Detmar** – That Which Made Me Bloom
- Olive Diemert** – Dead End Convo
- Jazi Dunay** –Show Your Voice
- Maddie Ellis** – Peeking Through the Shadows
- Delaney Garcia** – Sports is More Than Just a Physical Game
- Cami Fisher** – Just Smile
- Fiona Gjermeni** – Using My Voice
- Mateo Guajardo** – Who's Really Listening?
- Ella Hartranft** – Women Have Worth
- Lucy Henrikson** – Artwork with Trembly Hands
- Ed Horton** – What My Voice Says
- McKenna Hunt** – The Freedom Fight
- Emily Jarecke** – Authentic Voice
- Aniya Johnson** – Importance in Life
- Amalija Marich** – A Voiceless Voice
- Bella Marzicola** – Perfect Mistake
- Emily Potoczak** – Show Your Voice
- Bode Smith** – The Frustrations of a Young Adult
- Arabella Spear** – Little Lightning Baby
- Ashley Van Gunten** – This Essay Will Not Be Televised
- Andrew Winters** – Challenges and Adaptation
- Corrine Wroblewski** – Hair Dye

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LHS student Lilly Benjamin's piece moves on to state judging.

LAKEWOOD SPORTS

Growing Lacrosse In Lakewood

by Drew Ferguson

Over the last two decades, lacrosse has been the fastest-growing team sport in the United States. Lakewood Saints Lacrosse is a Club Lacrosse program open to boys and girls enrolled in grades 2 through 8 living in Lakewood or Cleveland. The season runs from March through May and is a whole lot of fun to watch and play.

Lacrosse is a team sport that was invented by Native North Americans. Its name was dehuntshigwa'es in Onondaga ("men hit a rounded object"), da-nah-wah'uwsdi in Eastern Cherokee ("little war"), Tewaarathon in Mohawk language ("little brother

of war"), and baaga'adowe in Ojibwe ("bump hips").

Each player has a stick (crosse) with a net on the end that is used for throwing and catching a rubber ball. The object is to advance the ball into your opponent's end and score a goal. Lacrosse incorporates concepts from several sports including soccer, basketball and hockey. It doesn't matter how big or how small you are, there's a place for you in lacrosse. Speed, skill and smarts are just as important as size on the lacrosse field. Men's lacrosse allows for varying levels of body contact requiring more protective equipment, while women's lacrosse is a non-con-



tact sport requiring less.

Lakewood Saints Lacrosse is a member of USA Lacrosse, North Coast Chapter and the Northern Ohio Lacrosse League. Lakewood Saints Lacrosse provides every athlete the opportunity to enter, enjoy and excel by learning and playing lacrosse in a way that's best for each stage of growth and development. Boys and girls are divided into Learn To Play (Grade 2), Bantam (Grades 3-4), Youth (Grades 5-6) and Middle School (Grades 7-8). New players are accepted at all levels with the goal of developing knowledge and skill from year to year.

The season runs from March through May, with practices occurring twice per week and games/tournaments scheduled once a week or every other week depending on age. Registration for this season is open from now through March 6th. Registration and additional information can be found at: <http://saintslacrosse.org/>

Parent information nights will be held during Preseason Practice Sessions on:

Saturday, February 11th at 7:30pm at Force Sports Westlake off of Detroit Road

Sunday, February 26th at 7:30pm at Force Sports Rocky River off of Center Ridge Road

We are always looking for new players, coaches and volunteers. If you are interested or have any questions please contact Drew Ferguson at Saint-sLAXLakewood@gmail.com

In the Lakewood community, Ferguson serves as Commissioner for Lakewood Saints Lacrosse and hopes to continue to grow the sport. He spends his free time outdoors with his wife and two sons, on the water, camping, fishing, skiing and biking.

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LAKEWOOD EDUCATORS

Educator Spotlight: Byndas, Campfield & Portik

by Christine Gordillo

Three is the lucky number for this month's Educator Spotlight! Congratulations to Harrison Elementary intervention specialist Rebecca Byndas, Emerson Elementary cafeteria leader Kim Campfield and Lakewood High head swim coach Patricia Portik! Click on Read More to find out why these three are deserving of the February honor.

REBECCA BYNDAS

As a teacher, Harrison intervention specialist Rebecca Byndas from the beginning has been about challenging herself and finding ways to create a sense of community and belonging in the classroom.

"She is always trying to figure out how to incorporate different things to include all students," says Rebecca's nominator, paraprofessional Elizabeth Stoneman.

When Rebecca realized that her preschool classroom included two students who are deaf, she knew she wanted to do something that would make them feel included. So she decided to learn sign language. Talk about a growth mindset!

Elizabeth says that Rebecca is the first teacher in the 14 years she's been working in the district that she

has known to learn sign language to help a student. It warms Rebecca's heart when she sees students signing to each other in the classroom. "It is amazing to see the progress in such a short time," she says.

Rebecca joined the District in 2015 as a general education teacher and recently earned her special education certification for preschool. She loves seeing the great growth that happens at that young age.

With three educators in the Harrison preschool room, collaboration is paramount and Rebecca embraces the team approach.

Says Elizabeth: "Rebecca is the ideal team player. She is willing to learn and change things that need to be changed to aid both staff and students needs."

KIM CAMPFIELD

Emerson Elementary cafeteria leader Kim Campfield has only been in her position since August but in that short time she already has made quite an impression on both her boss and the students.

"Kim was recently promoted to leader at Emerson and has really taken ownership of her new role and has put in a lot of effort to do the best job she can," said Nutrition Services

Supervisor Jacob Green, Kim's nominator.

Kim, who joined the District in 2018 when she moved here from Virginia, was excited for her new leadership role at Emerson and approached it with a growth mindset: "I wanted to spread my wings and learn new things," Kim says.

Kim exhibits our Vision of a Lakewood Educator competencies through her creative thinking as well. A great example is when she was asked to come up with an alternative to a peanut butter sandwich for students with allergies. She was proud to develop a healthy cold lunch selection that still appeals to many students.

Kim's excellent communication skills come across whether she's talking with her supervisor about new ideas for food offerings or making sure to say hello to every student she serves. She doesn't let a student pass through the line without a quick "How you doing, sweetie?" She says it's the southern hospitality in her.

Kim's supervisor, Jacob, is among many who are grateful for Kim's move north to Ohio. Jacob believes Lakewood City Schools is lucky to have Kim, and we agree!

PATRICIA PORTIK

After a number of years experiencing a carousel of coaches, the Lakewood High swim team has found itself a steady captain at the helm in Patricia Portik. In her third year as the Ranger head coach, Patricia has drawn on many Vision of an Educator skills to create a team culture that promotes empathy, collaboration, communication and a growth mindset.

"Building team culture is a big part of what I'm trying to do," says Patricia. "We want to create a buzz (about the team) so people want to be a part of it." She has challenged herself to grow the team's numbers after seeing its ranks dwindle during the pandemic fallout.

Patricia tapped into her creative

thinking skills to come up with a fun way to motivate swimmers to strive for their best times by awarding each swimmer who achieves a personal record time with a banana that has the swimmer's new time written on it. The kids love it.

She also has made it a team staple to have those who aren't swimming an event to cheer mightily for the competitors at the end of their lane. And if one of the opposing team's swimmers has no one to cheer them on, the Rangers will cheer for them, too.

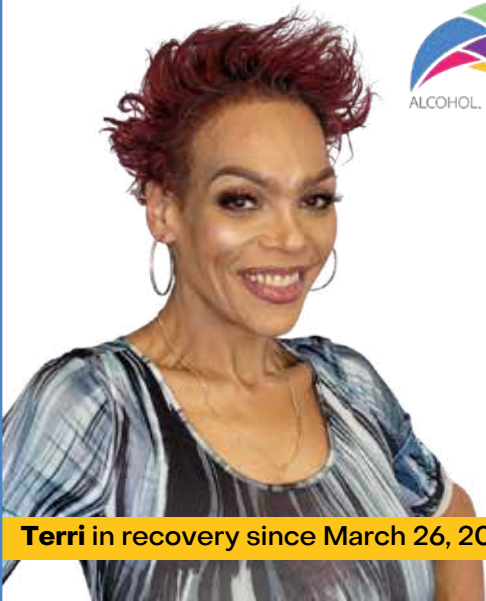
Patricia, who has been around competitive swimming and pools for most of her life, employs her excellent communication skills and her natural empathy to connect with her swimmers both as a coach and mentor. She said she is flattered and grateful to be in a position to offer guidance to swimmers in matters both in and out of the pool.

Patricia's nominator, teacher and softball coach Lucas Yousko, notices the connections Patricia has made: "The relationships she has built with her swimmers is a perfect example of how to coach in 2022/23, and keep kids engaged," he said.

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FOODWOOD

Arctic Igloos At Georgetown

by Adelaide Crnko

Once recognized as dwellings for those who live way up north, igloos have now appeared elsewhere becoming a trend in outdoor dining. Georgetown restaurant here in Lakewood is one example of where they can be found. According to Mickey Krivosh, the eatery's owner, they were the first in Northeast Ohio to install "Arctic Igloos."

Krivosh's two children, Ryan and Jennifer, proposed the idea about six years ago while he and his wife Patty were in Florida. At first Dad wasn't receptive to the suggestion, but the kids prevailed and he is glad they did. It actually increased business during cold weather as patrons were still able to enjoy a meal on the patio. The igloos are generally put up in October and removed by the end of April. Seasonal decor added for holidays such as Halloween and Valentine's Day contributes to the festive ambiance.

There are four structures at this site and each seats up to eight guests. They are heated so for the most part feeling warm enough should not be a concern. There may be specific reasons to reserve an igloo. Couples have become

engaged in one. Others may throw a birthday party or have a "Mom's night out." Otherwise, it's simply an out of the ordinary way to commune with others over good food. For that, plenty of menu options are available at Georgetown. There are appetizers and pizzas, salads and soups, and an eclectic mix of entrees such as pasta, seafood or meat dishes.

If you are interested in booking an igloo, first visit Georgetown's website to view the details and guidelines. For example, there is a non refundable rental fee per igloo, a minimum expenditure per party and a two-hour time frame that is strictly adhered to. Igloos are not available during Happy Hour. You may phone a hostess Monday-Saturday, from 12:00pm-3:00pm at 216/221-3500 if there are further questions. The menu is available for viewing on their site as well.

If the opportunity presents itself,



take a peek at Vosh which is adjacent to Georgetown. There you can view its event rooms should one be needed for a future reception, rehearsal dinner, or shower. The full extent of what Vosh offers can be found on the internet as well.

Many factors contribute to why people have dinner outside the home: indulging in cuisine you're not inclined to prepare yourself, celebrating a special occasion, or seeking a form of escape for the evening. The charming patio at Georgetown with its white lights and colorfully lit backdrop provides an enchanting venue to do just that. Being

in an igloo elevates the experience further. All this is waiting for you on the corner of Detroit and Riverside.

Even those beyond the Cuyahoga River have been known to savor Georgetown, especially during the summer when the patio is in full swing. We can all use a little magic in our lives now and then. The simple pleasure of enjoying a night out in a unique setting may be all you need to create a memory that lasts a lifetime. Georgetown is located at 18515 Detroit Road; Vosh is at 1414 Riverside Drive. Phone: 216/221-3500.

Lakewood Kiwanis K Kids Awareness Week

by Anna Bacho

February 13-17, 2023 is Kiwanis International recognition week for Kiwanis K Kids. Lakewood Kiwanis is proud to sponsor 4 K Kid Clubs in our community: Grant Elementary School, Horace Mann Elementary School, Horizon Before and After Care at Harrison and Emerson Elementary Schools.

K Kids is the youngest youth leadership club in the Kiwanis family. Each K Kids club has a school/administrator advisor and Lakewood Kiwanian advisor. Each club has their leadership team of K Kids selected through essays submitted or elected at the beginning of school. After that is in place, the voting of projects by the kids are done for the year. Our K Kids projects include food drives, community trash cleanup in the Spring and local initiatives that they have chosen to do. The kids learn that they have a voice in the club and need to make the commitment to com-

plete their projects. As advisors, we try to have different speakers come in to connect the kids to the community service they complete. Win, win for all. Lakewood Kiwanis also sponsors Builders Club at Harding Junior High.

Our K Kids have been busy this school year. Grant School K Kids recognized their local veterans with a breakfast and promoted the Thanksgiving food drive at the school for LCAC (Lakewood Charitable Assistance Corp.) . Horace Mann KKids hosted a joint winter decoration project with The Haven. 7 Haven residents traveled

over to the school and worked with the kids. Horace Mann KKids are also planning to have an Alex's Lemonade Stand in March for Pediatric Cancer. Recently, Horizon K Kids at both Harrison and Emerson Elementary made Snowman Soup (hot chocolate mix, marshmallows, a candy cane and a holiday poem) for a homeless ministry in the area. And in December, the KKids made dog biscuits and blankets for City Dogs in Cleveland.

K Kids motto is to Build Leaders and Lakewood K Kids are doing it in Lakewood. #Kids Need Kiwanis

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Trying To Figure Out How To Afford Home Repairs? Check Out Lakewood Pride Fund

by Jacqueline Bon

Do you have an essential home repair and are worried about how you're going to pay for it? Perhaps the Pride Fund is a program for you.

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secure home repair loans for Lakewood families who otherwise might not have access to conventional bank financing, helping families complete health and code compliance repairs.

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Should Have Been Mentioned In "Advertisers That Power Us"

by Debra O'Bryan

In the first issue of the year, I was bursting with pride that Jim O'Bryan and the Lakewood Observer were inducted into the Cleveland Press Club Journalism Hall Of Fame. We humbly wanted to thank everyone who made it possible and take them into history with us. We spent weeks compiling lists of everyone who has taken part. It has been brought to my attention that sadly, a very important supporter was left out.

Carolyn Ostrom, with Lakewood

Seventh Day Adventist Church has been a supporter of the Lakewood Observer continuously for years since the very early days of the paper. Through thick and thin, Carolyn has always stepped up to keep civic journalism thriving in this town. We are proud to have the church events and public service announcements like their monthly Red Cross Blood Drives in our paper. It truly is advertisers like this who keep us going every month. We are forever grateful. You deserve to be recognized, thank you from all of us.

FOODWOOD



Barbara's Bests: The Root

by Barbara Raymond

If you want good food in an interesting setting visit the coffee shop and restaurant, The Root. When owners Julie Hutchison and Bobby Breitenstein opened it in 2009 they had a vision for the place. It would be a family business. It would be "a gathering place," says Julie, "where people would find comfort" and inspiration from interesting conversations and the works of local artists that would hang on the walls.

Of course, they'd have coffee and teas.

And they'd have food. Delicious, vegetarian food."We knew we'd need a big kitchen," says Bobby. "We do everything from scratch. We make our own sauces and bakery items. We even make our own cheeses." They'd use as much locally-grown, organic produce as possible, buying from local farmers who don't use pesticides.

And it's not only the food that's home-made. Bobby, a carpenter, made a large concrete table that sits in the back, and all of the small tables customers also sit at. The bench seating at the concrete table, which Bobby also built, was fash-

ioned from a church pew. Wood for shelving came from a local home built in 1857

And The Root is truly a family business. Julie and Bobby's 18-year-old daughter Hazel works behind the counter when she's not busy with college studies. Son Gabriel, 16, works on carpentry with his dad.

Two objects in the seating area of The Root indicate the family's dedication to the people of Lakewood: a refrigerator and wooden pantry. Both hold food, but the food's not for sale. Instead, it's been donated, and is there for anyone who needs it. "There's always enough," says Bobby. He and Julie began this practice during the early part of the pandemic, when so many people, including those in the food industry, were out of work.

Besides Lakewood's citizens, what do Bobby and Julie like most about our city? "The Lake and the river," says Bobby. "And the accessibility is awesome. You can walk just about anywhere."

"Lakewood has a lot of great community programs," says Julie. "H2O, Lakewood Alive, the new community Center on Clifton and

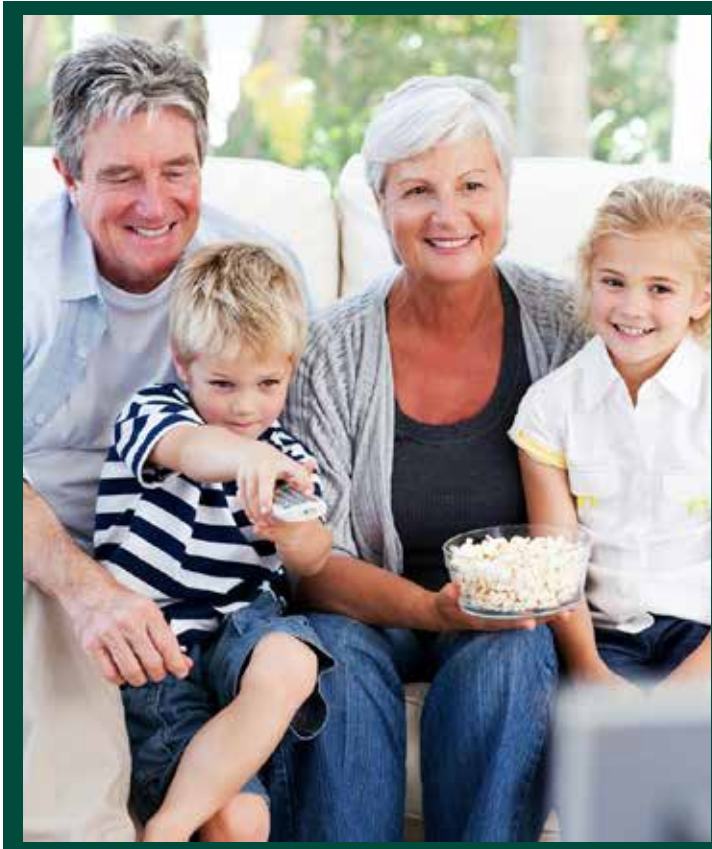


Julie, Hazel, and Bobby

Cove, which has lunches for seniors, and the Lakewood Family Room. Lakewood does a great job of taking care of its citizens." So does The Root.

The Root Cafe is located at 15118 Detroit Avenue

Barbara Raymond is a Lakewood resident and author of nonfiction book, "The Baby Thief: The Untold Story of Georgia Tann, the Baby Seller Who Corrupted Adoption."



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LAKEWOOD IS ART.®

Meeting Lakewood Artist Victor Melaragno

by Jim O'Bryan

Lakewood Is Art: a statement that is extremely true, and has been for a long, long, long time. Which brings me to an interesting conversation I had with Lakewood artist, husband, father, brother, naturalist and all around good guy, Victor Melaragno.

He had come up to me at the Root Cafe, saying, “You know I worked on the Doughnut Pantry sign, when they changed the name.” He was referring to a story I did a couple months ago about referring to the Doughnut Pantry by its previous names. “Would you like to see them?” he said. I replied, “Of course.”

During the course of the conversation and looking at the sign, I remembered I had seen some of Victor’s artwork decades ago... Turtles on dirt for the Ohio Herpatolgy Club. When I asked him about his art, he reminded me about the show he was in recently at Prama Art Gallery in Parma.

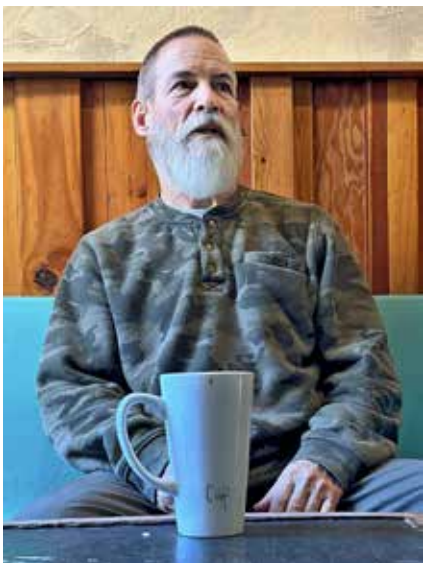
It occurred to me that it’s time to highlight some of Lakewood’s artists, using the definition first laid out by the founding members of “Lakewood Is Art”: to honor, respect and celebrate all forms of art, from drawing to painting, sculpting to photography, tattoos to



writing, textiles to landscaping, mosaics, and yes, even living.

Victor explained that he got his start early in life as soon as he could hold a pencil, doodling at Hayes Elementary and later St. Clements, as a way to deal with both the boredom of the classroom, and to work out ideas in his head. If he wasn’t in school he was in The Emerald Canyon, aka the Metro Parks, which he thought of as his backyard. This is where he would search out snakes, amphibians, birds and nature. This would become part of a continuing theme in his life. Love of art and nature.

On the first day of seventh grade at Harding, Vic sat next to a young Lakewood legend, Dermott Hill, in



Victor Melaragno relaxing with a cup of coffee at the location of his first show, and favorite coffee shop The Root Café

homeroom, who was an amazing artist in his own right. They encouraged each other; it was Dermott who convinced Vic to pursue his dream of being an artist. They remained friends until Dermott passed away in 2018.

As Victor grew, so did his level of art and art instruction. At Lakewood High he became part of the infamous “Kozmic Studios,” a commercial art class taught by real live commercial art studio lead designers-- a program that cranked out professional commercial artists at an amazing rate.

It was here he met more incredible artists, Erika Wannenmacher, Marc Clements, James Gregory Kraus, and Kevin Hogan, who opened his eyes to the history of art, and the many art movements. Thrown into the world of Cubism, Dadaism, Bauhaus, and Surrealism, he found the Flemish artists Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Bruegel, and he was hooked.

Continuing his doodling and cartooning, he stumbled onto the hottest craze of the era: Hot Rods, and Hot Rod Art, and no one had a bigger influence on Vic than Big Daddy Ed Roth, creator of “Rat Fink,” and many other monster characters.

He also became a gymnast as a good way to burn off energy, and was good enough to win a partial scholarship to Tri-C, but life got in the way. To help with the bills he took a job at Brilliant/Lustrolite as a sign painter, doing hand lettering and gilding. Vic honed his craft with pictorial work and reverse painting for illuminated

signs. His vocational course in high school prepared him for pattern making and design scaling which were all done by hand prior to 1990. He enjoyed his new found profession at Lustrolite which became Brilliant Electric Sign Company where he works to this day as a supervisor. He’s been there over 50 years now. He married Cindy, the gal of his dreams, with whom he enjoys all his passions along with his daughters Kay and Emma.

Drawing almost every day, he created monster characters which would get incorporated into cards and letters to his wife, daughters, and friends. These characters were affectionately named “SoonMoon People.” Vic started to create cutouts of these using various materials and painting them. Producing a lot of art, but not doing anything with it, he had gotten into a very nice groove and was happy, when out of the blue Erika Wannenmacher and Marc Clements called wanting to put a Kozmic Studio 30 year reunion together. While that never happened, with their encouragement Victor started entering his art in shows, and



SoonMoon: with “Desmond Dekker and the Aces” vinyl aluminum composite, sintra, 45 record and painted with enamel.

“I Want To Believe.” Erika asked Victor to create two “SoonMoon” pieces for the show. He ended up flying down for the grand opening, which motivated him to create more art at a serious level. As this was going on Victor was giving back to Lakewood, creating some murals and art in Lakewood Schools



then started getting invited to put on art shows, then actually selling art.

One of his first shows was at the Root Cafe in 2011, Julie Ramirez, along with Haley Himiko provided him the space to showcase his art. He was lucky enough to sell several of his pieces, one which was purchased by old pal Erika. This led to his 2nd and most important show. In 2015, Erika was guest curator at a gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico called Off Road Productions. The show’s theme was alien oriented, called

as an act of love, as generations of his family have attended and benefitted from Lakewood schools.

Since then, he has had numerous shows in the greater Cleveland area. Keep your eye out for Vic and family and say hello, and we will help keep you posted on any upcoming shows or installations he may have.

If you know a Lakewood artist in the broadest definitions, drop us a line, we would love to meet them and highlight their talents. After all “Lakewood is Art!”

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Series Of Lines:

Reviews Of Recent Releases By Local Bands, Pt. 131

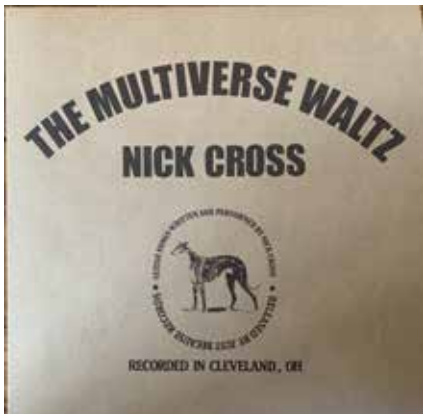
by Buzz Kompier

Cleveland Steamers - 10 More Steaming Piles Of Hit - Drome - 10 songs - LP, CD

Is the real news here that Drome Records is back or that Chris King (of Wild Giraffes fame) is now in this band? The Steamers' last album prior to this was "Best Record Ever" in 2018, but they've had a few singles since then and now this brand new record. First thing, and it's first because it's what people are going to notice before anything else: the cover art and title of this record are terrible. Not only are they really dumb, but they don't match the content here at all—you'd look at this and think it was a total novelty record, which it is not. Parts of this may have worked as a promo poster for the album or something but as art-work itself, it just does not, and I fear it may put off people who would actually enjoy the music. Anyway. This record is divided into two thematic halves (and "Love and Hate," while basic, would've been a better title idea), which is pretty highbrow as far as this group goes. At first I liked the "Hate" side more, but upon repeated listening I think "Love" has the better songs. "Girl Like You," "Water Balloon," and "Marie" were a few highlights—good punky pop (or maybe poppy punk, I can't decide). The style of the band's music is pretty much unchanged from how it's always been,



but the addition of Chris King certainly takes the band a step up (Cheese Borger, who usually sings, isn't bad but delivers almost everything in a low monotone—the vocals of Meredith Rutledge-Borger are less present than usual on here but when she does appear she makes it count; there are several nice harmonies and backing vocals she provides) because he is very good—it's been more than 40 years since the last Wild Giraffes single, but you wouldn't know it from his voice. Side "Hate" has a slightly wider variety of stuff: the incredibly corny "Murder" (I'm sure the corniness is intentional since it's so over the top); the bluesy "Bad Feelin'" (some good harmonica on this one); and my favorite of this side (and honestly, maybe the album), "Into The Cornfield," which is as uptempo and punk as they get and Chris's vocals are especially nuts. It's a solid record and probably the most



cohesive Cleveland Steamers album yet. 3.5/5

(Try a local record store or buy it on eBay from Cheese himself!)

Nick Cross - The Multiverse Waltz - Just Because Records - 9 songs - LP, digital

The text on the cover characterizes this as "guitar songs," and while I suppose that's somewhat accurate, it isn't especially descriptive. This is far more laid back than Coffinberry or even Nick's work in the Cross Brothers. Some songs fall into the indie folk/alt country genre(s), like the title track and "Turn To Blue," whereas some stick closer to an indie rock sound, like "Azalea City" and "Darker Minds" (the latter of which was one of my favorites here). Nearly half (4 of the 9—this is mathematically true)

are instrumentals, which is probably where the "guitar music" thing comes from. "On The Cosmic Telephone" and "Watch Me Disconnect" are sort of dreamy (and indeed, cosmic and disconnected); "Love You Same" almost sounds like a lullaby and I was picturing "Land Of Enchantment" as a soundtrack of sorts—I could see it (or hear it, I guess) in the background of some movie. Nick did this whole thing himself (apart from brother Tony showing up on "Doctor," which added some nice harmony—it was another of the best ones on here, I think) and it does feel like a very solitary, homemade deal. The cover art doesn't seem quite fitting for the music and almost feels tossed together (I was kinda wondering if it was a tribute to a different album cover perhaps) but hey: I liked the back cover, maybe it adds to the whole lo-fi charm of the thing, and anyway, you don't play the sleeves, brother! I'll admit I prefer the more upbeat stuff Nick has done (especially the Cross Brothers LP), but this is an interesting record with some nice songs on it. 3.5/5

(justbecauserecords.bandcamp.com)

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

Roundstone Pulls Out Of Holespital Deal

by Jim O'Bryan

On February 13, 2023, social media erupted with the "disgrace of the City losing the Roundstone deal." It had that ill-informed outrage over something--anything--kind of tone.

So I made some calls and talked with some people just to get the record straight.

The short story: the deal is not dead, but Roundstone did get a better offer in their hometown of Rocky River. While not official, that is believed to be the chosen site out of four others that emerged.

From the beginning Roundstone had wanted complete ownership and control of the project which was something the city of Lakewood never offered. What was agreed

to originally, in principle, was that Roundstone would have condo-style ownership of 4 floors of the office space.

Over the ensuing months, things went back and forth through many public meetings, principles, boards and other participants. It was during this period of time that other offers came forward allowing Roundstone complete ownership and control of their site.

The good news is that 90% of the city was on board with the original plan and were working together towards a common goal. This is a very good sign that bodes well for their approach heading into the future with this project.

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