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Volume 9, Issue 25, December 11, 2013

LPL One Of USA's Four Star Libraries

by Leana Donofrio-Milovan

Lakewood Public Library has once again been named a four-star library by Library Journal, the most trusted and respected publication for the library community. The overall score, based on circulation, library visits, public programs and computer use, was 1714—one of the best scores in the state and the highest score of all public libraries in Cuyahoga County. This is the second year Lakewood has received such a designation. Ohio was second in the nation for the most starred libraries following New York.

"This is actually a very humbling honor. The Lakewood Public Library derives its greatness from the community that built it and the people from all over Northeast Ohio who fill it every day," said Project Supervisor Ben Burdick.

More than 7,500 libraries across the country were



Four-Star Library: What you always knew in your heart is now confirmed by National Library Authority.

evaluated, but only 263 were recognized as superior. Cleveland Public Library received a four-star rating with a score of 1083 while Rocky River Public Library ranked three stars with

a score of 1426. Both Cleveland Heights and Cuyahoga County Public Library received five star ratings with scores of 1533 and 1549 respectively. Lakewood's four-star rating was earned

with an overall score of 1714—the highest score in the county.

Why only four stars? In addition to the overall scores, Library Journal awards its star ratings by dividing libraries into budget categories. The \$1,000,000 - \$4,999,999 tier covers many more libraries nationally—hence Lakewood's rating, despite its overall top score.

Program attendance put Lakewood at the top of the list with a score of 1.8 program

attendance per capita. This includes children's programs, community events and adult fare. From movies to concerts and more, all of the programming at the Library is funded by the Friends of Lakewood Public Library without tax dollars spent. Just recently, the Library wrapped up an extensive series of programs called Muslim Journeys that drew people from all over Northeast Ohio with films, distinguished scholars, musical concerts and crafts for children.

Public Internet access at Lakewood Public Library also stands out with 8.5 computer sessions for every man, woman and child in the city. Circulation and visits to the library remain strong. The average Lakewoodite visited the Library 16.2 times and checked out 29.2 items over the course of the statistical year.

To see all of the Ohio Star Libraries in the 2013 Library Journal Index of Public Library Service within peer groups based on expenditures visit <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2013/11/managing-libraries/lj-index/class-of-2013/all-the-stars-2013-state-by-state>.

District Briefs Community On Common Core

by Christine Gordillo

The Common Core Standards were somewhat demystified for a room full of parents and other community members at a meeting led by the district's Teaching & Learning Department on Dec. 4.

While much debate has gone on in the media about the merits and implementation of the new, more rigorous national standards that have been adopted by 45 states, including Ohio, parents have not received a lot of informa-

tion on how they directly impact the teaching of their students in the classroom.

Audience members heard from Assistant Superintendent Kevin Bright about the background of how the Common Core Standards came to be, the mission behind them – to better prepare students for college and careers



Roxann Ramsey-Caserio - Director of Teaching and Learning listens as Superintendent Patterson explains the testing.

– and how their emphasis on creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking will result in school districts producing graduates ready to compete in the 21st century global economy.

Next, Director of Teaching & Learning Roxann Ramsey-Caserio explained how the Common Core Standards only lay out what skills each student must master, but that it is up to each district to determine the path and methods of how to get students to that point. In Lakewood, the district has five instructional coaches and five digital literacy teachers to help teachers and students navigate the new waters of Common

continued on page 8

Lakewood Police Department Detective Bureau Requests Your Help in Identifying a Suspect in a Bank Robbery

Contact Det. Pat Foye: (216)529-6764 Or the Lakewood Police Department Detective Bureau: (216)529-6763

SUSPECT: Black Male, mid to late thirties, 5'9", wearing a green and dark colored jacket with a white stripe and a New York Yankees baseball hat.



On 12-9-13, a black male entered Key Bank at 1435 Warren Rd. at 10:26 a.m. The male passed a note to the teller asking for money and threatened harm to an area school if the request was not fulfilled.

Light Up Lakewood WOW!



2013's version of Lakewood Alive's Light Up Lakewood took place on a chilly night with a snowstorm supposedly closing in on us. No matter, Lakewood loves a good party and showed up en masse for a bigger and better Light Up Lakewood! Kudos and thanks to Lakewood Alive, their volunteers and the City of Lakewood. More photos on pages 12-13 and online.



Lakewood Observer

The Lakewood Historical Society At Light Up Lakewood



The Lakewood Historical Society encourages parade spectators to see the new One-Room School exhibit at The Oldest Stone House Museum.

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LAKEWOOD DISCUSSION

Topics	Author	Replies	Member Views	Last Post
Christmas in Lakewood a community photo gallery	Peter Grossetti	9	450	Mon Dec 09
Police Seek Your Help!	Jim O’Bryan	0	341	Mon Dec 09
Bomb Threat at St. Edward High School This Morning	Natalie Schrimpf	2	225	Mon Dec 09
Light Up Lakewood ... what fun	Peter Grossetti	7	639	Sun Dec 08
Common Core Meeting Draws Crowd	Jim O’Bryan	16	59	Sun Dec 08
Is Common Core A Common Danger?	Bill Call	29	1457	Thu Dec 05
Best Taco Bell In The World -	Jim O’Bryan	14	1455	Thu Dec 0
One Person’s One Way Causes Outcries From Many	Jim O’Bryan	15	1432	Mon Dec 02
IMAGE-IN LAKEWOOD	Jim O’Bryan	195	15011	Sat Nov 30

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Upcoming Submission Deadline

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Sunday, January 12, 2013

Publish Date

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Wednesday, January 22, 2014

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Health

Neighborhood Family Practice To Expand Service Area

by Debbie Martinko

Neighborhood Family Practice (NFP), a federally qualified non-profit community health center currently serving patients from three office locations on Cleveland’s near west side, was recently awarded a federal grant that is part of the Affordable Care Act.

NFP, one of eleven health centers in Ohio and 243 nationally to receive this funding, will utilize initial an initial grant of \$316,000 in operational funds to open a new office location in the Bellaire-Puritas neighborhood.

“This neighborhood was identified by NFP for expansion because there is currently no doctor’s office located in that area – there is a real shortage of high-quality, primary care,” said Jean Polster, president and CEO of Neighborhood Family Practice. “Our plan is to open the new office that will allow us to provide medical and dental care and mental health services to patients of all ages with all types of health insurance early in 2014.” NFP plans to open a small temporary office (located in Puritas Plaza) in February 2014 followed by a larger, permanent health center location later in the year.

In addition to the initial funding, NFP will receive \$650,000 a year

in federal funds to run the new location. The money is part of \$150 million in Affordable Care Act dollars that was distributed across the country. Community health centers are receiving these funds to provide basic health services, including dental care and mental health services.

About Neighborhood Family Practice

NFP has been providing quality primary health care services to patients of all ages on Cleveland’s near west side for more than 30 years. The mission of NFP is to partner with the community for everyone’s best health by providing quality health care services regardless of ability to pay; treating patients with compassion, dignity and respect; protecting confidentiality; and offering culturally sensitive services and community outreach.

For more information, call 216-281-0872 or visit www.nfpmedcenter.org. NFP currently has three locations (at Ridge & Denison, Detroit/Shoreway and Tremont) which serve more than 14,000 patients each year. Known for delivering high quality care, NFP is accredited by the Joint Commission for Healthcare Organizations and is recognized as a Patient Centered Medical Home from the National Center for Quality Assurance.

Straight from the Heart Raffle Features \$100,000 Grand Prize!

Advertorial

Would you like to win \$100,000? How about a two-year lease on a Volvo or Mazda? A Harley Davidson motorcycle? Or a Mediterranean Cruise for two? These are just a few of the 40 incredible prizes offered through the 10th annual Straight from the Heart Raffle to benefit the cardiovascular programs at Fairview, Lakewood and Lutheran Hospitals.

Sponsored by the Community West Foundation, the raffle to select the 40 prize winners takes place on Saturday, February 15, 2014, at the Straight from the Heart red-tie gala at LaCentre Conference and Banquet Facility in Westlake. In addition, early raffle ticket purchasers are entered into two early bird

drawings on December 13 and January 17, 2014. Each winner receives a \$1,000 cash prize.

With such a great cause and so many incredible prizes, why not purchase a Straight from the Heart raffle ticket for your chance to win the \$100,000 grand prize and 39 other amazing prizes? Raffle tickets are \$100 each or three tickets for \$200.

To see a full list of available prizes, or to purchase raffle tickets online, visit www.straight-fromtheheartevent.org or contact the Community West Foundation at 216.476.7061.

All proceeds from this raffle will benefit the Heart Centers at Fairview, Lakewood and Lutheran Hospitals.

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City News

Council Passes A Moratorium On E-Cigarettes

Council President Brian Powers called the December 2, 2013 Council meeting to order at 7:31 P.M.

The first order of business was a report from the Finance Committee which was presented by its Chair, Councilwoman Mary Louise Madigan (Ward IV). The report was on a proposed ordinance that would add two city positions, add a stipend for employees who are notaries and a 2% increase for every pay grade. The two positions being added are an IS Project Manager and a Budget Manager. Both have been approved by the Civil Service Commission and do not increase the size of either department as they both have vacant positions that had not been filled. After redistributing work it was decided these positions were needed. The 2% pay raise will only affect those already at the top of their pay grade and the stipend for notaries is being reinstated after a several year hiatus.

Council passed the ordinance.

Next Councilman Tom Bullock (Ward II) read a statement to Council regarding bedbugs. It stated that in the last six years, of the 528 cases of bedbugs in the county, 70 have been from Lakewood. Although he said this is not something to necessarily be alarmed about, he believes that the number is enough for Lakewood to review its prevention and response strategies. Since bedbugs spread with the movements of people (on their cloths, luggage and furniture) and Lakewood has a higher population of mobile residents,

by Christopher Bindel

Bullock thinks that it is important to educate landlords and property owners about prevention and treatment strategies. He also wants the city and county to review what each of their roles are in handling this issue, how they can better help each other and things they can do to improve. To help facilitate this he proposed that Council, the Administration and representatives from the County meet to discuss these issues, and requested that his statement be referred to the Human Services Committee for consideration.

Councilwoman Monique Smith (At-Large) said as Chair of the Human Services Committee that she wanted to acknowledge that she appreciates Councilman Bullock for presenting this issue especially since he is not the first one to show concern over it. She said concern has been growing, especially in places like Ward IV where there is a higher population density.

Councilwoman Mary Louise Madigan (Ward IV) said that she appreciates this being brought forward as it has been something she has been watching for a long time. However she wanted to make sure they made it clear to people that it is not the City's responsibility to take care of bedbugs. The City can help with educating the public and tracking incidences, but it is not their duty to remove them.

Council referred the matter to the Human Services Committee.

Next the Mayor and Councilman Bullock asked Council to consider a resolution that would show the City's support for the LEEDCo's "Icebreaker" project. Lake Erie Energy Development Corporation (LEEDCo) is a Cleveland based non-profit which is trying to create the first offshore, fresh water, wind farm in the country, seven miles off the shore of Cleveland. In the communication from the Mayor and Councilman Bullock they say that the "project has the potential to generate locally-generated clean energy, create hundreds of new jobs, and establish Northeast Ohio leadership in an emerging high tech manufacturing industry that could employ thousands over the next decade."

The project proposes six prototype wind turbines that are designed to be able to handle rough winter storms and a lake that freezes. The project has garnered a lot of attention and support including a \$4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy for engineering, site assessment, site control, and other expenses. In February of 2014 LEEDCo will submit an application for an additional \$46.7 million investment from the Department of Energy. The resolution presented to Council is very similar to others coming before City Council's in neighboring cities as well. The resolution is meant to demonstrate public support for the project which is necessary as part of the application. Likewise, as a city that will have front row seats to the project, Lakewood's support is essential.

Before voting on the resolution Councilman Shawn Juris (Ward III) said that in the documentation provided to him he could not find where all the funding was coming from and asked the Mayor if the project was fully funded by the public, or if there was a mix of public and private funds. The Mayor said he did not have the information with him to answer that question, but said there has been a lot of local support for the project in the private sector.

Councilman Juris said he was quite concerned with the hastiness of the resolution and said he would like to discuss it in committee first before committing a vote to it. He said that if

the project ends up being completely publicly funded he didn't want to be a part of approving of it if down the road if the unproven technology fails.

Councilman Powers asked Councilman Bullock if there were any reasons that they could not delay the vote so it could go to committee. Bullock said he would prefer not to send it to committee especially since other communities have already passed their resolution in support. He also wanted to mention that there had been some public funds used in support for this project, but also said that it is quite common to apply for public funding for practical prototypes after initial research and development has been done, especially in the energy industry.

Councilman Juris said that he understands that there is always some risk with trying new things, and that he knows the idea of wind turbines on Lake Erie has been around for some time and is something he isn't necessarily against. However he said since it was just introduced he would simply like to digest it a little bit further and understand who the players are involved with it. Therefore if it didn't require immediate passage he requested it be moved to committee.

Councilman Powers said that he had no issue supporting it then since it

continued on page 21

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Lakewood Public Library

Register Now For Winter Storytimes

by Eric Knapp

It's the most wonderful time of the year— Lakewood Public Library's Winter Storytime Season! Registration is simple and easy. You can stop in at the Children's and Youth services desk anytime to sign up. You can also call us at (216) 226-8275 extension 140 or 141, or register online at <http://www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/youth/> and click on the button at the top of the page.

The storytime season begins the week of Monday, January 6th, and continues for eight weeks. Several options are available for different age groups: Just Baby 'n Me has babies 9-24 months bubbling up with laughter; Children from 2-3 ½ years in age are in for a treat with our Toddler Treats Program; Storylore provides a more traditional storytime for children 3 ½ -6 yrs of age; Children anywhere from 2-6 yrs of age can participate in our Shake Rattle and Roll (a more movement-based storytime) and/or our



Illustration by Nicka Petruccio

Pajama Party program. Chase those winter chills away at the library!

Storytimes will take place in both the Main Branch and the Madison Branch. For more information, refer to the Lakewood Public Library Program Guide, the Children's page online, or call us at 216-226-8275 ext. 140.

Otaku Cafe Serves Up A Slice Of Japan

by Philistine Ayad

Konnichiwa! How can we, at Lakewood Public Library, serve you? Some Anime? Perhaps a bit of Manga? Hmm... We have just the thing... JAPAN! Youth and Teens from sixth through twelfth grade can make reservations for our Otaku Café Winter Season.

From January 10—February 28th, let's all feast on all things Japanese. We will meet in the Main Branch Multipurpose room on Fridays from 4:00 p.m. –5:00 p.m. Together, we will explore the world of Asian-Ball-Joint Dolls, Pocky, plushies, and so much more! Come and be entertained by Hatsune Miku, J-Pop, K-Pop, and the strange world of Japanese commercials. Explore everything from the kawaii to the kurai. Come on in and discover Harajuku and the amazing Japanese street fashions!

Registration is required.



"Veil: Friends" was created by Fatimah Zafira.

Register at www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/youth or call the Children's Desk at (216) 226-8275, ext. 140

Philistine Ayad is a Paraprofessional at the Lakewood Public Library. She loves reading, writing, and the arts. She also enjoys watching movies, some television, and anime.

Cleveland Playhouse Script Club, "Yentl"

by Erin Hallahan

In fulfillment of her dream, a young woman rebels against conventional beliefs and lives in disguise to obtain an education. After debating with her rabbi father on Jewish law and religion, she dreams to aspire to greatness. She finds a school and transforms her identity to study amongst her peers. Once enrolled, she emerges as a gifted student and the most eligible bachelor in town. The play is based on Isaac Bashevis Singer's short story, "Yentl the Yeshiva Boy." Singer and Leah Napolin adapt the story to create the heartwarming script for "Yentl," a progressive and inspiring story of love, determination and self-discovery. The play will run January 10 - February 2, 2014 at the Cleveland Playhouse Allen Theatre.

Explore the story's transformation process from page to stage. The



refreshing twist on the common book club is sure to enlighten theater and literature enthusiasts alike. Join Rabbi Enid Lader and the Cleveland Playhouse artistic staff in a lively conversation discussing the script. Come to the Lakewood Public Library Main Auditorium on Wednesday, January 8 at 7:00 p.m.

Please call (216) 226-8275, ext. 127 to participate. Copies of the script are available upon registration.

Erin Hallahan is a Librarian at Lakewood Public Library.



eBooks For The Holidays: Lakewood Public Library Can Help

by Leana Donofrio-Milovan

The holidays are coming, and with them the purchase of new, shiny eBook readers. To get help using your new device or downloading free eBooks look no further than Lakewood Public Library.

Through the Ohio Digital Library found at www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org, users can connect with Overdrive and its vast virtual library. Materials a member library purchases through Overdrive will be added to the consortium's collection, allowing any patron belonging to a member library to check out the material. By pulling the resources of consortium members together, libraries are able to give users more choices in material.

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If you have any questions about Lakewood Public Library eBooks or Digital Audio books call the Lakewood Public Library Technology Department at 216-226-8275, ext.127.

The Library also offers one-on-one eBook help Thursday nights at the Madison Branch and Sunday nights at the Main Library. Registration is required. Call Madison at 216-228-7428 to register and the Main Library at 216-226-8275 ext. 127 to register and get help using your e-reader. Also, you may sign up to test and take a look at e-readers the Library owns before purchasing to see which device you like best!



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Lakewood Public

A Visit From
Henry David Thoreau

by Erin Hallahan

Henry David Thoreau is considered one of the greatest writers in American literature. His progressive abolitionist ideas, intensive studies of nature and reformist opinions on government have inspired readers for over 160 years. His essay, "Civil Disobedience" (1849), and his book, "Walden" (1854), are his most famous titles among a vast collection of essays, novels, manuscripts and journals. He considered materialism and conformity the evils of society while promoting a more simple existence based on truth, inward reflection and nature. These ideas along with Thoreau's timeless and captivating spirit are captured by Dr. Kevin Radaker in his presentation.

English Department Chair and Professor of English at Anderson University, Radaker has portrayed Thoreau over 400 times since he first landed the coveted role in the Chautauqua Society's summer tours in 1991. For nearly 23 years he has performed at colleges, libraries, universities, conferences and national parks across the northeastern and midwestern United States. Depicting the brilliant author and philosopher, Radaker delivers an enlightening performance allowing the audience to achieve the impossible feat of time travel. Join us on a voyage to mid-nineteenth century New England in Lakewood Public Library's educational and entertaining edition of Sunday with the Friends.

Radaker's convincing delivery of his Thoreau depiction is inspired by decades of studying his work and mastering the art of educational drama. He "has sifted through Thoreau's writings to find and thus interweave many of his most important, thought-provoking and eloquent passages into the course of the dramatic monologue to awaken



or reawaken interest in Thoreau." His doctoral dissertation on Thoreau's work, published scholarly articles and acting experience combine to build an impressive Thoreau expert resume.

After exploring the world through Thoreau's eyes, Radaker will engage in a question and answer session in 1860 as Thoreau. The audience will then have an opportunity to speak with Radaker, who will return to his modern day expertise. James David Moran, Director of Outreach at the American Antiquarian Society boasts, "Radaker's portrayal of Thoreau combines penetrating and exhaustive scholarship with vibrant and dynamic theater. The result is a mesmerizing performance that is moving, illuminating and profound."

Embark on a journey to pre-civil war America and become an eyewitness to the literary genius of the famous American writer and philosopher Henry David Thoreau. The program will be held at Lakewood Public Library on Sunday, January 5 at 2:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium. Brought to you by the Friends of Lakewood Public Library, the program is free and open to the public.

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Lakewood Schools



Roxann Ramsey-Caserio - Director of Teaching and Learning kicks off the meeting on Common Core Learning to a good crowd of parents. She called the meeting to help parents understand the new state mandate, and how Lakewood is going to implement a strategy.

District Briefs Community On Common Core

continued from page 1

Core when it comes to the classroom learning environment.

Technology is an integral component of the new standards, and district Technology Coordinator Paul Hieronymous shared with the audience how Lakewood is well-prepared to meet the new challenges required by the Common Core. Students are already delving into tech applications through Google Apps for Education, which allow students to create, communicate and collaborate through shared drives, blogs, and much more. Because the new state assessments will be done completely online, it is critical that students are comfortable navigating the online world in an educational context. Lakewood is committed to providing the tools necessary to have our students ready in this area.

In order to understand just how differently our students will be asked



Parents had many good questions, this one asks about books, and how they will check the progress of their students.

to approach learning, those in attendance were given sample test questions in math and language arts that compared the old version of assessments (Ohio Achievement Assessment) and the new Common Core version (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, or PARCC). This exercise gave community members a chance to see how the new Common Core assessments require deep critical thinking skills to navigate more complex tests and ask students to provide evidence or justification for their answers. As Ramsey-Caserio pointed out, the old ways of textbooks and memorization of facts is no longer acceptable or desired under Common Core.

Before concluding the meeting and answering audience members questions, Ramsey-Caserio emphasized that everyone – students, parents, teachers, administrators – will experience a steep learning curve with the Common Core and that patience is needed as the school year progresses. Professional development regarding the new standards is ongoing and intensive for district staff and the district is doing everything it can to support its teachers and students as they cope with completely new methods of teaching.

To find out more about the Common Core Standards, you can visit <http://www.corestandards.org/>

Garfield Students To Benefit From LEAF Grant

by Christine Gordillo

Thanks to a \$1,000 grant from Lakewood Earth and Food (LEAF), Garfield students will participate in a yearlong Project Based Learning venture with the theme of “Farm to School.” With an emphasis in reading and mathematics, students will gain invaluable skills in communication and leadership while learning about environmentally responsible actions in the community.

Students will experience 21st century skills in collaboration, creation and critical thinking during authentic learning visits to the West Side Market, participation in cooking lessons, and creation of a school garden. Three classes will collaborate, bringing together middle school students from an 8th grade Language Arts class, an 8th grade Math intervention class, and 8th graders involved in the B.R.I.D.G.E.S. (Beginning to Realign Individual Development for Growth and Educational Success) program. Students will collaborate to create products displaying local communities’ access to fresh, local foods.

The project will include a speaker series, where local professionals will be invited into the classroom to discuss their environmentally responsible

actions. Professionals who have participated in the speaker series so far include Annabel Khouri of Bay Branch Farm and Chef Michael Nowak of Black Pig restaurant.

Collected compost from school lunches will contribute to creating a garden in the spring. By collecting and analyzing data from students, teachers, and local professionals, students will discover the strengths and areas of opportunity for sharing information



with the public about access to local foods.

A visit to the West Side Market will allow students an opportunity to see firsthand selling of a variety of locally produced meats, cheeses, produce, and breads. Cooking lessons will strengthen students’ interest and students will be encouraged to recreate their creations, so they may be highlighted at a final Harvest party. Near the end of the project, the classes will invite the community to come learn about class findings and ideas that will be presented through integrated media projects.

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Lakewood Schools

Winter Concerts: Great Holiday Entertainment

by Christine Gordillo

If you are looking for an affordable way to enjoy some holiday entertainment, the Lakewood City Schools Music Department provides a wonderful way to enjoy some uplifting holiday music for just a few dollars. The district's acclaimed music program will be putting on performances throughout December as the holiday school break approaches.

All the middle school and high school concerts take place at 7:30 p.m. at the Civic Auditorium. The first of the concerts kicked off earlier this month, but there are still some great ones left to take in:

- Dec. 10: 6th Grade Winter Concert
- Dec. 11: LHS Choral Winter Concert
- Dec. 12: LHS Camerata Orchestra & Symphonic

Band Winter Concert Dec. 18 & 19: LHS' Sounds of the Season concert,

featuring the high school's top performing groups in band, choir and orchestra. The program is the same each night.

And what would be a holiday season without our youngest performers' irrepressible shows at the elementary schools where dramatists, instrumentalists, singers and even tap dancers will take the stage. For a full calendar of performances, please visit the Performing Arts page on the district web site: www.lakewoodcityschools.org. Tickets for the Civic Auditorium performances are \$3 for adults, \$2 for students and \$1 for seniors. The Sounds of the Season concert will be \$4 for adults, \$2 seniors and students. Can't beat it!

"Why I Love Lakewood" Essay Contest Winner Announced

WHY I LOVE LAKEWOOD

Hi my name is Freddy Becker.

There are many reasons why I love Lakewood. One of the reasons is that my family and I can walk or bike everywhere! Some of my favorite places to walk or bike are my grandma's house on Belle Avenue, Menchie's on Detroit, Lakewood Park, and my school Lakewood Catholic Academy.

Another thing I love about Lakewood is all of the sports fields! Some of my favorites are Old Stone House, and Lake Front baseball field. I also like to walk up to Lakewood Stadium and watch a football game.

Finally I love that all my family and friends live so close. That gives me the opportunity to see them all the time. Lakewood is a city you never have to leave.

That is why I love Lakewood.

*Freddy Becker
Lakewood Catholic Academy*

by Valerie Mechenbier

Congratulations to Freddy Becker, a 4th grader at Lakewood Catholic Academy, the winner of the 7th Annual "Why I Love Lakewood" Fourth Grade essay contest sponsored by the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce. Freddy will receive a \$100 cash prize, ride in the Light Up Lakewood parade, and help "flip the switch" at the lighting ceremony at Light Up Lakewood on December 7th!

LCA 4th Grader Freddy Becker with Chamber CEO/President Patty Ryan.



Ranger Shop Open Special Holiday Hours

by Christine Gordillo

Stop in and find all of your Ranger spirit wear at the Ranger Shop, located in Lakewood High School. From yard signs to sweatshirts to great gift ideas for your favorite teacher or coach, the shop has everything Ranger.

Holiday Hours:

- Saturday, Dec 7: 10am-2pm
- Monday, Dec 9: 1pm-3pm & 6pm-7:30pm
- Wednesday, Dec 11: 1pm-4pm
- Saturday, Dec 14: 10am-2pm
- Monday, Dec 16: 1pm-3pm

Lakewood's Hayes Elementary Named High Progress School of Honor

by Christine Gordillo

School Honored for Proficiency Gains in Math & Reading

Hayes Elementary is one of only 37 schools in the state to be named a High Progress School of Honor by the Ohio Department of Education for its gains in reading and math proficiency among all students during the 2102-2013 school year. Hayes is the only school in Cuyahoga County to have earned this significant award.

Former Hayes Principal Bob Curtin, who moved into a new administrative role this school year, said that Hayes' success "is due to years of collaboration among staff, central office leadership, students, families, and the community in direct support of all learners."

To become a High Progress School of Honor a building must first be a Title 1 or Title 1-eligible schools with at least 40 percent of its students eligible for free and reduced-price meals. In addition these schools must rank

Wednesday, Dec 18: 12pm-4pm
Saturday, Dec 21: 10am-2pm

All proceeds from Ranger Shop sales go to the Lakewood Alumni Foundation. The Ranger Shop is all volunteer staffed. We are always looking for volunteers to open the shop. If you are interested, please email volunteer@lakewoodrangers.com. Volunteers who are also Athletic Booster Members receive \$2.50 in Booster Bucks for every hour volunteered that go towards your student's Pay-To-Play fee.

in the top 10 percent for gains in proficiency, or if high schools, in the top 10 percent in graduation rates. Finally, High Progress Schools of Honor must have an Annual Measurable Objectives grade of C or higher and have met or exceeded Ohio's value-added measure for the last three years.

As an incentive to help close achievement gaps in Ohio, the Ohio Department of Education developed the Schools of Honor program to identify, recognize and highlight schools that are making substantial progress in ensuring high achievement in reading and math for all students, many from economically disadvantaged homes.

Dr. Richard A. Ross, Superintendent of Public Instruction for the state, said in a letter to former Principal Bob Curtin that Hayes is "an outstanding example of what is possible when students, educators, parents and community members work together believing that all students can succeed."

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Lakewood Sports

Lakewood Soccer Association Ends Record Season

by Ted Nagel

The Lakewood Soccer Association has ended another great fall season of soccer with record numbers in their recreational Saturday Soccer program, as well as some very impressive results for many of their Travel Soccer teams. Before getting into the details of the season, here is a quick summary about Lakewood Soccer Association (LSA).

LSA is a non-profit, volunteer soccer program that has provided various levels of soccer to the community for the past 31 years. Our mission is to provide the youth of Lakewood with the benefits and enjoyment of a team sport that develops soccer players through quality instruction while promoting sportsmanship, teamwork and physical activity. Chartered in 1982, LSA offers a recreational soccer program for kids between the ages of 4 ½ and 14. The Saturday Soccer Program is played in Memorial Park in the Metro Parks with volunteers who organize the games, set up the goals, line the fields and even sell donuts. Parents coach the teams and receive training from the Lakewood High School Boys Coaches, Andy Toth and Atilla Nagy. Coach Atilla Nagy is also the LSA Director of Coaching.

Many kids, after catching the soccer bug, look for something more challenging than recreational soccer and LSA offers both a boys and girls Travel Soccer Program. This program



Boys U13 Division B Runners up.

is for kids from ages 7-14 who show a little more talent and hustle and want to move up to the next level of local soccer challenge. The coaches for this program are all certified by the Ohio Youth Soccer Association North or OYSAN. They are generally former players or coaches who have the drive and talent to take the kids to the next level. Beyond the team coaches however, all of the travel players learn from Coach Toth and Coach Nagy at weekly "footskills" training. Footskills are a unique training event in the sport of soccer in which the kids learn their technical craft as well as some of the

artistry of the game. Footskills are also offered to the Saturday Soccer kids and LSA offers weekly goalie training sessions as well.

LSA started this season with its biggest year ever! The Saturday Soccer program had 1175 kids register! That meant that every Saturday, there were 45 teams and 585 players playing soccer in the Metro Parks and enjoying the game of soccer. Families come to cheer them on and win or lose, generally everyone leaves happy. LSA also develops its own referees primarily using the older Travel Program players who receive referee training at the



beginning of every season. It's a great way for the kids to develop leadership skills, earn a little extra money and also learn more about the game enforcing the rules of soccer.

The Travel Program also hit record numbers with 481 registrations, 24 teams and 260 players. Most teams had solid records but these five teams either won or were finalists (2nd place) within their Divisions: U9 D-Division Girls, Champs, coached by Amanda Marcum and managed by Kathy Doren; U11B-Division Girls, Finalists, coached by Ted Nagel and managed by Jamina Cook; U13 C-Division Girls, Finalists, coached by Jim Croniger; U14 B-Division Girls, Champs, coached by Simon Mastroianni and managed by Brenda Whalen; and finally the U11 E-Division Boys, Finalists, coached by Arpad Bereczky, Asst. Coach Tim Peck and managed by Michael Artbauer.

In the end-of-season Brunswick Tournament, which is one of the premiere soccer tournaments in the area, LSA entered 14 teams, of which 9 had winning records and 6 teams made it to the finals of their divisions. The teams in the finals were U9 Girls (Coach Dave Bartos), U11 Girls (Coach Ted Nagel), U14 Girls (Coach Simon Mastroianni), U11 Boys (Coach Atilla Nagy), U13 Boys (Coach Arpad Bereczky), and U14 Boys (Coach Atilla Nagy). Special congratulations to U14 Boys who won the Gold Division Final! The "Players of the Match" for the finalist teams were: U11 Girls Georgia Popovic-Ita, U14 Girls Maya Costanzo, U11 Boys Joey Hirzel, U13 Boys Joey Spellacy and U14 Boys Jack Hueter.

So to wrap it up, the LSA Board would like to thank all of the kids, parents, coaches, managers and the many other volunteers who make this such a great organization. A special thanks goes to Scott Suttell and Maria Pauer, the outgoing President and Vice-president respectively. And a hearty congratulations to the newly elected Executive Committee President Matt McIntyre, Vice-president Ted Nagel, Treasurer John Hueter and Secretary Nicole Long. A reminder that Soccer Registration Opens January 15th! Go to <http://lakewood-soccer.com> to check us out and for information on how to register.

Ted Nagel moved here with his wife (who grew up in Lakewood) and family after retiring from the Army. He volunteers in the community primarily with sports but also through the Lakewood Congregational Church.

Be In Tune For The Holidays

by Jessica Newell

Presents bought and wrapped? Check. Holiday menu planned? Check. Travel plans and extra beds made? Check. Piano tuned?

With all the hustle and bustle of the holidays coming up, it's easy to forget about getting a piano tuned. Especially if it's not something one generally pays attention to during the year. "People anticipate the arrival of family members, some of whom play, or some of whom simply want to hear you play," said Greg. "Any of the holidays, specifically Christmas and Easter, are big draws for people tuning pianos."

Luckily, with just an hour of time, Greg Newell, of Greg's Piano Forte, can help get your instrument all tuned up for when grandma comes to visit. He has been operating his business in Lakewood for 30 years. Greg grew up around the piano and transitioned his love of music into his current career.

Keeping a piano in good shape requires maintenance. Although it

is both a musical instrument and a decorative piece of furniture, it needs care and upkeep like anything else. "A piano fluctuates from changes in both temperature and humidity," Greg explained. This can cause a piano to easily go out of tune. "Tuning is a little like putting gas in a car. If you're not driving the car there is no reason to put gas in the tank," Greg said. However, he stressed that going too long without the proper attention can be more harmful for the instrument and, as a result, more of a burden on your bank account.

"If a piano is let go for more than 5 years or so without tuning, it is entirely likely that it will require a greater deal of effort to get it back into tune when you do decide to play it again."

Tuning isn't the only kind of attention pianos need. While instrument repair of any kind can get expensive quickly, it's important to remember that the longer it takes to fix, the more compounded a problem can become.

Greg's skills don't only include tuning. The business also repairs, rebuilds, refinishes, redesigns and moves pianos. "Tuning and repair is roughly one-third of our business. The other is made up mostly of shop work and moving."

The holidays bring an uptick in retail and services, including instrument repair. Greg says that many people will get pianos tuned or repaired for their family members as holiday gifts.

Since he mostly visits people's homes to do tunings, Greg gets to interact with a large amount of music-loving people in the Greater Cleveland area. "Do I enjoy working with my clients? Absolutely. It's probably one of the highlights of my career. I get to meet some really interesting people, many of them I would consider friends as well as clients!"

"Our appointments fill up fast this time of year," Greg says. To schedule an appointment with Greg, call (216) 226-3791.

Show a copy of this article before December 31st and receive \$5 off a holiday tuning!

Jessica is a lifetime resident of Lakewood and 2009 graduate of Lakewood High School. Currently, Jessica attends Cleveland State University and is working towards B.A. in Journalism and Promotional Communication, with a focus on Public Relations. She is a former intern at LakewoodAlive.

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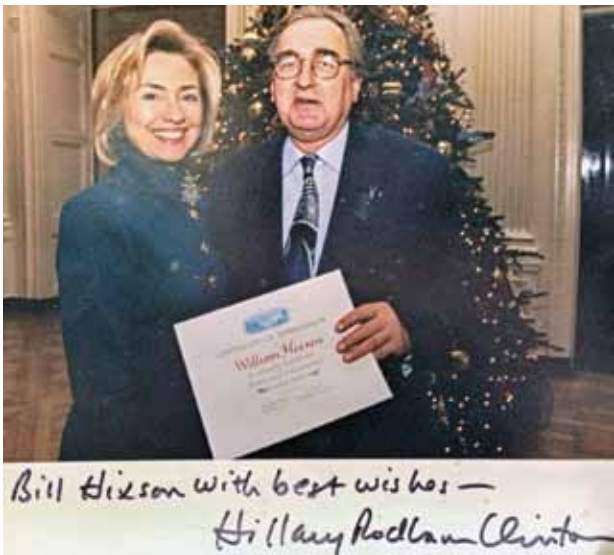
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Lakewood Business

Bill Hixson Is Mr. Christmas

by Debra O'Bryan

We are so lucky to have Bill Hixson in Lakewood. Entrepreneur, antique collector, story teller, greenhouse



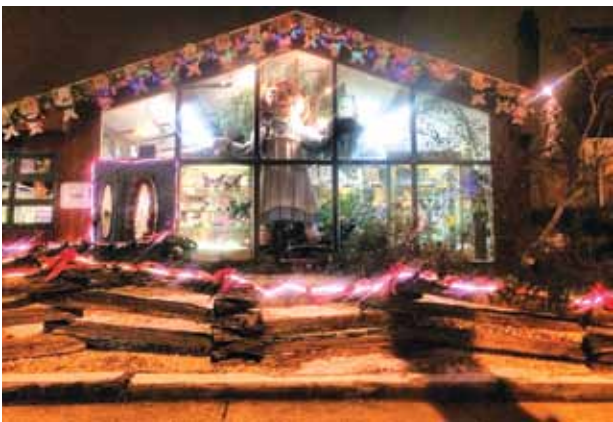
First Lady Hillary Clinton presents Bill with a commendation for his many years of service to the White House.

grower, professor, florist, importer, manufacturer, and designer/artist. He started Hixson's Flower Barn in 1959 and has enchanted visitors ever since. I remember being about four years old when I first got a glimpse of the colossal Raggedy Ann doll in the mid 60's that has been on view in the front window. My mother took me in to see her up close and it became one our favorite spots to visit whenever we went strolling down Detroit Avenue. Easter with over 10,000 eggs on display, the fresh and dried flowers that make the barn smell so wonderful, along with the unique basket fillers made Hixson's a must go to every year. Summertime was a special treat with the volcanic ice cream with flaming sugar cubes, served in the once beautiful greenhouse that was covered in stained glass windows that Bill had picked up

throughout the years as people were discarding them for more modern tastes. First-time visitors often remarked that Hixson's is like a museum. In a way it is, every nook of every room is packed with treasures, many from Bill's personal collections which he has accrued through the years. In this year's Christmas room there is a turn of the century sleigh from Vermont that came from a store he had up there, "It was a wonderful place, you could fish from the upper level over a river!" Bill says, "We don't sell one thing people need, it's about want and feelings." I agree, the barn always brings back warm memories and conjures good feelings. "All I ever wanted was a happy store with happy employees", says Bill.

Bill started teaching flower arranging as a young man when he took over for a former instructor right out of high school. His passion for horticulture grew as a student at West Tech where he joined various horticulture and naturalist clubs. He went on to work for Knoble Florist, and soon opened his own shop along with the Knoble-Hixson School Of Floral Design. In 1950 he

went into the service, but he continued to teach when he came home on furloughs. Always looking to improve his craft, one day he attended a lecture on a new product that was being developed. It was orange and covered in chicken wire to support plant stems. The inventor, Vernon Smiters, asked Bill what he thought about his product, Bill replied, "Should I compliment you or tell you the truth? It should be green and more dense." Vernon took Bill up on his suggestions and OASIS was developed. OASIS is a product used all over the world today in flower arranging. Bill was instrumental in introducing OASIS all over the country and to Europe and Japan, which helped to rapidly grow his school. He has lectured and taught in every state except Alaska.



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with two girls to learn from Mr. Hixson. After she returned to Japan she wrote that she had more students for him. "We have 20 now," she wrote in her first letter-- weeks later, "We have 30," and then 60 students all wanting to learn from Bill. "When are you coming?" she pleaded. He has gone to Kowai every year for a month since 1964 to teach floral design. He credits Japan in making him a better teacher, "They question why it is done, not just how," he explained. Although he loves all of the holidays, Christmas is his favorite time of year. Bill has been designing original ornaments with the help of a few third and fourth generation glass-blowing families who still do things the Old World way in Lauscha Germany for many decades now. These ornaments are still handmade one at a time, silver lined and hand painted. Each is truly a work of art. Along with every ornament is a legend about its meaning. With his right hand gal, Eunice Sowiak, who has been with him since the start, her ever present chopsticks holding her long hair in a graceful bun atop her head, they will find the ornament you're looking for. Out of

continued on page 14



Bill giving First Lady Laura Bush his designed ornament of Santa Claus on one side and Mrs. Claus on the back. Legend: "Behind every good man is a great woman."

During World War II, a woman who was teaching English in a Christian school in Japan came to the U.S.

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Light Up Lakewood



photo by Craig Lovejoy, Low Level Aerial Photography



photo by Jim O'Bryan



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Light Up Lakewood





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Gift Guide

Bill Hixson Is Mr. Christmas

continued from page 11

thousands to choose from, you'll find yourself going back again and again. Mr. Christmas will gladly sign ornaments for you. For meanings behind any ornament, Bill Hixson is the man to ask. He is the keeper of Christmas lore.

At 85 years young, I find it amazing that Bill Hixson still does the White House Christmas decorating. He started during the Reagan Administration when a former student, Nancy Clarke, the White House floral designer asked Bill to come help with state dinners. He has designed arrangements for Inaugurations, Inaugural Balls and state dinners for Queen Elizabeth, Mikhail Gorbachev, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, General Schwarzkopf, The Emperor of Japan, and many others. With over 32 years of Christmas at the White House, Bill has a few stories to tell, to say the least. His work starts in March to get ready for the trip. The First Lady along with the social secretary, head usher and interior designer for the White House collaborate on a theme. The First lady always has the final say on what will be done. He is then consulted on implementing the plan, trouble-shooting and overseeing the volunteers.

One year during the Reagan Administration, there were 11,000

paper snowflakes made by children from all over the country, they were made during the "Just Say No" to drugs campaign. After painstakingly adhering the flakes to many trees, he had come back the next day to find them removed. Bill consulted with the interior designer who thought they had clashed with rest of the decorations. He then responded, "I don't care if I get fired right now, but those children should not be disappointed." Nancy Reagan got wind of the dispute and the snowflakes were returned to the trees.

Among his favorite memories are times spent with both of the Bush administrations. "One year as we were finishing decorating the Cross Hall with ten trees, the only thing left was to cover them in fake snow. Barbara Bush loved masses of snow to create a Winter Wonderland effect. I was under a cherry picker when one of the volunteers dumped a full box of snow on me. I was completely covered head to toe. Well... it was on! A full-blown snow fight in the middle of the White House!" Barbara came downstairs to see what the ruckus was all about and yelled to me, "Bill Hixson, what is going on down here?" I apologized for our behavior, but after a minute, she said, "Do not to stop, please continue!" and went upstairs to grab the grandchildren. "We all had so much fun that day, I have photos of Barbara and

the grandchildren chasing each other."

During the George W. Bush administration, Hixson continues, a voice came calling out: "Bill, Bill, I love the heart with 'Merry Christmas' on one side and 'Believe' on the other that you are using on the tree." It was Laura Bush, Hixson says, "and we continued to talk for a time." Bill said that at one point he told her, "It was not President Reagan, President Bush, her father-in-law, President Clinton or her husband who brought forward motion to this country, it was me." After a minute or two, Laura asked why he would make that claim. "I answered that I had hidden a pickle, pig and frog glass ornament on the Blue Room tree every year." Laura wanting to know the meaning behind the ornaments, and Bill explained that the pig will root up fortune, the frog can only jump forward, and the pickle offers a promise of good luck. Laura thanked him, and said from that day forth they would continue the tradition and thanked him for the sweet conversation.

Bill also brought "forward motion" to the space program. His brother Wiley worked as an electrical engineer for NASA. Seems there was a problem with getting the Apollo Monkey secured to his little seat. Well, Wiley called Bill and Bill had the answer, he suggested and supplied the

mesh, webbing and special tape that was used to protect the little guy in the space program. This time it was more like "upward motion."

Bill told me he was given a Chinese curse, "May you have an interesting life." Bill sees it as a blessing. "God gives you what he wants, when he wants to, and how long he wants it. I have no plans to retire, I would die."

Bill told me he had no regrets, other than he wished he had held on to the Victorian Cottage, the first house built by Mathew Hall, son of settler Joseph C. Hall during the Civil War. "It's just a shame the city couldn't save it. Progress is not always better."

If you were wondering about the Raggedy Ann, she was hand-crafted by Susan Luehr, a former staff member when she was pregnant. She is approximately 20 feet tall and has lovingly been cared for for almost 50 years. She has received a new body, pinafore, and several hair dye jobs. Bill is hoping to get her new feet this year.

Stop and spend some time with Bill this holiday season or any time.



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Wellness Watch

Lakewood, A Half-Century Ago: The Christmas Walk...

by Gary Rice

I'm not sure if there's any more peaceful time known to humankind than the quiet walk to church on Christmas Eve that Mom and I took each year. We walked down to church to join Dad, who was already there, directing the youth choir.

As walks go, it wasn't a very long one; just down Rosewood Avenue, across Detroit Avenue, and over to the Lakewood United Methodist Church. In the span of a lifetime, those walks generally only took about fifteen or twenty minutes. More often than not, there was simply the quiet crunching of our metal-strapover gumboots on the crystalline snow that shown like shimmering diamonds in the glow of those old frost-covered streetlamps; having their light interspersed by the shadows cast from those huge tree-lawn elms, arching ever Heavenward. The elms' V-like giant branches formed a natural cathedral of wonderment. Rosewood itself took on a surreal, holy, other-worldly quality, as childhood imaginations took flight on that Sacred Night of nights.

Sometimes too, we would be joined by neighbors on our pilgrimage down that street. Sometimes, we would all sing carols together. At the intersection of Detroit, some of those neighbors would turn left, for destinations like St. James, or Trinity Lutheran. Others stayed with us, and made the trip across the street to Lakewood Methodist. Sometimes, we walked in the footprints of others. Sometimes, especially with us kids, we made new pathways of our own, and not always on the sidewalks,

of course. The mounds of snow at the ends of the driveways became our own little mountain range to conquer. All too often, by the time we arrived at church, we had wet trouser legs well above the height of our 8 inch gumboots, and we could have cared less too. Sometimes, we lost our balance, and ended up fidgeting through our beautiful, but always extra-long church services, with very soggy, itchy, wet, cold behinds.

Such was Lakewood life, on that timeless Holy Night.

Us kids did not always understand the "Glorias" and "Hallelujahs" back then either. We retained very little of those serious sermons and Scripture readings, but there were those bits and pieces...

Bits and pieces? Oh yeah....

I remember very few toys that I ever received for Christmas, but I do remember those bits and pieces...something about a Savior being born this day in the City of David...something else about peace on earth, and goodwill, and these remembrances cause me to wonder sometimes...

Is our world...is Lakewood, for example, still that loving place where people of faith can joyfully walk down a street on Christmas Eve, and then each proceed to their own house of worship? Do people even WALK down a street on Christmas Eve anymore, particularly on that timeless journey to the church of their choice? Would they even recognize their childhood church if they decided to return to it? For that matter, is their church even functioning anymore? For many in Lakewood, that answer would unfortunately be "no"...and for those who still make that Christmas walk, do they continue to speak with others on their way, or do they simply and hurriedly shuffle along, lost in their own private thoughts? Has "church" simply become an automatic tradition, or some guilt-inspired historic obligation for

many? I surely hope not.
The last time the neighbors and I tried old-fashioned street caroling on our own street, for example, almost no one came to their doors to listen...Talk about your tree falling in the forest? Even the elms are long gone, as soon will be the ash trees that replaced them. Elm disease and ash borers insured that future arboreal tree-lawn canopies above our streets will be long in coming, if ever again.

...and yet....still...What is so different, really, between now... and my halcyon memories of Lakewood's Christmas Eve, a half-century ago? Kids still play in those snow drifts on the way to church. That Sacred Night is no less so, and the message that night brings continues to be a timeless offer of hope and renewal. Back then, as now, our youngsters continue to learn that we need to treat EVERYONE with peace and love.

That message was once very much in our hearts, as we walked within the natural elm-covered cathedral that was Rosewood Avenue.

May it ever remain so.
Merry Christmas, from our home...to yours!



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Best Day Ever



photo by Jim O'Bryan

Brinich/Bratz Wedding

by Jim O'Bryan

November 30th saw Troy Wayne Bratz wed his long-time girlfriend Margaret Brinich. Margaret is a life long Lakewood resident, and Editor-In-Chief of the Lakewood Observer. They have been dating for 5 years and can be seen around town at LEAF, of which she's a member and past president as well as at events with Birdtown Crossfit. The site of the wedding and reception was the Templar Motor Car Building (aka Screw Factory). The reception was just amazing, wonderfully catered by Lakewood's Gatherings Kitchen on Madison Avenue. The who's who of society were there. But as I was a guest, I had no camera, but had my phone! However, Heidi Finniff, Branch Manager of First Federal of Lakewood, sent in a photo of these belles of the ball! *Bottom right photo, left to right; Joanna Brell, Christine Cowen, Heidi Finniff.*

LEAF Holiday Market Set For December 10th

by Annie Stahlheber

LEAF Community's last market of the year is scheduled for December 10th, 2013 at Garfield Middle School (13114 Detroit Ave), from 5:30 to 8:00 pm. Everyone is welcome to shop at this event, which includes a wonderful collection of vendors featuring locally grown, handcrafted and homemade gifts and goodies.

Some may be surprised that local produce is still available in December. Those who pre-ordered a holiday produce shares through City Fresh, can pick up shares at this event. If not, there will be additional local produce vendors selling seasonal items holiday cooking and baking needs. Several other vendors will have holiday baked goods, decorations, and gifts. See the list of vendors, which is growing daily, below.

LEAF Community is also featuring their local foods cookbook, LEAF Cooks: Recipes from the Community. This cookbook is a compilation of reci-

pes utilizing ingredients available in the Ohio region, and is organized by season. LEAF Community Gardeners will have the opportunity to renew their garden plots for the 2014 season. Funds raised from this event, and through the sales of the LEAF cookbook help fund a Farm to School/Sustainable Agriculture grant for schools in Lakewood. LEAF Community encourages you to shop local this holiday season, and hopes to see you at the market.

Vendors registered (subject to change): Plant Kingdom, Maggie's Farm, Goody 2 Shoes Bakery, Morki's Wares n' Such, Market Connect, St. Croix Farms, Blue Pike Farm, Fallen Angel, Blaze Gourmet, Carey's Crafty Creations, Three Sister's Urban Garden, Cleveland Crops, The Grain Man, Chris Stark, ArcAncient, Crystal Luli, Rust Belt Chic Press/Belt Magazine, STEM Handmade Soaps, Wood Crafts by Jim, City Love, Evan's Bibelots, Sweet Bean, Jen Davis Photography



photo by Jim O'Bryan



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Lakewood Residents

Grace Avenue: Lessons to Be Learned

by Colleen Cotter

Lakewood is a diverse city which benefits from a vibrant residential community closely connected to a vibrant commercial community. For Lakewood to continue to be such a remarkable place to live and do business, the city must be willing to fully engage residents in the processes of commercial development and must be willing to hold developers accountable for the promises they make in exchange for permissions they receive. Only under those conditions will the balance between commercial and residential be appropriately maintained.

Unfortunately, the new Discount Drug Mart at the corner of Detroit and Grace is evidence that under Director of Development Dru Siley's leadership the broader interests of Lakewood are being pushed aside in order to chase short-term commercial development.

In asking for conditional use of residential property for accessory parking, Drug Mart made promises about how they would use that residential property. The city granted them conditional use. Now, every day, Drug Mart breaks those promises. The city is taking no action to hold them accountable and the residents are left unsupported,



One of several trucks that enters and exits the Grace Avenue entrance every day.

are not going to be on Grace Road, we decided to keep those inside the lot and that's something that can be enforced."

Director of Development Dru Siley, who also serves as the Secretary to the Planning Commission, lauded

Grace Avenue And DDM Site Timeline

The first news:

- 9/11 - **Drug Mart** purchases the former Ganley site and the apartment building.
- 9/11 – **Drug Mart** presents preliminary plans for its development to the Architectural Board of Review.
- 3/12 - **Residents** hear from neighbors in the apartment building that the building had been sold, that it would be torn down for a Drug Mart, and that they had been served with eviction notices.
- 3/12 - **Residents** ask Councilwoman Mary Louise Madigan on numerous occasions about the apartment building. She informed residents that she had spoken with Director of Development Dru Siley who reported that these were "just rumors."
- 4/12 – **Grace residents** are finally told about Drug Mart's plans.
- First Planning Commission Meeting, 6/7/12**
- 6/6/12, 3:17 pm: Dru Siley sends residents revised plans.
Architectural Board of Review Meeting, 6/14/12
- 6/13, 4:42 pm: Dru Siley sends residents revised plans.
Second Planning Commission Meeting, 7/5/12
- 7/3/12, 7:49 pm: Dru Siley sends residents revised plans. July 4 is a holiday.
Dru Siley lauds Drug Mart's promise that trucks would never use the Grace or Cohassett entrances.
The Planning Commission votes against allowing commercial parking on two of the three residential lots at issue.
Request for Rehearing
- 7/9/12: Councilwoman Madigan emails: "I will ask about the next steps and keep you posted."
- 7/13/12: Drug Mart submits their "request for a rehearing".
- 7/19/12: Councilwoman Madigan emails: "I haven't learned anything about DDM's next steps. Dru and I talked Monday [July 16] and will likely talk again today or tomorrow."
- 7/23/12: Dru Siley informs residents via email that Drug Mart had appealed the decision.
- 7/24/12: Dru Siley sends the actual rehearing request letters.
Third Planning Commission Meeting, 8/2/12
- 7/31/12: Neighbor submits a legal memo to the city, requesting that it be provided to the PC that day. But instead, Dru Siley hands it to the PC members at the PC pre-meeting.
Planning Commission grants rehearing request
DDM dismisses Grace residents' concerns that trucks will drive on Grace.
DDM states that no trucks will ever use the Grace or Cohassett entrances.
Mayor Summers speaks in support of Drug Mart.
Planning Commission reverses its 7/5 decision, granting lot split and consolidation and conditional use of the residential properties for parking.

Trucks, 6/3/13 to present

- Multiple semis and other trucks make deliveries each day to DDM, using the Grace Avenue entrance to both enter and exit the parking lot.
- Residents call/email the city to complain about the trucks, but get no response.
- Committee of the Whole, 9/30/13**
- City Council President Brian Powers calls a Committee of the Whole meeting to address resident concerns.
- 30 Grace residents attend the City Council Committee of the Whole. They present a series of photos of trucks entering and exiting on Grace.
- Drug Mart offers no explanation for the trucks.
- Drug Mart announces it will conduct a traffic study.
- Mayor Summers states that after the traffic study he will convene a meeting of neighbors to discuss. No meeting has occurred.

Planning Commission Meeting, 12/5/13

- Drug Mart presents its traffic study.
- Residents' comments are limited to 3 minutes each. Residents were not made aware of this rule change in advance.
- Mayor Summers states that use of the Drug Mart exit on Detroit is not safe for trucks to use. Neither he nor Dru Siley raised this issue at any Planning Commission meetings. Mayor Summers fails to address what distinguishes Drug Mart from the many other locations where trucks enter and exit off Detroit, including Garfield Middle School across the street from Drug Mart.
- Residents are not permitted to respond to Mayor Summers' assertions.
- Planning Commission declines to take any steps to enforce the promises made under oath.

forced to live with the consequences.

Since the spring of 2012 a group of residents have tried to engage with the city regarding development of the new Drug Mart. We were never against development on the commercial site, nor against this particular store. Our concerns were that the store was out of scale and would bring an unacceptable level of traffic, lights, noise and trucks to the residential area. We wanted the commercial site to stay on commercial property and not encroach on residential property. We wanted the fully-occupied apartment building to remain: it provided affordable homes for neighbors and was a buffer between commercial Detroit and the single family homes on Grace.

We had a reasonable position. We thought this process would be transparent and inclusive, and that those involved would be true to their word. Unfortunately, that is not what transpired.

In Drug Mart's effort to obtain permission from Lakewood's Planning Commission to use residential property for parking, Drug Mart assured the Planning Commission that no trucks would use the entrance on Grace. Period.

This was a key issue for residents because the Grace entrance is right next to and across the street from homes. Keeping trucks off Grace would reduce the impact of the development on the neighborhood. Drug Mart assured the Planning Commission they had changed their plans in order to address these concerns. Drug Mart's statements were unequivocal. Drug Mart's Architect Kurt Schmitz testified 6 times on the record at two different Planning Commission meetings that trucks would never use the Grace or Cohassett entrances. For example, he stated:

"Limit truck traffic to Detroit. We've done it. All of our truck traffic comes in here, goes out, backs into the loading dock and goes back out Detroit. We've eliminated all truck traffic off Cohassett and Grace."

Later Mr. Schmitz dismissed residents' concerns about trucks, stating that:

"[T]he trucks

the changes Drug Mart made to their plans in response to residents' concerns. He reminded the Planning Commission that "[a]ll of the traffic circulation for trucks [would be] in and out of Detroit."

This promise was even specifically referenced by Planning Commission Vice Chairperson Mary Cierebiej. Just before she voted in favor of Drug Mart's request to split and consolidate a corner of residential property and use that corner (with two other lots) for parking, Ms. Cierebiej linked Drug Mart's need for that property to their plan to have truck traffic exclusively use the Detroit entrance. She stated that "the triangle makes it possible for traffic and truck traffic to move on and off of Detroit itself."

Drug Mart got its conditional use, but then broke its promise.

Since the store opened in June trucks of all sizes enter and exit the Drug Mart lot daily from the Grace entrance. The residents approached Mayor Summers and Mr. Siley to ask for help in getting Drug Mart to live up to its side of the bargain. Mayor Summers' and Mr. Siley's response was that the Planning Commission did not explicitly include this condition in its decision, and therefore they can do nothing.

Their position seems to be that a developer can promise anything to the Planning Commission to get what they want even if they have no intention of following through on that promise, because the city will not hold them accountable. Without the city's support, residents are forced to live with the consequences of those broken promises.

Unfortunately, this was not our first experience of being marginalized by Mr. Siley in this process. Throughout, we were the outsiders – not knowing what was going on or what

continued on page 21



Another of the trucks using the Grace Avenue entrance, in spite of Drug Mart's promises.

Lakewood Cares



Giving Back on "Giving Tuesday"

by Angela Smith

Lakewood Hospital Foundation trustees kicked off “Giving Tuesday” by making financial donations to the foundation in support of Lakewood Hospital.

“Giving Tuesday” is a day of philanthropy following Black Friday and Cyber Monday. This national movement calls for everyone – businesses, families and individuals – to find at least one way to give back to their community.

In addition to financial contributions, the Lakewood Hospital Foundation trustees also collected over 100 new mittens, hats and scarves for the students of Lakewood’s Harrison Elementary School.

“We are happy to give back to the community. Many of the students are without, so it is especially touching to warm their hands, heads and hearts,” says Ken Haber, President of Lakewood Hospital Foundation.

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by Lisa Weeast

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Lakewood Cares

This Holiday Season Let’s Care For Everyone That Enters Our Lives, And Some That Don’t

by Debra O’Bryan

While most of us are warm and happy in our homes this holiday season, there are some in our community who are not. Lakewood offers little refuge for the homeless on our streets. Yes, we have homeless people in Lakewood. You see them and maybe choose to ignore them, but please open your heart this season. The **Lakewood Community Services Center, 14230 Madison Avenue** helps with food and services and is always in need of donations, this time of year especially. On your own, instead of looking the other way, offer much needed blankets, socks, and coats to someone who looks cold. A hot meal or a cup of coffee could save them. Please don't forget about our furry friends as well. Do not leave your pets outside when temperatures drop below freezing, water dishes freeze and all sentient beings require more food during the cold. Keep walks shorter when the temps dip, paws freeze quickly. Look out for your neighbors and their pet's as well, we are after all a community. Show your love Lakewood.



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The Very Rev. Tracey Lind, preaching

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Lakewood Living

Council Passes A Moratorium On E-Cigarettes

continued from page 4

did not require any funds from the city and just showed support for LEEDCo's mission. With that he said they could put it to a vote and see where it goes from there.

Council voted in favor of the resolution 6-1.

Mayor Summers then asked Council to pass a resolution showing their strong opposition to Substitute House Bill 5. The statehouse has been working at great length to overhaul the entire tax system so that there is only one for the entire state, at all levels. Lakewood has been opposed to this from the beginning and has been closely monitoring the development of House Bill 5 (SB 5). Mayor Summers says that HB 5 has come along way since its introduction and many improvements have been made. However, he said that with the substituted version that has been

introduced, some members of the House have sought to get rid of home-rule, which is a guarantee of the Ohio Constitution.

Home-rule allows municipalities to handle their own taxation process. This allows them more control over auditing local returns which helps them make sure people are paying their fair share, while at the same time making sure they are not paying too much. This also gives the city the freedom to pursue those who have neglected to pay their taxes. The substitute version of HB 5 would take these tools way from all local municipalities in the state and give them to a large centralized bureaucracy which would attempt to do this for the entire state. Mayor Summers fears this that this will not happen properly, to the detriment to Lakewood, and many other Ohio cities.

Council passed the resolution

unanimously.

Law Director, Kevin Butler, then asked Council to pass a resolution putting a moratorium on the sales of e-cigarettes and other alternative nicotine products. The moratorium will only be enforceable on businesses that are expanding or opening anew. This is being done while the Ohio General Assembly considers legislation which would regulate the sale of these devices, as they are seen to be attractive to youths since they offer candy flavorings.

Council referred the ordinance to the Public Safety Committee for discussion.

Next Director of Public Works, Joe Beno, asked Council to pass an emergency resolution that would allow them to conduct emergency sewer repairs. A storm sewer line that runs from Hilliard to Madison underneath the Harding Middle School baseball field has shown

some degradation. Over the summer a few tiles in the bottom began to show they were out of place, but when checked recently it was obvious that they had completely broken and fallen down. The sewer was originally scheduled to be replaced next summer with a \$125,000 project that would reroute it to follow the streets (Hilliard, Woodward, and Madison) but if this repair is made now they would no longer have to do that replacement and would be able to do it for only \$30,000. Beno is requesting this resolution because as an emergency construction project they plan to use a different contractor then one of their approved emergency contractors. The reason they have decided to go with a different contractor is because this one would be able to fix the pipe from inside the pipe rather than the traditional contractors that would dig a 20 foot deep 50 foot long hole across Madison. Although Lakewood has never used this contractor before, the new City Engineer has had lots of experience with them.

Grace Avenue: Lessons to Be Learned

continued from page 18

the rules were. We were often given misinformation.

At our request, Councilwoman Mary Louise Madigan went to Mr. Siley several times for information and passed his responses on to us. Unfortunately, the information Ms. Madigan brought back to us was too often incorrect and misleading.

In spring 2012 we approached Ms. Madigan when we heard that Drug Mart wanted to raze the apartment building and build a new store on the old Ganley site. We asked if this was true. She talked to Mr. Siley and passed on his response: "It was just a rumor." But it wasn't a rumor. Drug Mart had purchased the apartment building and the old Ganley site in September 2011. They had hired an architect and presented preliminary plans to the city. Mr. Siley knew about these plans for months. Yet when asked directly about it, Mr. Siley told us (through Ms. Madigan) that it was "just a rumor."

This marginalization of the residents went on throughout the process. Mr. Siley consistently gave us Drug Mart's revised plans 24 hours before meetings, giving us little time to review and respond.

Even Planning Commission members complained about last minute materials. We tried to be responsive to this concern. For the third and decisive Planning Commission meeting, a neighbor gave Mr. Siley's office a legal memo 2 days prior to the meeting to

be forwarded to Planning Commission members in advance. But instead, Mr. Siley distributed the memo at the meeting, making it virtually impossible for them to consider it for their decision.

After the Planning Commission initially denied Drug Mart's request for conditional use, we reached out again to Ms. Madigan for information regarding any new developments. On July 9, 2012 she said she would "keep [us] posted." On July 19 she emailed: "I haven't learned anything about DDM's next steps. Dru and I talked Monday [July 16] and will likely talk again today or tomorrow."

But in fact, there was news. On July 13, six days earlier, Drug Mart had filed an appeal with Mr. Siley. In spite of our earlier inquiries, we were not told of this until July 23. We had been to multiple meetings. We had exhibited our interest and we had a lot invested in this. Yet, news of this appeal was withheld from us for 10 days. This time, Drug Mart would prevail.

When faced with a group of engaged citizens who wanted to work with the city to improve Lakewood, city officials marginalized us, ignored us, misled us.

In order for future development to benefit all of Lakewood, Mr. Siley's way of doing business must change. Residents must receive straight answers to direct questions. Developers must be held accountable for the promises they make.

Mr. Siley's job is to bring busi-

ness to Lakewood. Lakewood of course needs businesses, so his is an important job. The problem is that he also controls the processes around approval of commercial development. He controls the content and timing of the information residents receive. He controls what information the Planning Commission receives and when. He advises the various bodies that are charged with considering, approving or denying these projects. He advises them about conditions they can and should place on their approval. Yet when Drug Mart repeated six times a promise about trucks, a promise that appeared to be key for the support of at least one Planning Commission member, Mr. Siley's position is that because the Planning Commission did not include the truck issue in their order, he is powerless to do anything about it.

The commission members are volunteers and need professional advice. But advice from someone who has his own agenda is an inherent conflict.

This system is not working for Lakewood. We deserve better. We need better.

Colleen M. Cotter is a resident of Lakewood.

Councilman Juris said that although he knew this was an emergency and had to be taken care of, he wanted to know what the City loses by not doing the full pipe replacement and rerouting it to follow the streets. Director Beno said that they actually lose nothing. The reason they were going to do it the other way is because none of the contractors they had previously talked to thought anyone would actually fix the old pipe from inside so it was determined to be necessary to reroute the pipe. Since a contractor was found who would fix it from inside, it is no longer necessary to reroute the pipe.

After a thorough discussion between Council and Director Beno, with Council feeling satisfied that their questions were answered, they passed the resolution.

Coming to the end of the agenda items, Council President Powers adjourned the meeting at 8:48 P.M.

Chris Bindel has been a Lakewood resident his entire life and has been covering the Council meetings for the LO since March of 2009. He is a Mayoral appointee to the Citizens Advisory Committee, as well as a member of Pillars of Lakewood and president of Eaters of Lakewood.

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Lakewood Is Art

Beck Youth Theater Continues 65th Anniversary With Criminally Hilarious Play, "Law & Order: Fairy Tale Unit" Parodies Popular Television Show

by Kathleen Caffrey

Beck Center Youth Theater presents "Law & Order: Fairy Tale Unit" in the Studio Theater December 13-15 and 20-22, 2013. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and 3 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Tickets are now on sale. Seating in the Studio Theater is limited and tickets for youth theater's holiday shows sell quickly.

In the fairy tale criminal justice system, the characters from fairy tales and nursery rhymes are represented by two separate yet equally ridiculous groups: the fairy tale police who investigate fairy tale crime, and the fairy tale district attorneys who prosecute the fairy tale

offenders. These are their stories. This popular play is written by Jonathan Rand and directed by Beck Center's Associate Director of Outreach Education and theater instructor Rachel Spence.

"It is an absolute blast directing these 31 students," remarked Spence. "The kids really understand the material and are having fun with the parody style." Spence has cast a variety of Beck Center students – actors, artists, dancers, and singers – who are currently enrolled in arts education classes. "Law & Order: Fairy Tale Unit" features a talented cast of 31 young actors ages 6 to 12 who have all joined together to present this hilarious spoof under Spence's creative direction. "Even

if you've never seen any 'Law and Order' episodes, you will still have a great time."

Beck Center's Youth Theater program, considered the longest continually-running youth theater program in the country, is celebrating its 65th season. "Law & Order," the second of four productions this season, will be followed by Beck Teen Theater's "The Children's Hour," February 21-March 2, 2014, and the popular "The Wizard of Oz," May 9-18, 2014.

Tickets are \$10 for children and \$12 for adults and may be purchased online at beckcenter.org or by calling 216.521.2540 x10. Beck Center is located at 17801 Detroit Avenue in Lakewood.

Free onsite parking is available. This production of "Law & Order: Fairy Tale Unit" is made possible by the generous support of Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture and the Ohio Arts Council. "Law & Order: Fairy Tale Unit" is produced by special arrangement with Playscripts, Inc.

To celebrate the Youth Theater's 65th Anniversary, Mitchell's Ice Cream is supplying a "Here's the Scoop" voucher, valid for a free scoop of ice cream, with each Youth Theater ticket sold this season.

Kathleen Caffrey is the director of Marketing & External Affairs, Beck Center for the Arts.

"Love And Do What You Will"

by M. Michelle Dwyer

Wealthy widow Kate Danville seeks final absolution for a life filled with lost love, betrayal, and adultery. But does she truly want forgiveness ... or retribution?

Local author M. Michelle Dwyer is proud to announce the release of her new fiction novel, "Love And Do What You Will" (published by iUniverse and available in paperback and hard cover via www.amazon.com and www.barnesandnoble.com.) This scintillating story shows the trials and triumphs of a woman destined for a forbidden relationship she can never have.

"When a young priest is called to the home of wealthy widow Kate Danville, he hardly expects a tale of betrayal, lost love, and pain. Yet, as she begs to be set free from regret, her story unfolds—and it's even more scandalous than the tabloids have guessed. Kate was married

to Stephen Danville, an up-and-coming Manhattan attorney, but as the priest soon discovers, Stephen was hardly the love of Kate's life.

At the age of seventeen, Kate met thirty-two-year-old Lutheran pastor Richard Northington. He was a married man, serving at the church of her youth—off limits to young Kate. But nothing can stop the passion of true love. The two embark on a sixty year affair, but it feels more like a prison of secrecy. The only tie that binds them is Richard's gift of a ruby ring.

Once she marries Stephen, Kate thinks there may be hope for a peaceful—even if not entirely honest—future. She never relinquishes her forbidden love as she travels from the small Pennsylvania town of Ashland, to the picturesque Berkshire mountains, within the inner circles of Manhattan's high society, and to the tropical beaches of Hawaii. Becoming Stephen's

wife and starting a successful antique business, she appears destined for happiness. Her idyllic lifestyle unravels as her hidden secrets are exposed by a string of blackmail which threatens her husband's political future and endangers the lives of her children. Kate must battle her Puritanical upbringing against her vibrant personality to discover how far she will go for love ... and which of God's laws she will break in the process."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: M. Michelle Dwyer has been writing since the age of fourteen. Her love of literature was inspired by her mom who introduced her to the works of Charles Dickens at a very young age. Michelle graduated magna cum laude with an English/Communications degree from John Carroll University and has since worked as a sales/marketing professional. Aside from writing, she enjoys traveling and resides in Litchfield, CT

and Lakewood, OH. She loves pets, reading, meeting new people, and playing the piano.

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Lakewood Living

Tis' The Season To Be Thankful

by Allison Urbanek

Often this time of year, as I am putting my house to bed for the winter season, I think about all of the sweat, tears and sometimes blood that I have put into my home over the repair season. It makes me feel very proud to be a homeowner. The same goes for the LakewoodAlive Housing Outreach program; this year has been a phenomenal year. We had over 272 volunteers donate 1,500 hours of community service to homes throughout the city contributing to over \$52,000 worth of improvements. Our Paint Program had 13 completed houses, a program record, generating \$58,767 dollars of paint improvements in the city. These repairs collectively generated over \$100,000 of positive improvements for our community.

We are so thankful and proud of our volunteers and supporters. We cannot thank you enough for your support and help to make Lakewood such a wonderful community. We hope to expand our reach in the community by continuing to offer a wide variety of services for homeowners and soon-to-be homeowners. We are working diligently to strengthen our programming in order to assist all residents with their home repair needs.

We will focus on repair education in 2014 with a mixture of hands-on repair workshops and lectures on topics

that are relevant to Lakewood homes like moisture and ventilation, porch repair and replacement, how to contract a repair, as well as sustainability improvements. We are available to homeowners who just aren't sure where to start with their home repairs. Next time you are getting ready to start a project, call us and we will make sure you are on the right track.

In order to continue to offer relevant programming, we look to you. We encourage you to contact our offices with ideas or suggestions on how we can serve you better. We continue to offer our contractor evaluations on our website as well as in the office. We are also happy to review estimates or repair contracts to make sure that you are getting what you're expecting. So when you are waking your home up this spring or if something unexpected happens like your furnace goes out, give LakewoodAlive a call. We are happy to help make your "honey-do" list short and sweet.

Happy Holidays to you and yours.

Allison Urbanek is the Housing Outreach Director for LakewoodAlive. She is a housing advocate and enjoys working with homeowners to help make homeownership easier. She and her husband live in Lakewood and enjoy taking part in all of the fun things the city has to offer.

Lakewood's Recycling Habits

by Charlotte Petrie

On October 14th of this year, select Lakewood streets received city-issued blue recycling bins. These new blue bins will be implemented using a three-phase process with phases two and three to occur in 2014 and 2015, respectively. This program is just another step forward with the recycling habits of Lakewood residents. Recycling and re-using items is one of the easiest and best ways to help our planet. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the average American produced 4.4 pounds of waste per day in 2011. Out of that waste, about 1.53 pounds was recycled or composted, or just under 35%. In 2012, the city of Lakewood recycled just over 50% of the waste generated by residents. This is an impressive number and Lakewood should be proud of the success of its green initiatives.

Recycling is as much a civic duty as voting. It is the responsibility of the citizens in the world to do their part to ensure smooth running for the planet. Studies have shown how certain behaviors, like recycling, act as social bonding mechanisms. Another way of saying this is that recycling is something the community does as a community. In an effort to help quantify the success of the new blue recycling bins, I tracked the bin use in my neighborhood for the first five weeks of the implementation. During those first five weeks of the new bins being in circulation, there was a slight increase in the number of households putting out recycling for curbside pick-up. Of twenty-four houses tracked, only

two houses never used their recycling bin over the course of the five weeks. By the end of the first five weeks, the ratio of recycling bins to garbage bins was 1:1.2, whereas in week one the ratio was 1:2.7.

This is a small improvement, but all improvement should be lauded as it is one step closer to the city's ultimate goal of recycling over 60% of waste by 2016. However, this goal should be even higher for the residents of Lakewood. The true goal should be to live a zero-waste lifestyle. While recycling decreases the amount of greenhouse gases created in the disposal process, re-using and reducing are the best ways to truly make a big difference. Being zero-waste is not an easy task and it will not happen overnight, but the payoff for our pocketbooks and our planet are worth the effort.

With the New Year right around the corner, I encourage all residents of Lakewood to take charge of the waste production in our lives and challenge ourselves to waste as little as possible.

Charlotte Petrie is a life-long Lakewood resident who works in non-formal education in addition to instructing group exercise for adults and kids. She loves living in Lakewood and thinks the "mistake on the lake" is one of the best cities in the world. Currently she is working on her master's and a component of the program is community engagement. As she continues on, she would like to write articles to help engage her Lakewood community in conservation and sustainability.



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