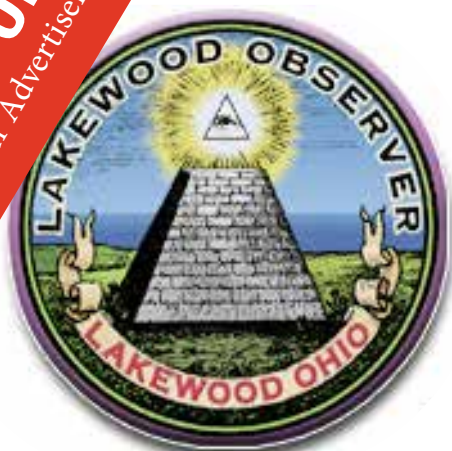


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Anthony Trollope

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Volume 12, Issue 1, January 5, 2016

*Savers Wore Red, Builders Wore Blue,
Residents are Divided, What's A City To Do?*

Council Passes Hospital Deal In A City Divided

by Meg Ostrowski

On December 21, 2015, after making their intentions known in previous weeks, Lakewood City Council passed (7-0) Ordinance 49-15 supporting a new Master Agreement between the City of Lakewood, Lakewood Hospital Association (LHA) and Cleveland Clinic Foundation (CCF) to close Lakewood Hospital and build a new Family Health Center and emergency department on adjacent property. You can read the full ordinance and agreement at: <http://www.onelakewood.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Ordinance-authorizing-contracting-for-2015-Lakewood-healthcare-master-agreement-subst-12102015.pdf>

The vote was preceded by hours of public comment. Supporters of the political action committee, Build Lakewood, expressed their gratitude and support for Council's efforts and their enthusiasm for new development and the anticipated community health foundation. Some said they had conceded to market forces

being beyond the city's control and exhibited attitudes of simply wanting to move forward.

Members of the grassroots organization, Save Lakewood Hospital, had a different message. They accused Council of giving city assets to CCF for pennies on the dollar, excusing LHA and CCF of obvious liability for the hospital's decline and then rewarding them with a monopoly on healthcare delivery in downtown Lakewood. They argued that Council should have done more to protect such a valuable community resource. Furthermore, they shared concerns about the risk to lives, loss of Lakewood jobs and the significant impact on the local economy and city revenue, saying that these factors will lead to additional suffering, higher taxes and reduced services.

Council members admitted closing the hospital would be a loss and that the deal wasn't perfect but thought it was fair and minimized risk. They assured attendees that they had done their jobs as **continued on page 11**

LCC Youth To Spend Night Fundraising For Area Homeless

by Robin Suttell

Youth from Lakewood Congregational Church (LCC) again will spend a January night outside the church in an effort to raise funds for local homeless support organizations during the church's 12th annual Homeless Awareness Sleep Out (HASO).

Participating youth, ranging in age from 11 years old to 18 (grades 6-12), will gather at the church, 1375 West Clifton, on the corner of West Clifton Boulevard and Detroit Avenue, starting at 3 p.m. to start constructing their box shelters - the only source of shelter they will have until late Sunday morning.

By 6 p.m., they'll head outside and spend the evening in front of the church along

Detroit Avenue collecting donations from passersby until 11 p.m. Parent chaperones will rouse the youth from their box shelters by 6 a.m. on Sunday to resume collections. The group will share the evening's experiences and reflections on the event during LCC's 10 a.m. worship service.

The event, one of LCC Youth Fellowship's cornerstone ministries, is designed to call attention to the plight and struggle of Northeast Ohio's homeless community and raise funds for several area homeless support agencies. Last year, the group raised nearly \$4,700 for the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless, Y-Haven and Family Promise of Greater Cleveland.

Besides collecting dona-

In The Battle Of Lakewood, LHS Soccer Comes Out On Top



The LHS boys soccer team celebrating when they beat archenemy St. Ed's and won their qualifier in the sectional championships - such joy and elation!

Rx:Create! Charity Event To Benefit North Coast Health

by Elizabeth O'Brien

Art comes in many different forms, and at "Rx:Create! 2016," you'll have the opportunity to win a unique piece of local art - and support healthcare in our community. Last

year's event was a huge success and we're hoping you'll break out of the winter blues and join us for a laid back evening of art appreciation! Same great event in a new venue!

The event will take place on Friday, January 29, 2016, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Vosh, 1414 Riverside Drive, Lakewood. The evening will feature raffles and an auction of unique art, jewelry, sculpture, furniture, photography, textiles and more created by northeast Ohio artists and designers. Proceeds from Rx:Create! make possible the life-saving healthcare North Coast Health is able to provide to our neighbors in need.

Please join us! Tickets are \$22 in advance (\$25 day of event, as available) and can be purchased online at <http://northcoasthealth.org/event/rxcreate2016/> or by contacting North Coast Health at 216-228-7878 x114 or events@northcoasthealth.org.

Creators wanted! Tap into your creative side and help us make this a successful event. North Coast Health, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, invites artists in all disciplines to donate a piece to the benefit. Donations can be dropped off at North Coast Health (16110 Detroit Avenue, Lakewood) by January 22. Arrangements can also be made to have donations picked up at the artist's convenience.

About North Coast Health
North Coast Health is a faith-based charitable clinic

continued on page 11



Observations

FUNDRAISING ALERT

Magic Gives Back for Garfield Middle School

by Rachel Vuyancih

Fun filled entertainment for the whole family. Please join us at 7 p.m. on Saturday, January 30, 2016 at the Civic Auditorium for an amazing Las Vegas style magic show. This show will feature Rick Smith Jr., renowned magician, along with his team of dancers, jugglers, strong-man and so much more. Most of the performers are Guinness World-Record holders!

Ticket prices range from \$15.00 for general admission seating, \$20.00 for preferred seating and \$25 for VIP seating. Tickets are only available online at MagicGivesBack.com. Click on purchase tickets and follow the prompts for January 30th show.

Witness record holders in action. Performers have been featured on Ellen, America's Got Talent, The Tonight Show, Shark Tank and more. This show is for all ages! You won't want to miss it. Purchase your tickets today.

Any questions or more information, please contact Tony Chiaravalle, Garfield Assistant Principal at 216-529-4241 or Rachel Vuyancih at jorz@att.net.

Thank you and see you at the show!



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HOT OFF THE DECK - WHERE LAKEWOOD TALKS

<http://lakewoodobserver.com/forum>

Topic	Author	Posts	LO Reads	Date Posted
Query : Should the Deck Create a "Lakewood Hospital" Forum	Matthew Lee	18	649	Mon Jan 04
Hospital Non-Compete Video	Kevin D Young	9	241	Mon Jan 04
Improvisation Performance/ Workshop JAN 9 at Beck Center	M.Charboneau	1	105	Mon Jan 04
CCF Seizes Complete and Absolute Control of LHA	Brian Essi	4	300	Mon Jan 04
Cox Cable Woes....	Tim Liston	24	1516	Mon Jan 04
Possibly Drunk Driver Sends Car Into House on Hilliard	Lori Allen	3	529	Mon Jan 04
Hostage Situation Ends Well On Fry	Jim O'Bryan	3	1311	Mon Jan 04
The Problem with Anonymous Forums	Bridget Conant	2	170	Mon Jan 04
Best Posts of 2015	Meg Ostrowski	42	1448	Mon Jan 04
Psssssssst Lakewood	Jim O'Bryan	10	664	Sun Jan 03
Did The Lakewood Hospital Foundation Commit Fraud?	Bill Call	8	925	Sun Jan 03
We need to hurry up and pass this so that the Clinic does'nt lose money	Brian Essi	6	485	Sun Jan 03
Swearing in ceremony for Dan O'Malley (Ward 4)	Alex Belisle	2	374	Sat Jan 02
Happy 21st Birthday Fundraiser tonight 1/2/16	M. Limkemann	1	138	Sat Jan 02
Copper Church Downspout Jim O'Bryan Thief Indicted		1	153	Fri Jan 01
PLEASE EXCUSE OUR DUST!	Jim O'Bryan	4	206	Fri Jan 01
Tough Start To New Year	Lori Allen _	2	1019	Fri Jan 01



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Upcoming Submission Deadline

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January 24, 2016

Publish Date

January 19, 2016
February 2, 2015

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City News

Council Passes Plan to Close Lakewood Hospital

December was a busy month for the Lakewood City Council. Typically Council has two regularly scheduled Council meetings on the first and third Mondays of the month, with additional committee meetings. However in December Council held an additional, special meeting on the 14th, to place the new proposal regarding Lakewood Hospital-- discussed in the last issue of this column-- on second reading. All issues of a permanent nature before Council require three readings before they can be passed. The special meeting held on the 14th was held with the express purpose of placing the Hospital ordinance on second reading so that Council could vote on it by the end of the year. With a few members of Council stepping down at the end of the year, this was done in part so they could vote on something they have worked hard and spent so much time on, not to mention to save the incoming Council members from an impossible game of catch up.

With only one issue on the table at the meeting on the 14th, each member of Council had a chance to explain why they support the new agreement. The meeting began with each Council member giving a statement, then proceeded to the reading of the ordinance. This portion of the meeting lasted less than 40 minutes, however the public comment section still remained. Many of the same people who have spoken to Council over the last 11 months on this issue returned joined by a few new faces. Points of views were shared from both sides of the argument, some quite passionately. In the end, nearly three hours had passed.

On December 21, 2015 Council held its final meeting of the year, where the outcome of Lakewood Hospital would be decided. Originally scheduled at the beginning of the meeting, Council President Mary

Louise Madigan decided to move the agenda item considering the Hospital to the end of the meeting due to the number of people signed up to speak on the matter.

The next item on the agenda was an ordinance that would bring the City into compliance with new state income tax collection regulations. The Ohio General Assembly passed Substituted House Bill 5 which regulates municipal income tax collection into a more standardized system across the state. In order for Lakewood to comply with the new regulations, several changes needed to be made in Lakewood's code. After lots of hard work the Administration submitted an

the last couple months. With some substitutions, which were explained by Finance Director Jennifer Pae, Council passed all the items, finalizing the balanced budget for 2016.

The last item on the agenda, before moving back to the Hospital issue, was an update from the Planning Commission on the proposal to designate St. Charles Green a park. The statement from the Commission indicate that they are open to the idea of designating the six parcels as a park, however they do not currently recommend making the designation until more input can be gathered from the community and further analysis of the land is conducted.

ing audiences along the way. Emotions seemed to run high from those distraught over the loss of the hospital to those happy to finally see this divisive issue to come to an end.

After two and a half hours of public comment, Council members made their final statements as to why they support the agreement and will be voting for it. Several times throughout these statements members of the public called out and interrupted the Council members; at least once a Council member was called a derogatory name. Those in support of Council's actions also interjected out of turn. Several of them spoke back and jeered at the members of Save Lakewood Hospital.

Finally, after 11 months of discussion and heated discourse, Council had come to the moment to make the final vote that would decide the future of Lakewood Hospital. In a unanimous vote, they passed the ordinance with the plan to close Lakewood Hospital in exchange for an outpatient medical center and an emergency department across the street from the current hospital, leaving the current hospital land to the City for redevelopment.

The final vote was greeted with joyous applause from half the room. With the meeting still not adjourned, the audience began to stream out of the auditorium.

Two items still remained on the agenda, which Council President Madigan deferred until the end. These items were resolutions commending Council members Madigan and Juris on their service to the City upon the completion of their final Council meeting. Councilwoman Madigan served on council for 12 years with a few stints as President, while Councilman Juris served 5 years.

With the passage of those final resolutions, Council President Madigan adjourned her final meeting.

NEWS FLASH
*At the January 4, 2016
Lakewood City Council Meeting
Ward 2 Councilman Sam O'Leary became
Lakewood Council President,
Ward 1 Councilman David Anderson became
Lakewood City Council Vice President.
Congratulations To Both
And God Speed!*

ordinance that would reconcile the City and State's tax codes.

Upon this final reading Council passed the ordinance, just in time for it to take effect on January 1, 2016, for the new tax year.

Next Council moved to complete the 2016 budget. The budget consists of several ordinances which have been discussed by Council in three meetings of the Finance Committee over

Coming to the ordinance that held the fate of Lakewood Hospital, Council introduced a substituted version with a few changes. Law Director, Kevin Butler, explained the changes to Council before they moved forward.

Next, Council President Madigan began to call members of the public up one at a time to speak to Council. The scenario played out the same way it has for 11 months, with grow-

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City News

Master Agreement Gives Clinic Public Assets

by Brian Essi

On December 21, 2015, City Council voted 7-0 to approve the so-called Master Agreement (MA) to close and dissolve Lakewood Hospital. Lakewood Hospital had been recently valued at more than \$120 million. [Subsidium Slide # 71 8/20/14] Under agreements existing immediately prior to approval of the new Master Agreement, if Lakewood Hospital closed and dissolved, the City of Lakewood would have received the entire value of Lakewood Hospital, i.e. property and money worth nearly \$120M. [1996 Lease 12.2, 14.1 and LHA Articles of Incorporation] Instead, under the Master Agreement, the Cleveland Clinic (CCF) will receive money and property valued at \$80M, the City will receive less than \$23M and a new health and wellness foundation jointly controlled by CCF and the City will receive about \$16.5M. The City did not conduct any public bidding or advertising of its Lakewood Hospital rights and properties.

Here is What the City Receives under the Master Agreement.

The City will receive total cash and property valued at less than \$23M:

1. \$ 8M Net Present Value (NPV) for a medical building on Columbia Road in Westlake. [MA 5.4 and Exhibit H]

2. \$ 2.7M estimated sales price for 2.7 acres of land at the southwest corner of Belle and Detroit sold to CCF. [MA 5.1 and Exhibit G]

3. \$ 5.7M estimated sales price for 5.7 acres of land and gutted Hospital buildings located on the east side of Belle Ave. to be sold to private developer. Note: this estimate is likely high because (a) it is not discounted to NPV to take into account that the City will not have possession of this site until at least June, 2018; (b) the land will be impaired by a restrictive covenant limiting use of the property as a hospital or medical facility by any Health Care System Provider; and (c) CCF has the right to lease parking spaces on this land. [MA 5.3] Further, Councilman Tom Bullock said it could take 3 to 5 years to develop or sell the site, i.e.

the building has questionable marketability for uses other than a hospital or medical facility and is encumbered by CCF's parking rights.

4. \$ 6.2M NPV as a partial payment for demolition and tear down of the Hospital buildings on the east side of Belle Ave. [MA 3.3(c)]

5. The Curtis Block building and residential homes near the hospital—the value of these properties is included in the estimate for the 5.7 acres above. [MA 5.6]

The City may also receive a maximum of \$2,887,500 in rent instalments beginning March 1, 2016 and ending June 30, 2018, but this rent is in exchange for LHA's continued occupancy, use and control of the hospital building for an emergency room (ER) through at least June, 2018. It is not a payment for City's equity in Lakewood Hospital assets. [MA 5.5]

Here is what the LHA Trustees and CCF employees working at Lakewood Hospital Receive.

LHA Trustees and CCF employees receive a full release and waiver of liability [MA 9.4] and will be indemnified, defended and insured against their past and future conduct through a payment of \$2.5M by LHA to CCF for an insurance policy. [MA 9.12]

Here is what the new Health and Wellness Foundation Receives.

A new health and wellness foundation will be created, but will not be fully funded by LHA until June 2026 at the earliest—the total value of LHA's funding of the new foundation is worth \$16.5M NPV. [MA 6.1 and Article IV] This amount could be reduced depending upon LHA future operating losses. [MA 6.1(c)] Although the agreement states that "LHA" and the City will name the initial board and develop the yet undefined rules of governance of this new foundation [MA 4.1], the effect of the agreements are that as of December 21, 2015 CCF has full legal authority to vote in new trustees as it pleases. The practical effect is that CCF and the City will name the initial board and develop its rules of governance.

In addition, CCF will make 16 annual payments of \$500K to the new foundation starting in mid-2018 and

ending in mid-2034. These payments have a NPV of less than \$4M---CCF will have the practical right to control the use of this money.

So although supporters of the Master Agreement claim the new foundation is worth \$32M, the portion that the City has only shared control of is worth only \$16.5M. CCF will have significant influence and control over the entire new foundation.

Here is What the Clinic Receives under the Master Agreement.

The Clinic is obligated to pay a total of only \$10.7 million to the City and will receive the following:

The state of the art medical office building and surgery facility located at 850 Columbia Road, Westlake. [MA 5.4]

2.7 acres of cleared land located at the southwest corner of Belle and Detroit. LHA will pay an estimated \$3.6M to tear down the existing hospital parking garage and the Lakewood West Medical building to prepare the land for CCF's Family Health Center (FHC). [MA 5.1, 3.3(b)]

\$2.5 million in LHA cash to help CCF build a parking garage on the 2.7 acres of land given to CCF. [MA 3.3(b) and 2.2(a)]

All of Lakewood Hospital's valuable bed licenses, medical equipment, furniture, fixtures and everything else of value located in the current hospital building. [MA 3.3(d)]

A covenant not to compete in favor of CCF that will prevent the Hospital building and land from being used by any Hospital System Provider as any medical facility or service including a hospital. In other words, the value of the gutted hospital building and land returned to the City will be greatly decreased and likely torn down because it is designed for use as a hospital and medical facility. [MA 5.3]

The right to lease parking spaces from the City on the hospital land on the east side of Belle owned by the City.

A full release of liability for its "decanting" and other damage that CCF caused to the Lakewood Hospital, i.e. CCF gets to keep all that it has taken from the hospital prior to December 21, 2015. [MA 9.4 and 3.4]

Continued control and influence of the new Health and Wellness Foundation and how that money is spent. [MA 4.2]

Control of \$3M in donor restricted assets on LHA's balance sheet. [MA 3.3(d)(6)] On December 22, 2015 CCF amended the LHA Articles of Incorporation so that CCF can receive this money too if the donor restrictions are reformed.

A "Dissolution Distribution" of all remaining LHA cash, accounts receivable and other property after payment of "wind-down expenses." [MA 3.3(d)]

Based upon LHA's most recently available financial statement, CCF will have at its disposal more than \$27M of LHA's cash and liquid investments to be used for the

"wind-down" even after payments to the City and the new foundation described above. In spite of this fact, the Master Agreement states that there is a "significant assumption of risk" by CCF to pay for "wind-down expenses" that might exceed the \$27M or LHA's "Net Asset Value." [MA 3.1(a) and 3.3(a)] The agreement does not specify any compensation for most of the rights and property to be given to CCF other than this perceived "assumption of risk." [MA 3.1(a)] There has been no public disclosure or record of the estimated wind-down expenses that CCF is alleged to be at "risk" of assuming.

LHA's experts estimated a \$38M NPV benefit to CCF from the admissions at Lakewood which are likely to move to CCF's facilities in the first 3 years alone as a result of closing Lakewood Hospital. In the first 3 [Subsidium Slide #70 8/20/14]

LHA's operating losses for the first 9 months of 2015 were only \$4.5M. [9/30/15 LHA financial statement] The Master Agreement calls for all of Lakewood Hospital's inpatient operations (except the ER) to be wound down and closed by March 1, 2016—just two months of potential losses. [MA Article III and 6.1(c)] Consequently, it appears that there is no evidence or circumstance of any financial risk to CCF that would necessitate payment of any "wind down expenses." In fact, experts estimate that CCF may receive more than \$20M of LHA cash upon dissolution. This would mean that CCF is paying nothing for substantial and valuable equipment, property, licenses and non-competition covenant rights and may receive \$20M in cash on top of those free valuables.

The terms of the Master Agreement and other agreements attached to it are such that CCF and LHA (now fully controlled by CCF) will not be obligated to account for how the balance of the LHA money is spent in the "wind-down." [MA 5.5, Exhibit I] Nor will there be an accounting of how much of LHA's cash is ultimately distributed to CCF. It should be noted that throughout the hospital debate, CCF refused to disclose how it allocated over \$20M of annual administrative charges to Lakewood Hospital claiming its allocation formula was "confidential and proprietary."

In summary, the City would otherwise have received nearly \$120M in value under the 1996 agreements if the hospital closed and dissolved, but will likely receive less than \$23M under the Master Agreement. CCF will likely receive cash and property valued at \$80M in exchange for an estimated payment of only \$10.7M. The nearly \$70M windfall to CCF could finance building CCF's \$34M proposed FHC in Lakewood with \$36M left over.

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Lakewood Public Library

LPL Calendar Of Events

compiled by Elaine Rosenberger

Thursday, January 7

Meet the Author: “The Green Berets and Their Victories”

by Joseph Meissner

Honored as Cleveland’s Outstanding Veteran of the Year in 2013, Joseph Meissner is a Cleveland attorney with over fifty years of experience serving the underprivileged in our region. His latest book celebrates the accomplishments of US Special Forces soldiers popularly known as the Green Berets in Vietnam during 1968 and 1969, the most crucial years of the conflict. Books will be available for sale and signing at the event.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Saturday, January 9

“The Wild Bunch” (1969)

directed by Sam Peckinpah

As the sixties began to ride off into the sunset, two films made during the last year of the decade explore the theme of the closing of the Wild West era. (The other film is Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid). The films earned adjacent spots on the American Film Institute’s list of the Ten Greatest Westerns. Yet no two films could be further apart in style and tone. The Wild Bunch takes place in 1913 and features a gang of aging outlaws led by Pike Bishop (William Holden) who cross the Rio Grande in order to make one final score and retire. The graphic violence, often shown in slow motion, was controversial at the time and can still have an impact on today’s audiences. Terry Meehan continues his series, “Westerns of the Sixties,” introducing each film with rare clips and original documentaries, followed by audience reaction and a lively discussion.

6:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Sunday, January 10

Trepanning Trio

Trepanning Trio is an acoustic instrumental ensemble known for making oddly beautiful music with classical, traditional and handmade instruments, including viola da gamba, guzheng and pan lids screwed onto sticks played with violin bows. Contrary to its name, this trio performs with a rotating lineup of six to fourteen members drawn from an unlikely rogues’ gallery of musicians. With a devotion to the complex and pretty, they have shared the stage with free improvisation luminaries like Eugene Chadbourne and Paal Nilssen-Love.

2:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Thursday, January 14

Meet the Author: “Hades Melody”

by J.D. Belcher

Spiritual awakenings remain taboo in everyday conversation, despite their regular appearances in pop culture and in the lives of biblical figures. In homage to Lewis Carroll’s publication of “Alice in Wonderland,” Lakewood native J. D. Belcher, presents his own revelatory look into the fascinating and often strange world of spiritual awakenings, when an individual becomes suddenly and unexpectedly aware of the spiritual activity that surrounds him. Written in creative non-fiction style and following in the vein of works such as “A Christmas Carol,” “Stranger Than Fiction” and “The Truman Show,” Belcher’s memoir chronicles his own story of enlightenment, one filled with disembodied voices, doppelgangers and prophetic visions that visited him in the months preceding the 9/11 attacks. Belcher shares what happened when an awakening experience crashed head-on with his role in the church. The experience affected relationships with his family and loved ones, but may also have been a mysterious foretelling of the worst terrorist attack in the history of the United States. Books will be available for sale and signing at the event.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Saturday, January 16

“The Magnificent Ambersons” (1942)

directed by Orson Welles

The amazing thing about “Citizen Kane” (1941), widely regarded as the greatest film of all time, is that it was the first feature ever made by its young writer, director and star, Orson Welles. Over the next forty years of his fabled career, Welles was doomed to never reach these heights again. Had he simply peaked too soon? Absolutely not, as you will see in this, his second film, based on the novel by Booth Tarkington. The gorgeous, groundbreaking camerawork is there. The design and costume work perfectly evoke the bygone era. And the screenplay stands as a master class for literary adaptations—with perhaps an extra dash of Wellesian wit. Most importantly, the performances from this talented cast cohere in a way that can only occur when a company is inspired by a truly great director.

6:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Sunday, January 17

Sunday Cinema: “Après Vous” (2003)

In this engaging romantic comedy, lovelorn neurotic José Garcia is despondent after his girlfriend moves out. One fateful night, he is spotted and rescued from imminent death by Daniel Auteuil. A strange and persistent attachment develops in which Garcia becomes completely dependent on his new acquaintance. Finding a job becomes paramount. At the restaurant where Auteuil is head waiter, there is need of a new sommelier. Notwithstanding that Garcia’s skill set is limited to running a shooting gallery, Auteuil scores an interview for him and invents a resume. Garcia’s performance before his prospective employers leaves them stunned. Auteuil’s next trick is to somehow persuade Garcia’s wayward girlfriend, Sandrine Kiberlain, to reconcile with him. French with English subtitles.

2:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium

Tuesday, January 19

Knit and Lit Book Club

Come share your passion for great literature and show off your knitting, crocheting, counted cross-stitch, embroidery, and quilting works-in-progress. This Tuesday’s book is “Faceless Killers” by Henning Mankell.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Meeting Room

LPL Children/Youth Events

compiled by Eric Knapp

Fridays, January 8 through February 26

Otaku Café

For students in sixth through twelfth grade

Whether you’re new to the scene or consider yourself an expert, you can come explore manga, anime, cosplay and all kinds of Japanese culture with us at The Library. Registration required.

4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room.

Saturday, January 9

Tail Waggin’ Tutors

For school-age children

Bone up on your reading skills by reading to a dog. Drop in for a one-to-one session with one of our dogs and owners that have been certified through Therapy Dogs International.

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room.

Saturday, January 9

Sensory Story Time

For you and your 3-7 year old child

This story time program can be enjoyed by all children, but it is specifically designed for young children with special needs, autism or those with sensory processing challenges. Registration required.

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. in the Main Library Toddler Story Time Room.

Wednesdays, January 13 through February 17

Amazing Animals Lego® Bricks Camp

For students in kindergarten through fourth grade

A six-week Lego® session is sure to delight kids who love animals. We’ll build a spider, kangaroo, monkey and more! Registration required.

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room.

Saturday, January 16

Swiftly the Clown Balloon Show

For the whole family

This clown is one of the top balloonists in the country. Free and open to the public. No registration required.

7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room.

Monday, January 18

Share the Dream: A Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

For school-age children

Celebrate the life and legacy of MLK through stories, songs, and craft. No registration required.

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. in the Main Library Multipurpose Room.

Share The Dream: A Celebration Of Martin Luther King, Jr.

by Marge Foley

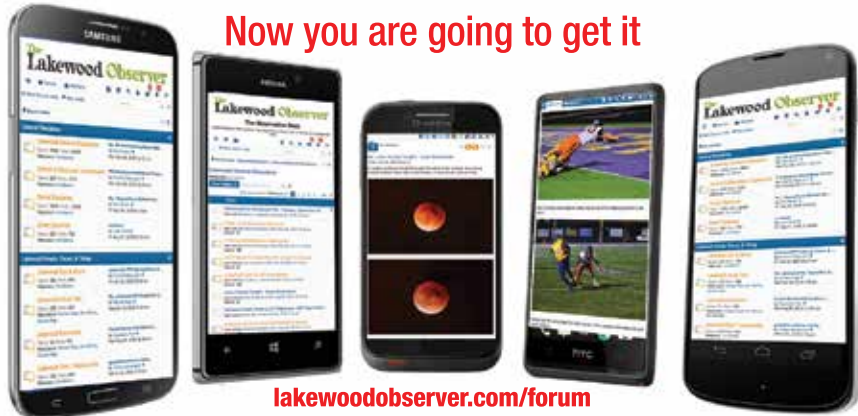
For some children, being off from school on January 18th, MLK Day, means sleeping late, playing video games, and watching television. The Lakewood Public Library is offering a meaningful alternative. Your child can still catch some extra shut-eye, however from 2 to 3 p.m. they can take part in a program that will celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through stories, songs, and a craft.

As part of the MLK Day of Service,

participants will create cards which will be distributed to local nursing home residents. This artistic endeavor will brighten the day of a senior citizen and provide your child with a chance to serve others. The cards will be delivered to the nursing home by the library at a later date. Each child will also be given the opportunity to make a take-home booklet about the life of Dr. King.

There is no need to register in advance. All school-age children are invited to participate.

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Lakewood Public Library

Visions Of 9/11: Author Jovon Belcher

by Leana Donofrio-Milovan

What if one day you began hearing disembodied voices, saw doppelgangers on the street and had prophetic visions of carnage? Would you believe you had gone mad or would you choose to believe in yourself? For a long time, local author Jovon Belcher didn't tell anyone what happened to him during the months leading up to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Who would believe him? Writing about spiritual awakenings is as old as mankind, but can still be difficult to do. Hades' Melody is a work of creative non-fiction which mirrors the spiritual enlightenment Belcher experienced that summer. He will appear at the Library on Thursday, January 14 at 7 p.m. to discuss his experience.

What inspired you to write Hades' Melody?

I studied creative writing in college and after I graduated, it took me almost four years to get my foot in the door and start working in the field. My first writing job came in the form of an internship working for the Pittsburgh City Paper (It's like the Scene here in Cleveland). Apart from that, I was also freelancing for other papers in the city and wrote for a couple of magazine start-ups. But I always wanted to write a book.

During the summer of 2001, just before the 9/11 attacks, I had a very strange experience. It was so mysterious and odd that it took me 15 years to finally come to an understanding of what happened to me. For years, I couldn't even talk about it for fear that no one would believe my story, and verbalizing it had been a virtual impossibility because it was so peculiar. So, about four years later, it finally came to me that if I wrote the whole thing down, it would be the book I always wanted to write. It took me five years to write it, and after another five years of researching, I realized that what this book was about was a spiritual awakening experience.

How would you describe this story to someone interested in reading it?

"Hades' Melody" is a memoir, written in first person. There's a lot of it that is exposition, and it's crafted in a stream of conscious style. So, even though it's structured like fiction with a main character, etc., it's still a memoir. Some might call it creative non-fiction, and I wouldn't disagree.

It's a story about a spiritual awakening experience I had. In our culture, (American popular culture) we don't discuss spiritual matters as forthrightly as they do in other parts of the world. It's kind of taboo. We push it to the side, and put it into film, theater, music and literature. A spiritual awakening is defined as when an individual suddenly and unexpectedly becomes aware of the spiritual activity that surrounds them. It's a common motif, but in my opinion, should be it's own genre.

The main character in the novel is on a very strange journey and seems

to be struggling to fit into the world around him. How did you develop this character?

Well, because "Hades' Melody" is memoir, all of the story was to the best of my ability written from factual events as I perceived them. Even though I started writing the story years later, I used what skills I had learned as a journalist and went back to interview almost all of the people who were involved in order to keep it as close to the truth as possible. That was probably one of the most difficult parts of writing it. And I say it was difficult because many of the other people in the book were very close to me, and it was an extremely sensitive issue to talk about. I was constantly learning throughout the entire process. In the same way that Dorothy and Alice seemed so lost as they explored the new worlds they suddenly found themselves immersed in, I too felt as if I were in another world,



Author Jovon Belcher

searching for answers and direction. To learn more about this program and all of the programs at Lakewood Public Library please visit www.lakewoodpubliclibrary.org.

Meet The Author:

A Local Author Remembers Viet Nam

by Lisa Calfee

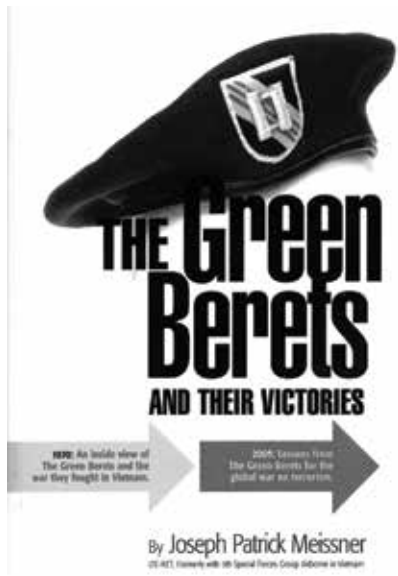
Publishers didn't want his book about Viet Nam. It was 1970, and Joseph Patrick Meissner's honest account of his time spent with

the Green Berets from 1968 to 1969 didn't play into the cultural narratives at the time. He stuck it in the back of a closet and got on with his life.

35 years later, "The Green Berets and Their Victories" was finally published. Lakewood Public Library is pleased to welcome local author Joseph Patrick Meissner on Thursday, January 7 at 7 p.m. to talk about his book.

During his service, Meissner kept meticulous records of his days with the U.S. Special Forces, even recording actual conversations on a tape recorder. His efforts give a fresh perspective to a war that has left a gaping emotional wound on the American psyche. With the current

global war on terror, its many lessons are more pertinent than ever. The author was named Cleveland's Outstanding Veteran of the Year in 2013 and is a Cleveland attorney with over 50 years of service to the underprivileged in Northeast Ohio. His generosity continues with all proceeds from the sale of "The Green Berets and Their Victories" going towards scholarships for deserving and needy Vietnamese students. Books will be available for sale and signing at the event. Join us Thursday, January 7 at 7 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium as we meet a very special author for our Meet the Author program. As always, this event is free and open to the public.



Family Music And More Presents
Swifty The Clown's
Balloon Show

by Jeffrey Siebert

Looking for something to do in the cold grey days of January? Why not come to the Lakewood Public Library for our Family Music and More program? On January 26th, the Children's and Youth Services Department will be presenting Swifty the Clown's Balloon Show!

Swifty the Clown is Ohio's premiere balloon artist, frequently ranked among the top balloon professionals in the country. He has an arsenal of over 3000 astounding balloon creations in his repertoire. If you can imagine it, Swifty can create it. It's not just for kids, either. Swifty can entertain audiences of all ages, particularly those with an

eye for lifelike visual art. This lovable clown is regularly featured in local and national media, including Fox 8 News, the Trivisano show, and most recently having his original creation on the cover of Balloon Magic, the #1 balloon magazine in the United States.

This program for children and their families will take place on Saturday, January 16th, 2016 at 7 p.m. All programs are free and open to the public. Generously funded by the Friends of the Lakewood Public Library, this event will be held in the Multipurpose Room, which is located in the Children's Department at the Main Library. We hope to see you there!

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Lakewood Schools

A New Scarf To Keep You Warm

by Noreen Kyle

The Westshore Young Leaders annual holiday celebration meeting took on new significance as the teens made no-sew fleece scarves for the children living in the Ohio Guidestone Residential Treatment Campus at the Berea Children’s Home. The young leaders cut, frayed and placed beads on each scarf. A special touch was added when a “Made with love especially for YOU” sticker was carefully placed for the recipient to see. The students felt excited to be able to make something to give to another

teen during the holiday season. Ohio Guidestone and the Westshore Young Leaders are looking to coordinate on future interactive projects in the upcoming year.

Join the Westshore Young Leaders at their monthly meeting on Thursday, January 21, 2016 from 6-8 p.m. at the Bay Village Police Department Community Room. The meeting is open to ALL middle and high school students in the six Westshore communities (Bay Village, Fairview Park, Lakewood, North Olmsted, Rocky River and Westlake).



Above: Westshore young leaders making scarves for a holiday surprise to residents at Ohio Guidestone Residential Treatment Campus.

Below: The finished product ready to help keep those in need warm this winter.

Friends Fight Hunger

by Katherine Miracle

Mac & Cheese and Ramen Noodles (the favorites of college students) are given by Virginia Marti College of Art and Design (VMCAD) students to fight hunger.

Would a college student ever part with their Mac & Cheese or Ramen Noodles? College students at VMCAD did because they are fighting hunger.

Vice President of VMCAD student government Tiara Smith said, “It was wonderful to see students who don’t

have much themselves so excited and serious about donating to those who are less fortunate. Everybody brought what they could and the results were amazing!”

VMCAD student government organized a Friend Thanksgiving called “Friendsgiving” and asked everyone to bring food. “It was amazing to see the donations come in and we were honored to help the Hunger Network,” said John Mendrea, Director of Student Services at VMCAD.



Pictured left to right: Paul Melnykowski, VMCAD Student Government President, Jada, Secretary VMCAD Student Government, Tiera Smith, Vice President VMCAD Student Government, John Mendrea, Director of Student Services VMCAD.

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Sports

Area Skaters To Participate In 2016 Winter International Children’s Games

by Dennis Marquard

Four area speed skaters from the Lakewood Speedskating Club have been selected to participate in the 2016 Winter International Children’s Games to be held in Innsbruck, Austria on January 11-16, 2015. Athletes must be between the ages of 12 and 15 on December 31, 2015, to compete in the Games. The Lakewood Club skaters who will be competing for the girls are Una Willhoite and Caitlynn Keyser, while the boys are Austin Herpst and Cade Grant. Over 1,200 young athletes from over 70 international cities are expected to be represented. The Games are an opportunity for children to combine sports with cultural exchanges and educational programs. The first International Children’s Games were held in Slovenia in 1968; this is the first year that Speedskaing will be a part of the Games. The venue for Speedskating will be the Olympic Speed Skating Oval, site of the 1976 Winter Olympics. The events for the skaters will be 500 meters, 1000 meters, mass start, and a mixed team sprint.

The skaters from the Lakewood Club, who practice at the Winterhurst Ice Rink in Lakewood, are

primarily short track skaters and the event in Innsbruck will be long track, skated on a 400 meter oval. In preparation for the transition from short track to long track the skaters purchased clap skates, which are used in long track skating, and have made a few trips to Milwaukee to train on the 400 meter oval at the Pettit National Ice Center. We are approaching the last few weeks of preparation and the team is excited! Lakewood Skating Club Coach Dennis Marquard, who will be traveling with the skaters to Innsbruck, sees this as a wonderful opportunity for the skaters to have a taste of international competition at a young age as well as make friends with skaters from all over the world.

The Cleveland Sports Commission will be sponsoring event fees, lodging, and meal expenses but the travel expense and skating skins are the challenge of each of the skaters. If you would like to help with some of the expenses, you can make a donation to their gofundme page, “2016 Children’s Winter Games Fund,” at <https://www.gofundme.com/yx4xy7t4?pc>.

For more information contact: Dennis Marquard (440) 899-9577.



Skaters traveling to Innsbruck (L to R): Caitlynn Keyser, Una Willhoite, Cade Grant, Austin Herpst.

LSA U13 Girls Champs Again!

by Ted Nagel

The Girls U13 team from the Lakewood Soccer Association (LSA) has taken their second League Championship in as many seasons. The girls play in the American Amateur Soccer League (AASL). Last season as a U12 team “playing up,” the girls won

the U13 Travel B Championship with an undefeated record of 7-0-1. This season, the girls played in the U13 Travel A Division and won the league with an 8-0 record. Their one blemish from the prior season was a tie with a tough Amherst team. This season, the girls met the same Amherst team,

in Amherst, without some of their key players. The team won the game 1-0 in a great defensive battle led by Cali Cook in goal. The one goal was scored by Bella Segreto. Cali Cook was named the game’s MVP. In an interesting twist, Cali’s twin sister Annika was named the season’s Most Improved Player. The girls finished the season without allowing a single goal!

The team took their perfect record into the prestigious Bothwell Cup Tournament. On a frigid weekend with snow flurries, the team went 3-0 in pool play. In their fourth game in two days in tough conditions, the team

finally suffered their first loss in the tournament finals, finishing the season 11-1 with a League Championship and a Bothwell Cup Runner-Up trophy. The team is coached by Ted Nagel and managed by Jamina Cook. The girls who played so well are: Aubree Nagel, Georgia Popovic-Ita, Katie Donnelly, Quinn Costanzo, Aiden Kelley, Cali Cook, Annika Cook, Sydney Hudock, Bella Segreto, Charlotte Milenski, Nevaeh Yarber, Sophie Lipka, Addie Smoot, Lucy McIntyre, Jane Jusko and Gianna McAuliffe.

Congratulations, girls!





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Lakewood Is Art

Why Would I Ever Listen To Any Music That Isn't From Ohio Or Australia?:
Reviews Of Recent Releases By Local Bands, Pt. 17

by Buzz Kompier

Obligatory Disclaimer: Record reviews are a tricky business. It's one thing to enjoy music, but to, like, pick out what you like about it? That being said, if I review your thing and I didn't like something, don't feel too bad. My opinion doesn't matter all that much.

Honey - Exorcise - self-released - 6 songs - Download

Note: As far as I have it figured out, this band is from both Pittsburgh and Cleveland. So I guess that counts as local enough. If someone wants to work it out further than that, (which members live where and why) they can be my guest, but I'm not going to do it. I'm not quite sure what to categorize this type of music as. It's sort of alternative rock, (whatever that means to you) but in a lot of places it seems more punk and in other places sort of art rock. So, sure, alternative sounds good. The songs were long (like art rock), with the shortest clocking in at 4 minutes and 20 seconds. The opener, "Sarcophagus Agnostic," had an arty intro driven by multiple guitar and keyboard (I think; it might have been just guitar with effects) tracks that sort of reminded me of The Who's "Won't Get Fooled Again." Then noisy guitar and fast drums came crashing in, and the real song started, but kept some of the elements of the intro as well. Yes, I know it's hard to understand most of what I write, but listen to it and you'll see what I mean. Most of the tracks had these same elements, (as I suppose is to be expected, if there had suddenly been a rap track, it would have been rather out of place) with heavy, pounding drums and guitar that switched between clean and distorted. My favorites were "Leftovers," which was the most mellow of the bunch, probably, featuring clean guitar for the most of it, until the last minute and a half or so, when the distorted guitar came blazing in again, then in the last 45 seconds (give or take) the song somewhat abruptly sped up before coming to a close, which was cool, and "Quiver," which featured a vibrato-laden and indeed quivery guitar throughout,

and had a nice...bridge, I guess, but a bridge that doubled as an outro. Anyway, my main criticism would be that most of the songs seemed to go on too long where they would've been more cohesive if a couple minutes had been chopped off, but, you know, style choices and whatnot. Anyway, if this sounds like your kind of thing, Honey will be headlining the Grog Shop on January 29, with Wesley Who and Prune Slayers opening. 3.5/5

Small Wood House - Candy Choir - self-released - 4 songs - Download

This one's an EP of some indie pop type stuff. I thought the songs as a whole were driven by the keyboards, with the guitar and drums more acting to push the songs along. The keyboards were the base, with the other instruments giving it structure, you get what I'm saying? The vocals were produced in an interesting way, in that they're not really up front in any of the songs, and they're echo-y and kinda spacey. This added to the 'vibe' of the songs, but it did make some of the lyrics somewhat unintelligible. Each song on the EP was like its own individual slow burn. My favorites were the opener, "Yeah It's Sad," which had an interesting keyboard sound that made me think of what it would sound like if the keyboards

used to make soundtracks for old video games were instead used for movie soundtracks, and the closer, "Trip, Fall, Die," which besides having a great title, also had male and female vocals taking turns singing lead, with the echo-y vocal sound kind of overtaking you and making you feel like it's all around you. It also came to an abrupt end, which I enjoyed for some reason. Hey, if you like lo-fi indie pop kind of stuff, this may be something you'd enjoy. I thought it was all right. 3.5/5

Stalemate - Permanent Things - self-released - 12 songs - LP+CD, download

I wasn't sure what I expected here. I didn't know what to make of the band name, but I liked a few of the song titles (particularly "Andy Kaufman vs. Jerry Lawler"). Again, I'm not quite sure what to call this type of music. Alternative rock, I suppose, would be the best descriptor, but with punk ele-

ments as well. A few of them, such as "Breadwinner" and "Black Friday," I thought could have been big hits if they were released in 2005. And I do mean that as a compliment. The songs had heavy guitars and riffs, and slightly raw vocals, but with very poppy melodies. My picks on the album would be the aforementioned "Breadwinner" and "Black Friday," as well as "JFK Memorial Parkway." I thought some of the songs sounded somewhat similar, but I suppose that's the confines of the genre. If you like alternative rock/punk that definitely sounds like early-mid-2000s punk, you'll probably dig this. 3.5/5

Are you a local-ish band? Do you have a record out? Email vaguelythreatening@gmail.com or send it directly to Observer headquarters: The Lakewood Observer, c/o Buzz Kompier, 14900 Detroit Avenue, Suite 205, Lakewood, OH 44107.

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Lakewood Cares

North Coast Health Announces New Leadership

by Elizabeth O'Brien

After serving North Coast Health since its inception - first as volunteer, then Head Nurse and eventually Executive Director for the past twenty years, Lee Elmore has retired from her post. Under Lee's guidance, North Coast Health has transformed the access and provision of care to thousands of individuals and families in western greater Cleveland, and has been recognized as a Patient-Centered Medical Home, level 3 by National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA).

It is with great confidence and excitement that North Coast Health welcomes Gina Gavlak as President and CEO of North Coast Health, effective January 1, 2016.

Gina brings twenty-five years of experience, dedication and a desire to improve access to affordable health care, eliminate health disparities, improve health outcomes and change the trajectory of chronic disease. Gina also has an extensive fundraising, program development and advocacy background.

Gina currently serves as Chair of the National Advocacy Committee of the American Diabetes Association. Over the past nine years, she was active in the creation and promotion of the Diabetes and Endocrine Center at Lakewood Hospital including the

development of the Diabetes Assistance Initiative which has provided over \$1.2 million in financial assistance to people who lacked the resources to afford their diabetes education, medications and supplies. While at the Center, Gina collaborated with North Coast Health to ensure that our uninsured patients had access to care and volunteered her time to meet individually with North Coast Health patients living with diabetes to help them achieve their self-management goals. In addition, Gina's experience as an emergency department nurse at MetroHealth Medical Center has allowed her to see firsthand, and develop a deeper understanding of, the challenges and the needs of the underserved and the impact on the individual and our communities.

The mission of North Coast Health will not change as we enter our thirtieth year of providing health care

and hope to the medically underserved in our community. We will go forth each day to "stand in the gaps" in the nation's health care system and provide top quality, compassionate care to those who seek it.

Thank you for the confidence you have placed in us. We promise to continue that care each day we open our doors.

About North Coast Health

North Coast Health is a faith-based charitable clinic that provides and optimizes access to health care for the medically underserved. Every day, people come to North Coast Health because they have no other option for affordable care. As a Patient Centered Medical Home, Level 3, as designated by the National Committee for Quality Assurance, we are able to offer full continuity of care in a professional clinical setting. Visit www.northcoasthealth.org for more information.



Gina Gavlak, President & CEO of NCH as of January 1, 2016

Free Tax Preparation Services

by Kathy Augustine

Cuyahoga County and the Cuyahoga Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Coalition will be hosting free tax preparation services as part of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. Last year in Cuyahoga County, the VITA Program served 13,000 people and brought back more than \$18 million

to the community. County VITA sites are at the County's Westshore Neighborhood Family Service Center (NFSC) and at the Southgate NFSC. Westshore NFSC is located at 9830 Lorain Ave, Cleveland Ohio 44102; the tax site will be open Tuesday evenings and Saturdays. Southgate NFSC is located at 5398 1/2 Northfield Rd, Maple Heights Ohio 44137; the tax site will be open Tuesday evenings and Saturdays. To schedule an appointment go online to www.211oh.org or call 211/United Way.

Returns will be prepared and filed by IRS certified tax-preparers and completed while the tax-payer waits. All returns will be screened for eligibility for the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit. To qualify, tax-payers must have a 2015 earned income less than \$53,505, and must be filing a simple return.

Tax-payers should remember to bring: Current photo I.D., Social Security cards for each adult and child on the return, W2 and 1099 income statements, child care expense statement and provider's Tax I.D. Number, Form 1099-INT for any checking or savings accounts as well as bank account and routing numbers for direct deposit. If the taxpayer purchased health insurance under the Affordable Care Act, bring 1099 tax credit from health insurance company.

Community members who want to volunteer to prepare taxes can register online at www.refundohio.org. Free training is available to become an IRS certified tax preparer.

For more information, please visit www.refundohio.org or www.cjfs.cuyahogacounty.us.

Tuition Grants For Women Twenty-Five Years And Older

by Anne Nehoda

College Club West is offering tuition grants for the 2016-2017 academic year. A minimum of \$2000 will be awarded to qualified women applicants. A woman must be at least 25 years old, currently enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree program, and reside in the counties of Cuyahoga, Lorain or Medina. College Club West members and relatives are ineligible.

Visit our website at www.collegeclubwest.org for details and application forms. Applications are due by March 15, 2016. Completed

applications must be postmarked by March 12, 2016.

College Club West, founded in 1926, is a non-profit organization of approximately 300 college-educated women. The scholarship program, begun in 1971, provides financial assistance for the continuing education of deserving women. The program is funded solely by the contributions of the members.

Thank you for your efforts in publicizing these scholarship opportunities.

Anne Nehoda is College Club West's Press Agent and Historian.



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Lakewood Cares

UCC President To Speak On Religion, Churches And Postmodernism At Lakewood Congregational

by Robin Suttell

The opening lines of “Beyond Resistance: The Institutional Church Meets the Postmodern World,” read: “Let’s be honest...churches are dying. Well, some of them are. Many more are going to.”

And from there, author, the Rev. John C. Dorhauer, sets the stage for a hard look at organized religion. He examines how the rise of postmodernity and its influence on the expression of faith might have placed churches in a precarious place but are not the cause of, contrary to popular belief, religion’s “perceived diminishment in capacity, relevance and impact.”

Dorhauer, the ninth general minister and president of the Cleveland-based United Church of Christ (UCC), will share his insights on

organized religion, justice and faith on Tuesday, January 26, at 7 p.m., at Lakewood Congregational Church, 1375 W. Clifton Blvd., Lakewood. The event is free and open to the public.

He has devoted his life to following the idea that faith should be just, generous and inspire commitment for the common good. Two key statements guide his theology: “God is love. God is just.” As the newly elected head of the UCC, Dorhauer brings his passion for justice to his work with the denomination’s 5,062 congregations and 943,521 members.

Dorhauer, the former conference minister of the Southwest Conference of the UCC, was elected to his current position at the 30th General Synod, which met June 26-30 in Cleveland.

Prior to his role in the Southwest Conference, Dorhauer served as associate conference minister in the Missouri Mid-South Conference and also served local churches in rural Missouri.

He earned his Master of Divinity from Eden Theological Seminary and Doctor of Ministry from United Theological Seminary, where he studied white privilege and its effects on the church.

Dorhauer published his first book, “Steeplejacking: How the Christian Right is Hijacking Mainstream Religion,” which he co-authored with Sheldon Culver, in 2007.

For more information on the free January 26 event, contact Lakewood Congregational Church at 216.221.9555.



The Rev. John C. Dorhauer

Cuyahoga County Board Of Elections Hiring Over 5,000 Workers For March Primary

by Cathy Bajic

The Cuyahoga County Board of Elections is seeking temporary employees and poll workers for the March 15, 2016 Primary Election. Applications are now being accepted for more than 5,000 paid positions. “Our democracy depends on citizens being engaged in the election process,” said Pat McDonald the Director of the Board of Elections. “Poll workers are the backbone of all elections as they assist voters on Election Day, and temporary employees help with vital administrative work before, during and after each

election,” said McDonald.

Poll Workers earn up to \$200.00 for their service, which includes successfully completing a poll worker training class and attending a meeting the night before the election.

Over 150 temporary employees are being hired to perform a wide range of duties. These jobs can last up to several months.

The public is invited to apply for poll worker and temporary positions online in the Employment section of the Board’s website: www.443VOTE.com.

AARP Free Tax Aide Help

by Joan Miller

AARP free tax-aide brings you free electronic filing of your tax returns. The IRS-certified volunteers are ready to help income tax payers of all ages. You do not need to be an AARP member to receive this service. A photo ID and social security number are required at time of visit. Bring last year’s tax return if

possible.

AARP tax-aide is available Monday and Tuesday noon to 3:30 p.m. starting February 1, 2016 at the Lakewood Senior Center West, 16024 Madison Ave. Lakewood. A handicap ramp and stairs are located on the Northland side of building.

No appointment necessary. Walk ins welcome.

Rx:Create! Charity Event To Benefit North Coast Health

continued from page 1

that provides and optimizes access to health care for the medically underserved. Every day, people come to North Coast Health because they have no other option for affordable care. As a Patient Centered Medical Home, Level 3, as designated by the National Committee for Quality Assurance, we are



North Coast Health

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able to offer full continuity of care in a professional clinical setting. Visit www.northcoasthealth.org for more information.

Council Passes Hospital Deal In A City Divided

continued from page 1

defined by their oath and the city charter and had made the best decision for the community based on the options available to them.

Build Lakewood left satisfied.

Save Lakewood Hospital has since begun collecting signatures to put a referendum on the ballot to overturn Council’s vote. In the meantime, there is a pending taxpayer lawsuit against LHA and CCF before Cuyahoga County

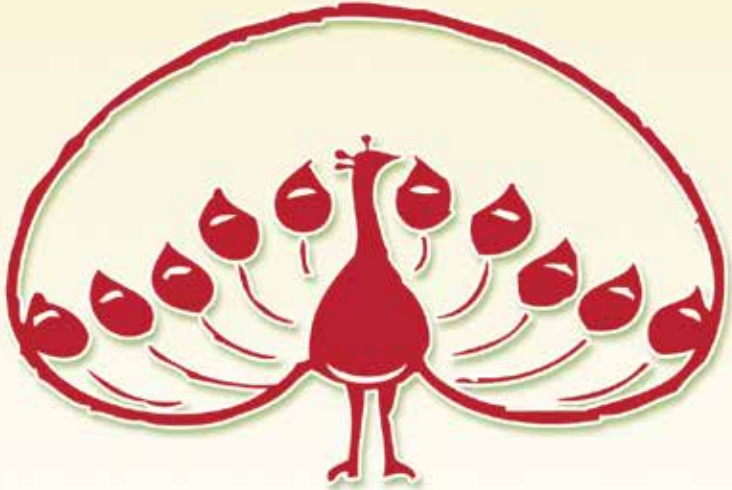
Common Pleas Court Judge John O’Donnell, a request for Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine to intervene and a complaint on file with the Federal Trade Commission submitted by former U.S. Congressman Dennis Kucinich.

Many hope that through actions and dialogue this divide can begin to heal. Others feel that this is a situation in which there can be no peace without justice.

What’s a city to do?

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Ask About Gift Certificates And Catering

Wellness Watch

The Thrifty Peddler - End Of An Era

by Polly Stringer

December 29th marks the end of an era as the Thrifty Peddler - Lakewood Hospital's resale shop - closes its doors. As age catches up with the volunteers who run the operation, and circumstances change, it is time to say goodbye to the Thrifty Peddler, an effort that has served its purpose to support special projects and services at Lakewood Hospital well beyond its original intent.

A storewide sale of all merchandise and store fixtures ended on December 29th.

The Thrifty Peddler was started nearly 40 years ago with one room in the basement of the hospital. It was open two days a week and featured donated clothing and accessories. Later the shop was moved to a storefront on the corner of Belle and Marlowe. This was a much larger facility and another storefront was added for furniture, lamps and pic-

tures. In August of 2009 the shop was moved to the present location in the Lakewood Professional Building.

All of the income generated from the Thrifty Peddler has been returned to Lakewood Hospital through its auxiliaries and volunteer association, for various initiatives and programs including the renovation and expansion of the Emergency Department, a van and playground improvements for the Child Care Center, treadmills for

stroke and cardiac rehab, special needs for the Teen Health Center, diagnostic and surgical equipment, inpatient and outpatient rehab therapy items, and funding for the Diabetes Assistance Program, to name just a few.

All of the merchandise was donated by community members. Many of these donors have been bringing items since the shop was started. Without them and their donations there would not have been a Thrifty Peddler.

The volunteers from the hospital's women's auxiliary boards and the volunteer association have been the heart and soul behind the Thrifty Peddler. Over the year these dedicated volunteers have managed the inventory, done the sorting and pricing, impeccably displayed the merchandise and happily assisted customers in finding that perfect treasure.

Some of these volunteers have been involved with the Thrifty Peddler since its start. It is because of their enthusiasm and commitment that the Peddler has thrived, ultimately impacting patient care offered through Lakewood Hospital.

A big thank-you to all those who have supported the Thrifty Peddler with their donations and purchases.

The Thrifty Peddler was located at: 14601 Detroit Avenue, Lakewood.



Julie Hutchison, owner of the Root Café, Lakewood's Ambassador to our sister city in Cuba, Havana and well-known explorer of cultures and lands welcomed the Buddhist Monks from Tibet, who made Lakewood the site of their initial conversation with the public. The Root Café is one of the crossroads of the area, especially for those who preach spiritual kindness and love for all.



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Business News

Lakewood Chamber Of Commerce Announces 2016 Speaker Series

by Valerie Mechenbier

The Lakewood Chamber of Commerce announces the 2016 Speaker Series, four quarterly presentations featuring headline speakers who will discuss some of the region’s most interesting and relevant topics.

On January 22nd, 2016, the Chamber will host a luncheon with Mr. Joseph Roman, CEO & President of the Greater Cleveland Partnership and Vice Chair of the 2016 Republican National Convention Host Committee. Mr. Roman’s presentation is titled “Your Business, Your Community and the 2016 RNC.”

The second event in the series is a luncheon on April 15th. Ms. Stephanie Sheldon, CEO & Founder of The Cleveland Flea, will present “Rising Strong:

The Cleveland Flea as an Innovator of Leading and Working in a Post-Industrial Rust Belt City.”

On Thursday, July 14th, the Chamber will host “Meet the Brewers,” a discussion on the emerging brewing industry, with a beer tasting featuring four local breweries.

The Speaker Series concludes with a luncheon on October 21st. Mr. Armond Budish, Cuyahoga County Executive, will speak on the topic: “What County Government is Doing for Your Business.”

Each event in the series can be purchased separately, or the entire series can be purchased at a discount before January 15th. The Speaker Series headlines an exciting 2016 event calendar that also includes the Chamber’s most

popular established events such as the Annual New Teachers Luncheon, the Community Leaders Breakfast with Lakewood City Schools, the Chamber’s Annual Awards Luncheon, and the

Taste of Lakewood.

For more information on Lakewood Chamber of Commerce events visit lakewoodchamber.org/events.

Bond Outlook 2016

by Jonathan Clark

Happy New Year 2016! 2015 was a choppy year for investments in your retirement accounts. The S&P 500 closed at 2058.20 on January 2nd 2015 and the close on December 8 was 2063.59. A long overdue correction happened in September/October. 2016, might be remembered as the year of rising interest rates. Bond investors over the last 5 to 20 years had a good run. As interest rates went from high to low, mutual funds and individual bonds paid a solid dividend, as well as seeing increased values while rates dropped overtime. The dividends and plans of increased value of bonds have disappeared. It is hard to get excited about individual bonds and bond funds that are struggling to kick out 3% in dividends. When you consider fees into the equation it looks frankly, unappealing. While it is customary to have a healthy balance between stocks and bonds in your portfolio, the future bond market could create a drag moving forward. It might be worth looking into a fixed annuity as an alternative for a portion of the bond and bond funds in your portfolio.

Understanding the challenges facing bonds as rates rise is complicated. Let’s say you owned a bond that was paying you 3% and you wanted to sell it. Consider new rates were up and someone could buy a new bond paying 5%. If you paid \$100 for your bond, why would someone pay you \$100 for 3% when they could buy a bond paying 5%? Likely, you would have to sell it for something below the \$100 you paid. This dynamic will be in play as rates rise. Some advisors would suggest putting a larger percentage of your portfolio into equities but that is easier for a younger investor than for some-

one near or at retirement.

An alternative could be looking at a fixed annuity. Why?

An annuity is a contract offered by an Insurance Company. Fixed annuities have grown in popularity because they typically guarantee principle and offer higher rates when compared to other safe alternatives. It is not uncommon to see a rate around 3% for a 5-7 year fixed annuity. Some would ask: why expose your capital to the risk of bonds when you can get a comparable rate without the bond risk? Fixed annuity contracts typically state your rate for a number of years; if you cancel or surrender your policy before maturity there will be a penalty on your growth and/or principle. Annuities come in many shapes and sizes and it will be important to work with an agent that is trustworthy and knowledgeable.

Time for the final bell of 2015. 2016 will likely be the beginning of changing rates. It has been a long time since we have experienced rising interest rates. Current bond values will likely change to the downside, how much, it is hard to know. This does not mean you should not hold bonds in your portfolio, but diversifying some of that capital into a fixed annuity could be a good complement to your current strategy.

Jonathan M. Clark is an Investment Advisor Representative, www.clarkwealthadvisor.com Investment Advisory Services offered through Brookstone Capital Management LLC, an SEC Registered Investment Advisor. Index or fixed annuities are not designed for short term investments and may be subject to caps, restrictions, fees and surrender charges as described in the annuity contract. Guarantees are backed by the financial strength and claims paying ability of the issuer.

Gordon Tower Insurance Agency Relocates To Lakewood

by Mary Bodnar

Gordon Tower Insurance Agency is now in the INA Building on Detroit Road, right above Panera on the 3rd floor. Agency Principal and Owner Michael Bodnar and Marketing Manager and Agent Mary Bodnar are long term residents of Lakewood and have raised their three children here, now ages 16, 18 and 21. After eight years of having their offices in Brookpark, the Bodnar’s are happy to have their business in their hometown. Gordon Tower Insurance has at their disposal all of the resources necessary to assist you in the entire process of buying insurance. The tools available through Gordon Tower Insurance and Michael Bodnar’s years of experience have made Gordon Tower knowledgeable in all facets of the insurance industry. Michael’s longstanding relationships with people affiliated with the insurance industry and services associated with claims, (repairs, towing and home repairs available through his outsourcing and networking at Gordon Tower Insurance) allow him to provide sources to clients in their time of need.

Michael Bodnar’s ability to counsel is where his great resources and in-depth market knowledge come into play. Recent changes in the insurance industry, state laws, rules and regulations, information about specific insurance markets and current market trends have an impact on what an insured should pay for a certain type of policy. Gordon Tower Insurance’s goal is to achieve the best possible coverage at a fair price for their clients.

The process of buying insurance tends to be an emotional process, especially when looking into life insurance, or covering the personal items of a loved one adequately. This is because,

in most cases, it is of utmost importance to have the right coverage should an accident or occurrence take place involving a claim to be made. Gordon Tower Insurance Agency is known for their integrity and believes that being forthright and honest is the backbone of any solid relationship of this magnitude. Michael always acts in the best interest of his clients and you can count on his being honest and open with you always.

Michael’s affiliations past and present include: Professional Insurance Agents of America (PIAA), Insurance Board of Northern Ohio (IBNO), served as Trustee, Secretary, and currently Vice President, currently on the board of Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF). Family Promise/ Interfaith Hospitality Network - ran homeless shelter in Lakewood 4 weeks every year for 15 years as Food Coordinator. Gordon Tower Insurance was also Corporate Sponsor of All You Need is Love (And Food) Hunger Relief Event in Lakewood, Corporate Sponsor of Community Tailgate Fall Kick-Off Barbeque Event in Lakewood, Lakewood Chamber of Commerce. Boy Scouts – Cub Scout Leader and Pack Leader in Lakewood for 9 years.

Michael’s accreditations include holding a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) from Cleveland State University, Property & Casualty License (P & C) Life, Accident & Health License. Life Underwriting Training (LUTC), Grange Senior Partner designated for outstanding sales achievement and superior performance. Gordon Tower Insurance has also been designated senior partner with Authority for building strong partnership, and demonstrating com-

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Forum

Letter To The Editor:

Lakewood Hospital Decision

Dear Editor:

Last night (Monday, December 21st), I attended Lakewood City Council's last meeting of the year, where they made the final, fateful decision on moving forward with the Agreement to work with the Cleveland Clinic on the proposed Family Health Center. It was a long, long meeting. Council heard every last person who wanted to express their view on the demise of Lakewood Hospital. I commend the patience and general attitude of forbearance that Council showed in its conduct of the meeting. Indeed, as Council should. They are the people's elected representatives, and must listen to the people. I was also impressed by the passionate discourse, on both sides of the issue, denouncing as well as praising City Council for their actions throughout this year-long process. Council listened, mostly calmly, no matter how strident and even abusive the comments became. In the end, the

Council's decision was unanimous. The City has agreed to work with the Cleveland Clinic in the development of a new Family Health Center in the heart of Lakewood. We are moving forward!

And now the work begins! Lakewood cannot "move forward" (an expression thrown out several times in last night's discussions) if it does not come together. The contentious battle over the hospital's survival has created a deep and painful schism which must be healed if Lakewood is to move forward. We cannot just "move on" as though the hurt and anger doesn't exist anymore. I suggest that leadership in the City – the Mayor, City Council, all the City's appointed Commissions, the Lakewood Hospital Association, the Lakewood Hospital Foundation, the city's religious leaders, the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce, organizations like LakewoodAlive and the Lakewood Family Collaborative – come together

to create a path to reconciliation. The two fractious groups, each of which have very upstanding and outstanding leadership, must come together to help the City develop this "futuristic" Family Health Center which can be a source of pride as well as a symbol of what Lakewood truly is, and can be.

As one of the speakers last night said, Lakewood has come together like this before, and we have wonderful examples of rejuvenation and rebuilding all around us, our state-of-the-art public library, our beautiful Lakewood Park, our excellent school system to mention just a few examples. We can do this again! There is plenty of talent,

vibrant energy and excitement in this town. Let us not waste it. Leadership in this City should use that talent, energy and excitement to build a Family Health Center that will be the example other cities will envy and imitate! I challenge the Cleveland Clinic to also see this as a joint venture with all the citizens of Lakewood! We want to work with you to make this Family Health Center a truly innovative, original concept that lives up to both the Clinic's and our beloved City's reputations!

Sincerely
Chitra M. Walker,
Citizen of Lakewood

Kucinich's Reply To My Suggestions To Save Lakewood Hospital

by Jeanne Coppola

I contacted dear Dennis Kucinich, earlier this month, via his website and asked him what can be done to save Lakewood Hospital. I also gave him some of my suggestions about what I felt needed to be done, including: sign petitions, get a new referendum on the ballot, boycott the new Wellness Center, visit Discount Drug Mart's Wellness Clinic (run by Metro Hospital), ask the Save Lakewood Hospital group to accept memberships, hold many meetings throughout the city (in community centers and schools and churches) with other grassroots groups to work alongside them, publicize their

meetings with flyers in community centers and in the Lakewood Observer, and hold press conferences and meetings with City Council.

I also asked if the current Lakewood Hospital building was unsafe, and if OSHA was involved in the decision to close the hospital, since the Clinic did not want another hospital system to use it, and has not chosen to use the existing building for their Wellness Clinic. I feel the Clinic should not deprive Lakewood of a city hospital.

Kucinich's reply is pasted below. It is good to know he is fighting to help save Lakewood's Hospital!

Date: Sat, 19 Dec 2015

Dear Jeanne,

Thanks for writing to express your concern about Lakewood Hospital. I am hopeful that the people of Lakewood will win in court what they did not obtain at the ballot box in November. As you know I have strongly supported the Save Lakewood Hospital citizens movement and shall pass along your excellent suggestions. I continue to pursue action at a federal level. The attempt to close Lakewood Hospital represents a betrayal of the community by the Clinic and some elected officials. It is only because of concerned citizens such as yourself that there is still hope that the public interest may yet prevail.

Sincerely,
Dennis Kucinich

A Nation's Bugle Sounds

by Michael Lauer

Listen, you can clearly hear the sound of the conical shaped, shiny, brass bugle playing in a distance.

Historically, the bugle was used in the Calvary to relay instructions to officers and soldiers during the great battles, assembling leaders, giving marching orders, and was the primary, effective, long distance, communication instrument of the Civil War.

Today, our nation's bugle sounds once again for all American citizens to assemble together as one nation united. Reveille sounds off to all people of this

great nation to stand strong during these troubled times in our country and abroad. Our courageous citizens of the United States have an extraordinary, patriotic allegiance that thrives within their hearts and minds since the Declaration of Independence. This loyalty of men, women and children who are inspired by the love of one's country permeates in the North, South, East and West of this great nation. Together, we will defeat our enemies and win any battle to protect and defend our citizens and the Constitution of the United States.

Representative Antonio Calls For Unity Regarding Hospital Vote

by Nickie Antonio

These are my remarks presented at the December 21st Lakewood City Council meeting:

"My name is Nickie Antonio, I live on Belle Ave. and have raised my family in Lakewood. Over the years I have served as an involved citizen, City Council member (sitting in one of those seats you occupy now), I have served in the office of the Mayor during Madeline Cain's Administration and I now serve as a legislator in the Ohio House. In all those positions of public service, I have experienced just how difficult, difficult decisions are to make. I also know it is nearly impossible to make everyone happy especially when exercising leadership. But leadership demands listening, debating and ultimately arriving at a decision in order to move forward, knowing that always there will be some who disagree with that decision, but move forward we must.

In Lakewood there has been much debate, questions raised, disagreements, accusations, injunctions and more with regard to changes at Lakewood Hospital. At times the vitriol has loomed far above the levels of civil discourse and sadly been personal and hurtful. While we cannot erase those scourges of battle I hope we can commit to moving on with the civility and respect that our community merits, we need to do this especially for our children, who deserve an example of the best of adult behavior.

We as a community have been



State Representative Nickie J. Antonio, Ohio House District 13

engaged in disagreement and debate with each milestone in the City's evolving landscape. A few include the development of the gold coast, the various changes to the hospital especially in 1985 with the change from a public hospital to a private non-profit and in 1997 when the hospital became a part of Cleveland Clinic and entered into the long term lease. With each change there was debate, folks happy and sad about the changes, and ultimately decisions though difficult, were made and we proceeded as a community together.

On November 3rd the people spoke through our democratic process. They chose a mayor and in defeating a ballot measure- the Lakewood voters communicated that they desire decisions to

continued on next page

Forum

A Lakewood Resident Imagines The Clinic’s Holiday Gratitude

by Jeanne Mackay
Inspired by The Tonight Show host Jimmy Fallon’s weekly “Thank You” Notes, I imagined a few of the year-end thank-you notes from the Cleveland Clinic Foundation to those who supported the CCF business strategy over the wellbeing of our community. I suspect they went something like this.

Thank you, Lakewood Hospital Association, for so generously allowing us to “decant” and diminish Lakewood Hospital, turning it into a shadow of its former self. You sincerely understood that we needed those bed licenses for our other facilities. It wasn’t a conspiracy, it’s called a brilliant business plan and we could not have pulled it off without you. We so appreciate your support in our marketing strategy, and, most especially, in keeping our “decanting” plans out of the public eye

for all those years. You can rest assured the records will NEVER see the light of day, guaranteed!
Feeling extra spoiled this holiday season,
The Cleveland Clinic Foundation

Thank you, LHA Step Two Committee, for working with us and Subsidium to convince the public and City Council that the RFP process was actually legit...nice work! Extra kudos for getting them all to buy that “outdated model of care” meme. Our PR guys were right, it worked like a charm! Without your hard work, our much anticipated Avon opening would be in jeopardy.
We cannot end this note without extending our utmost sincere thanks to you, Mayor. You really went to bat for us convincing your constituents that \$18.5 million dollars is a great

return on a One Hundred Twenty Million dollar asset. Heck, the bed licenses alone were worth somewhere northwards of \$70 million! We gotta hand it to you, that was a one savvy sell. Next time you’re out in Avon, pop in and see those Lakewood assets at work in our new world class “outdated model of healthcare” . . wink, wink!
Beyond grateful,
The Cleveland Clinic Foundation

Thank you, Lakewood City Council, for delivering us the most generous, goodie-filled Master Agreement imaginable. The naming rights, non-compete clause, the payments on the installment plan, no guarantees whatsoever, AND taking our word for the value of the assets, its the full monty!
We must admit we were a bit concerned with Huron Consulting on the scene. Their “status quo” option to take some time...develop a strategy to address the facility issues and develop a supportive physician network, and pursue negotiations with other potential partners, had us worried. Thank goodness our friends over on LHA put the kibosh on that one. Phew!
Special shout-outs to our two LHA Reps Madigan and Bullock. You went above and beyond the call of duty and we are both touched and grateful. We’d like to show our appreciation to you by inviting each of you to the grand opening of our acute care inpatient hospital

in Avon! Of course, the hors d’oeuvres are on us!
You have no idea how much your generosity has meant to us this holiday season.
Bless your big and generous hearts,
The Cleveland Clinic Foundation
P.S. We’ll continue to refer to Lakewood as the “healthiest city in America” if you return the favor and refer to us as “the wealthiest hospital system in the region”...LOL

Thank you, Plain Dealer, for consistently remembering where your bread is buttered. A “world class enterprise” needs a “world class” mouthpiece and you folks down at the PD...world-class team players all the way! Extra shout-outs to the gang over in editorial. Whoot! Whoot!
Best Friends Forever,
The Cleveland Clinic Foundation

A sincere THANK YOU to The Lakewood Observer for letting all voices be heard! The grassroots group Save Lakewood Hospital is collecting petition signatures for a referendum to veto Ordinance #49-15 which will close OUR hospital, transfer OUR assets to Cleveland Clinic Foundation and keep other healthcare providers off OUR property. Please visit savelakewood-hospital.org to learn more.
Jeanne Mackay has been a Lakewood resident for 33 years.

Officials Fail City, Future In Citizens’ Hands

by Matt Kuhns
On Monday, December 21, 2015, Lakewood City Council rubber-stamped a secretly negotiated 11th-hour plan to surrender Lakewood Hospital to Cleveland Clinic. The Clinic intends, with this authority, to complete its illicit decanting of what has always been a community-owned hospital, and to lock up healthcare in Lakewood for Clinic-owned hospitals elsewhere. Facing an ongoing lawsuit and possible investigations of their maladministration, the Clinic and its apologists apparently hope to thwart justice with a fait accompli.
The people of Lakewood do not

have to let this happen. Council has embraced a false narrative of “the Clinic or nothing,” blatantly ignoring the active overtures of a fully qualified alternative. Lakewood owes it to future generations, as well as the most vulnerable populations now and tomorrow, to employ every legal means to block the handover of our hospital and negotiate an alternative to the Cleveland Clinic’s dishonesty and theft.
Please don’t begin the coming year by giving up on your community. If council has lost the will to fight for Lakewood’s interests, honest working citizens have not.
Visit savelakewoodhospital.org to learn more.

Representative Antonio Calls For Unity Regarding Hospital Vote

continued from previous page
be made by their elected officials. No matter where we stood before election day, on November 4th we knew where the majority who voted stood on those issues.
I stand here today to say I honor the voice and will of the people. I believe it is time to move Lakewood forward and that begins with supporting the decision of this Council tonight and to work with Mayor Summers and the administration in the future as we have in the past for the betterment of

our City.
During this holiday season may we remember to wish peace and goodwill to all in our community and treat each other with dignity and respect no matter where we stand on this or any issue. As one who loves this community I commit to working with all who are ready to move Lakewood forward as we enter the next phase in Lakewood’s future. Thank you for this opportunity to address you tonight. I wish everyone the happiest of holidays with friends and family.”

A Lesson In Modern Democracy

by Ron Lucas
Even though the vote of city council on the issue to abandon Lakewood Hospital was a foregone conclusion, the auditorium at City Hall was packed with proponents on both sides. All were given time to speak.
Members of the Committee to Save Lakewood Hospital (dressed mainly in red) rendered the most passionate opinions. Council chairperson Madigan constantly referred to them as “red shirts” and admonished them to be respectful. Since when is passionate discourse delivered with a voice of moral outrage disallowed? Where would this nation be without the likes of Thomas

Paine?
The votes and explanations of council were unanimous. Each one defended their decision with the same hand-wringing excuse that they were constrained by restrictions in the city charter. Not one stepped outside the box or came up with a creative solution. There were no heroics from that group--just mediocre renderings and toadying to big money.
Like so many aspects of American life, healthcare has fallen prey to profit. It was a sad night for the City of Lakewood and a foreshadowing of the dismal outcomes we face at the hands of those who are now in charge of our future.

Gordon Tower Insurance Agency Relocates To Lakewood

continued from page 13
commitment, teamwork and integrity.
Their beautiful new office space will enable them to serve clients better with even more space in the heart of Lakewood, Michael and Mary Bodnar’s hometown for the past 17 years. Loyalty from customers has fueled continued growth, making a move to a new facility possible. Together, the INA

Building and Bailey Building represent the second largest office complex in Lakewood. The new office space has great views looking down on the corner of St Charles and Detroit.
The Agency’s new address is 14701 Detroit Rd. Suite 362 and phone is 216/663-7777. Website: www.gordon-towerinsurance.com
Like us on Facebook!

Forum

The Hospital Debate From A One-Year Resident

by Tim Collingwood

I have lived in Lakewood for about a year now, and I have given myself a lot of time to consider both sides of the Lakewood Hospital debate. As a citizen, it is very clear what the whole debate is about. Trust what the Cleveland Clinic is doing, or save what in this transitioning healthcare stage we live in, in this country, that is a rarity among rarities-- a hospital. A hospital that has been put in a reasonable travel-distance for emergencies. A hospital that has been a community staple for years. A defining feature of Lakewood. One of the many reasons why I moved to Lakewood, outside of the diversity, the closeness in distance, the local businesses ranging from the bars and restaurants to the local shops and boutiques, and the affordability.

I went to the last City Council meeting, which was a special meeting in relation to the vote on the referendum to keep Lakewood Hospital open until a better solution could be offered. One citizen offered multiple solutions and was even willing to personally invest financially into it so long as the Council votes no on the agreement at hand. I spoke, because I

had questions.

It is not that I don't understand how City Council works. I understand their reality. I understand the current financial reality of Lakewood Hospital, and the offer that the Lakewood Hospital Association has on its shoulders. I also understand the reality that Lakewood is a politically-conscious and active community, that has a good record. Any citizenry who can bend the will of the Catholic diocese of Cleveland, which is its own behemoth, to save a community staple, like St. James Church is a reputable community, to speak nothing of its many parks, its unique homes, its amazing library, its support for the arts via the Beck Center of the Arts, its phenomenal and recognized schools. I also understand the reality of the legacy of Cleveland Clinic, just ask the former patients of Huron Hospital in East Cleveland. Ask the former patients of Euclid Hospital in Euclid. Ask the nurses who are in between jobs because while they got the prestige of the Clinic, their jobs fell to the line because the turnover rate is high and not because of an individual hospital's economy. Ask

patients who did not get the world-class care based on their income status and don't have enough to sue for malpractice because they can't even afford a council with a lawyer. Ask anyone who refers to Cleveland Clinic to be the city's hospital, even though they often complain that residents of Greater Cleveland, no matter where they live, are not getting world-class care. People would much rather recognize the behemoth and fall into place than acknowledge that it is not perfect.

Of course, Save Lakewood Hospital doesn't want the perfect solution to this problem. They just want the acknowledgment that for the first time in a while and behind their backs, a deal was made that they had no voice in. It doesn't make sense why a community that prides itself on government transparency would suddenly choose to go opaque with this Cleveland Clinic deal. What is assumed is that there was a payoff, and I am sure everyone has a political future at the Clinic's expense. A councilman by the name of David Anderson told me, after I suggested this to him, the usual political shpiel about how he started out.

When I told him that this is a political reality in a post-Citizens United America, and it is not impossible that the Clinic has the Council bought, he pretended that it wasn't the reality. When I told him that this would cost him a vote, he said that that didn't matter to him and that I am just one person. Clearly, the councilman already told me what he didn't want to admit, and that is the entire problem in a nutshell. And, in the City Hall bathroom no less, which, I am glad, still works.

I will give the councilman room to clarify his comments to me if he so chooses. But the City Council seems to be taking after the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland and even the Vatican, and minus the difference of women in leadership roles, it seems that there is a narrative they want to control. They say there is an open dialogue, but it's only open if it is the words they want to hear. They say they are honest and open to feedback, but only so long as it isn't disagreeing with what has been concluded for the "public good." They say they value the voices of their constituency, but like the Vatican and the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, it is parlayed in the direction of the non-participatory, everything agreed-upon, opaque decision, and we as people, as constituents, are only there to accept and obey. Such is the reality of a post-Citizens United political America made flesh in our City Council. To me, as a citizen of Lakewood, that doesn't make sense to me. Maybe it makes sense to the tune of a campaign contributions and a political future in Greater Cleveland that Lakewood

is a part of, but to this citizen, it doesn't make sense.

I have lived in Lakewood for over a year, and have taken the time to educate myself on both sides of the Lakewood Hospital debate. Lakewood has what is still is unique in the Greater Cleveland area-- a hospital that is within a short travel distance of any residential home-- one of the reasons why I moved to Lakewood, outside of affordability. But, this is more than just a Lakewood issue, this is a city issue.

Ask former patients of the Huron Hospital in East Cleveland. Ask former patients of Euclid Hospital in Euclid. The Cleveland Clinic may have world-class reputation, but it does not run like a non-profit organization, it runs like a corporation, and like a corporation, people are nothing but cattle. Hospitals are not recovery centers, they are businesses that make millions on the health care plans of people in all stages of life.

Locations are not founded out of community need, no matter how they are sold, but are founded for real estate prime location. City councils are not representatives of constituents elected in to serve the people, but private entities looking to bought for a good enough price. Community service associations aren't concerned citizens who can afford to maintain the finances of a public service, but are an extra few thousand dollars to offer at the table that you didn't offer to City Council. This is a reality of living in a post-Citizens United America, and catching a hospital in the midst of a financial transition while national health care is also transitioning, well, that's where stink meets opportunity, and Lakewood apparently is not exempt from this political reality.

I only ask that readers consider that the Cleveland Clinic is not perfect, and Clevelanders from all sides and neighborhoods who have had negative experiences and know what happens when a corporation posing as a non-profit organization comes into a community with a successful city hospital to "help" and ends up screwing the city over see it happening again and we say and do nothing, well, it puts our health care options at a dangerous risk, and the constituencies of East Cleveland, Euclid, and Lakewood are not worth the sacrifice.

I still like living in Lakewood, but if the citizens of Lakewood can bend the will of the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland to keep St. James Church open, which is its own behemoth, and which unlike other communities at least that I am aware of, managed to keep St. James open, then I don't see any excuse, financial or otherwise, why Save Lakewood Hospital doesn't deserve the same indirect courtesy of just being heard.

Medical Experts Warn That Climate Change Is A Public Health Threat

by Tiffany Hunt

An international alliance of doctors, nurses, and other health professionals urged world governments to respond to the public health threats posed by climate change with a strong global agreement. This alliance released declarations of a global medical consensus on climate change signed by 1,700 health organizations, 8,200 hospitals and health facilities, and 13 million health professionals at the UN climate conference in Paris earlier this month.

Their declarations call for a "strong, universal and ambitious global climate agreement in which the protection and promotion of health is a central principle."

Carbon pollution exacerbates climate change, contributes to more frequent and more violent extreme weather that costs communities, the federal government, and the American economy billions every year and threatens public health. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s Clean Power Plan is the greatest single action the U.S. has ever taken to address climate change, and is the centerpiece of America's climate commitment in the Paris negotiations.

America's Clean Power Plan, which sets the first-ever federal limits on dangerous carbon pollution from power plants, addresses the primary cause of climate change and safeguards public health from the effects of breathing dirty air. In 2030, the net

public health and climate-related benefits from America's Clean Power Plan are estimated to be worth up to \$54 billion every year.

America's Clean Power Plan will also help avoid up to 3,600 premature deaths, lead to 90,000 fewer asthma attacks in children, and prevent 300,000 missed work and school days.

Legislative and legal challenges to America's Clean Power Plan are nothing more than reckless attempts to dismantle critical environmental and public health protections that reduce pollution and prevent thousands of premature deaths each year. While the polluters and their allies are busy crafting legal challenges to America's Clean Power Plan, they have no plan to address climate change or air pollution to protect the Americans who will suffer if the standards are not fully implemented and enforced.

By attacking America's Clean Power Plan and attempting to block an international climate change agreement, polluter allies in Congress are recklessly working to undermine critical environmental and public health protections that reduce pollution and save lives.

Working with vulnerable populations, I know that these folks are much more susceptible to climate change. I urge Ohio leaders to stand up for America's Clean Power Plan and protect future generations, the elderly and all vulnerable populations.

Pulse Of The City

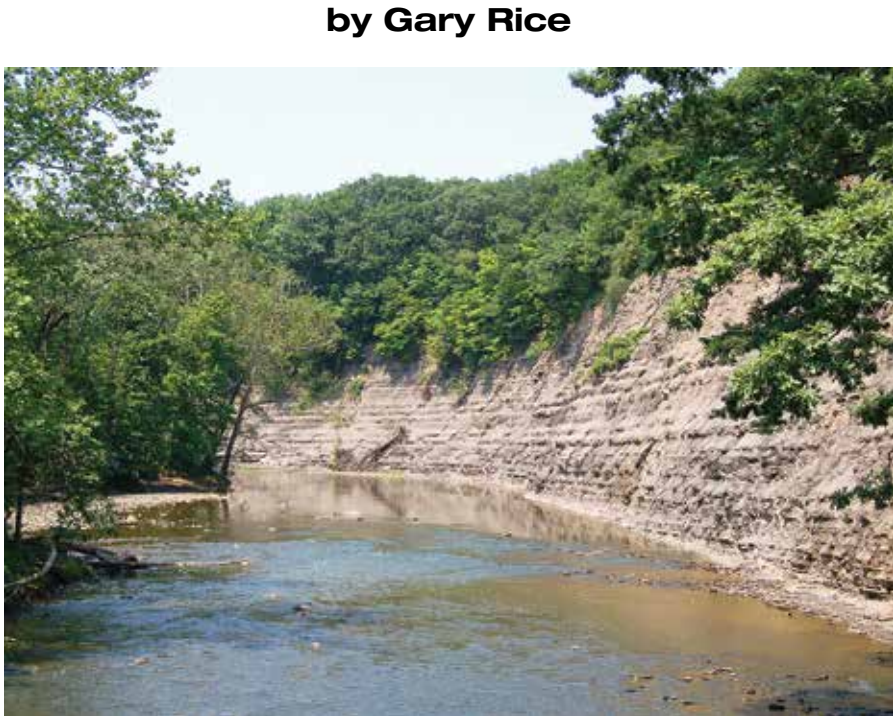
Retreat And Renewal... The Sacred Earthworks...

The traditions of many, if not virtually all modern and ancient religious faiths, include a time of retreat and renewal. Archeologists and theologians will tell us that the practice of re-charging and renewing our spiritual batteries is not a new one. Sometimes, the re-charging and renewal process takes the form of celebrating special days in a calendar year. Summer Solstice, for example, was one such date when many ancient peoples paused to reflect upon their place in the greater scheme of things. These days, even many people having no particular religious affiliation will set aside special days or times for retreat and renewal.

Why the need for such times? That's hard to say, but indeed, it seems to be a universal need. Over the course of our busy lives, sometimes a good night's sleep is simply not enough. Reserving a special time and place for retreat and renewal beyond the normal resting period seems to have been recognized by more and more people these days as being an essential component of our overall health.

Of course, what we do in order to retreat and renew can vary, according to our religious, spiritual, or emotional backgrounds, and what might mean a great deal to me, might not to you. A friend of mine and I were driving through the Rocky River Metroparks when the subject of church-going came up. My friend had some experiences that, early on, had alienated him from traditional religion. That said, he was a very strong man of faith. "Look around," he said (referring to the park), "This is my cathedral," and so it was for him.

There is also a part of our Metroparks system that is my "cathedral," and it's in such a secret place that it's no secret at all. It is however, a very sacred and special place to me, and I would suspect, for many others. It's located on top of a high plateau behind the Rocky River Nature



Rocky River, framed by Arrowhead Island and the sheer cliffs of Fort Hill, in the historic Emerald Canyon.

Center, and it's called Fort Hill. Many years ago, Native Americans occupied that land, constructing earthworks there for uncertain purposes. Specifically, there are three visible parallel ridges to see, (each about 3 feet in height) when you get to the top of the plateau, and, as they say, getting there is half the fun. You can go right up to the top of that 90 foot cliff by a long, (make that VERY long) stairway, or you can make a roundabout journey around the back side of the hill where there are fewer steps at a time to climb, but to say that the journey would be equally, if not more arduous that way, would probably be an understatement; at least for many of us. On my recent journey to the top of Fort Hill on the long steps, I ran into two people; a young apparently college-aged gal, who passed me going up and down a number of times. Then there was this guy, WAY older than I was, doing the same exercise! With my handicapped and unsteady legs, every step was an adventure, but that's the way it can be with a spiritual exercise. Those long

steps were, at least for me, very much a metaphor for life. Would I make it all the way up this time? Could I

then make it back down? Halfway up, I reflected: Should I, COULD I go ahead-- or turn back? Had the time in life come for me to stop doing this sort of thing?

No. Onward. Hang the consequences. Those steps, to me, were very much like life itself. They arise before you and challenge you, so you climb them; all of them that you can, that is... until you can climb no more.

At the top, there is a view that is likely the best view of Rocky River you will ever see, and a few feet farther along the pathway will bring you to the mounds. (Or earthworks, as the Metroparks refers to them.) Our Metroparks have very carefully and respectfully preserved those ancient Native American earthworks, even providing a small platform overlooking them, and surrounding them with a low fence.

Now this is where some of you, maybe even most of you (and particularly the kids) will say, "Is that
continued on page 19

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Lakewood Living

Huntington Playhouse Stories:

‘Nicely Nicely’ Done, Pat Miller

by Patrick M Meehan

Recent reviews about Pat Miller in the lead of the critically acclaimed “Bat Boy: The Musical” at Blank Canvas Theater were full of compliments like, “an actor who is willing to throw himself bodily and every other way into the role,” “creates a completely believable character” or “the ever-intriguing Pat Miller.”

Pat began taking classes at Huntington Playhouse in the summer of 2003. He played Nicely Nicely Johnson in “Guys & Dolls Jr.” under the direction of Tom Castro, featured recently in my story, “On Angel’s Wings,” published in the November 24 issue of the Observer.

Pat enjoyed the experience and resumed classes the following summer while playing the role of Drake in “Honk Jr.” I had seen that production and can attest that Pat had a focus and intensity one would expect in a seasoned actor, but was surprising in someone so young. By 2006 he graduated from “Jr.” shows and was in the ensemble of Neil Simon’s “Sweet Charity” under the direction of Tom Meyrose.

Throughout high school, Pat worked as an apprentice to Judy Mazur in the Youth Theater program at Hun-



Pat Miller in “Spamalot” at Beck Center. Directed by Scott Spence.

tington. This opportunity allowed him to gain experience in directing, stage managing and teaching. During this time, he also designed the logos for the Youth Theater productions. This experience proved quite fruitful as Pat would end up designing logos in his future full-time career. He is now a

graphic designer and marketing coordinator at Beck Center for the Arts.

In 2013 he managed to pick up two “Best Actor in a Musical” awards from the News-Herald and BroadwayWorld Cleveland for his performance as Patsy the coconut-clacking manservant in “Spamalot.” Last year, I had the plea-

sure to see his performance in “[title of show]” at Beck Center for which he won Best Actor in the 2014 Broadway-World Awards for the Cleveland region in the Comedy/Drama category. Just so there is no confusion, “[title of show]” is the title of the show.

He’d refined his craft since I’d first seen him in “Honk,” but his focus and intensity remained underneath the polish time and experience can give. My guess is his list of awards will grow as he delights audiences with the work he enjoys. One can speculate if his early experiences at Huntington Playhouse and that first role as Nicely Nicely is what lead Pat down his career path. In any case, “Nicely” done, Pat Miller!

Pat would like to give credit to his teachers Tom Meyrose, Tom Castro, Dolly Ballou, Judy Mazur, Jayne Kacik and Rachel Spence.

Citizens For Bay Village Community Theater is working to form relationships with civic groups, not-for-profit organizations, government and businesses in Bay Village to provide a true community effort to keep community theater an active and vital part of our city. Visit us at our new website www.baytheater.org. We meet on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. Check our website for meeting location.



Pat Miller

The Board Of Elections Is Seeking Workers

by Mike West

BOARD OF ELECTIONS ANNOUNCES THE FOLLOWING CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Temporary Election Clerk: Location: Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, 2925 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115 Hourly Rate: \$10.00, Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday. Hours: Generally Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m., but may vary to include evenings and weekends, depending on the workload and needs of the department. Assignments may vary in length from a few days to up to 12 weeks or longer.

REQUIREMENTS: High School Diploma or equivalent required. Prior experience in a public contact or customer service environment preferred. Must demonstrate command of Microsoft Windows and Office programs (ex: Word, Excel). Data entry or call center experience is helpful. Driver’s license, proof of automobile insurance and access to a personal vehicle may be necessary for some assignments. Good math skills are helpful. Bi-lingual (Spanish-English) is helpful. Applicants may be required to complete a skills assessment.

RESPONSIBILITIES: Performs assigned duties related to the preparation for Elections, conduct of Elections, and Post Election processes. Duties and responsibilities will vary with the department assigned, but may include the following: Preparing, processing and mailing Vote-by-Mail Ballot applications and Ballots; assisting the public with the In-house Voting process located at the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections; performing data entry; answering phones and providing prompt, accurate, excellent customer service; proofreading various Election related documents for content and accuracy; processing Vote-by-Mail identification envelopes, Poll Books and various reports; processing mail which includes organizing, opening, scanning, proofing and recording

transactions; reviewing, researching, verifying, organizing and/or compiling data, and generating reports; completing tasks associated with Voter transactions such as Vote-by-Mail and Provisional Ballots; safeguarding sensitive documents and supplies; recruiting, scheduling, assigning, and processing payroll for Poll Workers; assisting with the testing of Voting or Ballot Scanning equipment; conducting business in accordance with the Federal Election Guidelines, Title 35 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Policies and Procedures of the State of Ohio, and the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections and according to NVRA and HAVA procedures; performing all other duties assigned, delegated, or required of the management team, including those prescribed by law.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE: Applications and resumes can be submitted through our on-line process only. Visit our website: www.443vote.com, then click on the Employment tab and follow the prompts. Please note that you must complete a BOE on-line profile before you are able to apply for position at the Board of Elections. All job offers are made with the understanding that prospective employees pass a drug test and a criminal background investigation prior to being hired.

Applications must be received by 4:30 p.m., January 8, 2016.

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Lakewood Living

New Ward 4 City Councilman Dan O'Malley Sworn Into Office



photo by: Alex Belisle



photo by: Alex Belisle



photo by: Alex Belisle

- Clockwise from top left.
- (1) The newly sworn in Ward 4 Councilman shakes hands with Judge Carroll as family looks on during the January 1, 2016 ceremony.
- (2) Ward 4 Councilman O'Malley addresses friends, family, and colleagues in the City Hall Auditorium. O'Malley replaces long time Councilwoman and Council President Mary Louise Madigan as the representative for the far east ward in Lakewood.
- (3) Flanked by political veterans, Judge Francine (Frankie) Goldberg and Representative Nickie J. Antonio, O'Malley brings new blood to Lakewood City Council.

Retreat And Renewal...
The Sacred Earthworks...

continued from page 17

all there is to see?" True, the earth-works aren't decorated in tinsel, and illuminated with holiday lights, nor is there an ice cream stand anywhere in sight, nor in fact, is there an end to the trail anywhere close by. In fact, your journey is just beginning. If you wish, you can return down the steps from whence you came. If you have the energy, and you are strong, wise, and VERY careful, you can, after a period of quiet reflection and respect for all that those earth-works represent, proceed along the trail and return by the other way, as I did. (The visitors center has trail maps.) I said "careful" because parts of the trail are along a cliff-side without railings, and roots and pathway obstacles can cause falls. On that woodland journey, however, you will likely discover many things about this place, and perhaps, about yourself, as well. You are, after all,

traversing sacred ground on a sacred hilltop homeland for peoples who were here quite likely, thousands of years before you, and believe me, they will once again be traveling with you. Watch and listen well, for they are there. Trust me on this.

Much of my own childhood was spent in the woods and wilds of rural Pennsylvania. I was therefore as much at home on that woodland hilltop as I would be in my living room. It is indeed my cathedral, and in that cathedral, I have celebrated the cherished memories of friends and family members now passed on, as well as celebrating the Creator, and what plans might be in store for my future. It is indeed a retreat for me, and a sacred place of renewal. Best of all, it can be shared by anyone willing and able to make the journey. Just do so as you would in any journey in life... with determination, respect, caution, and hope.

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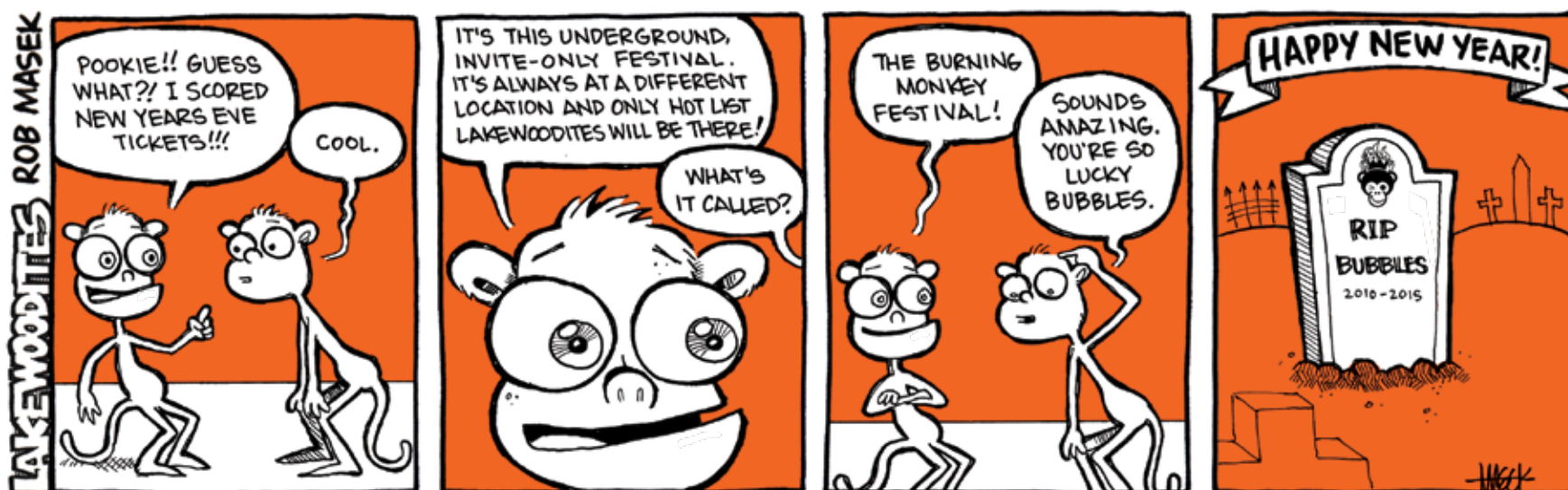
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A small portrait of Chris Bergin, a man in a suit.

The Back Page





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