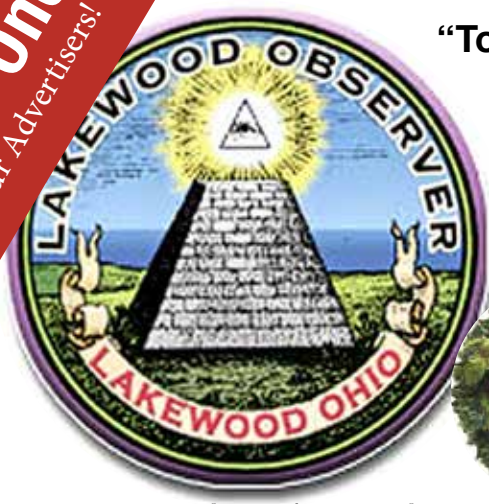


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“To love another is to see the face of God.”-Alain Boubil, Les Miserables

THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Founder of Award Winning Observer Community-Written Newspapers & Websites

Volume 19, Issue 24, December 20, 2023

Let the Voting Begin

LO Holiday Lighting Contest

by Jim O'Bryan

This year we will be offering prizes for the 8 best holiday decorated homes that were nominated and voted on by Lakewood residents.

We will also offer 2 prizes for homes whose decorations

best exemplify or project a message of PEACE ON EARTH..

Voting Process -

On December 18 we posted links to the photos of the homes. Now it's time to vote. You can vote three ways:

1) Online at the link pro-

vided.

2) You can email your votes to:

production@lakewoodobserver.com

3) You can snail mail your

continued on page 6



You can see the finalists on page 6, and you can vote to help choose our winners by following the QR codes, or going to: <http://lakewoodobserver.com> and clicking on the photo galleries.

Lakewood Mourns The Tragic Loss of Cassandra Fear



Photo credit: Go Fund Me page organized by Wendy Benson.

by Sarah Keppel

Neighbors, please hold the family of our beloved community member Cassandra Fear in your hearts, as she unexpectedly lost her life last Saturday, December 16th. The innovative and creative owner of Fear's Confections, Cassandra gave so much to our Lakewood community, donating generously to non-profits and grassroots events, invigorating Uptown Lakewood, and nurturing a welcoming neighborhood. If you would like to help support her husband and two children with a financial contribution you can do so at the official Go Fund Me at https://www.gofundme.com/f/cassandra-fear?utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet&utm_content=facebook_cta_control&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook



Cassandra could best be described as a light that could lift anyone out of bad spirits. From her shop, Fears Confections in Lakewood, to her angelic tenor voice in MANY Sweet Adeline choruses and quartets.... she sprinkled her love, acceptance and inclusivity to everyone who had the luck to be in her presence. She made us all laugh, think, and feel loved.

'22 Alum Kellyn Donohoe

Shining Example Of Vision Of Lakewood Graduate

by Christine Gordillo

At Lakewood City Schools, we love to see our graduates succeeding in their post Lakewood City Schools life. It is especially inspiring to see our most recent grads thriving and exemplifying all the competencies in our Vision of a Lakewood Graduate. Class of 2022 graduate Kellyn Donohoe is a prime example.

Kellyn embodies all of the six competencies - critical and creative thinking, communication, collaboration, empathy, growth mindset and global awareness/citizenship - as she navigates the early stages of adulthood. Kellyn left



Lakewood High with a legacy of outstanding academics and engaged membership in clubs from H2O to marching band to student council and assisting with the girls' basketball team. She did not miss a beat

in her first year at Kent State University.

Kellyn's can-do approach to life born of her personal mantra of focusing on "what I can vs. what I cannot do" has served her well at KSU, where she is part of the Career and Community Studies program. The program is a transitional program that prepares students with intellectual and developmental disabilities for adult life through academic pursuits, peer socialization, and career discovery and preparation.

She continues to be involved in music as part of the

continued on page 5

Warmest Wishes From Lakewood Municipal Court



Judge Neff And The Court Staff Wish You And Your Family a Very Happy Holiday Season
Judge Neff and staff enjoyed fun conversation and comraderie during the court holiday social gathering.

by Tess Neff

The Lakewood Municipal Court extends our warmest wishes for a truly wonderful holiday season. We are proud to be serving the

community and we look forward to continuing the work of improving the court in 2024. May your holidays shine bright and be filled with joy and peace!

January 25 Kindergarten Information Night

by Christine Gordillo

Parents of preschoolers, mark your calendars for Thursday, Jan. 25, 2024 for Lakewood City School's annual Kindergarten Information Night. Come learn all about the Lakewood City Schools' kindergarten experience. You will hear from the Teaching & Learning Department team members from each building. The night will include a ques-

tion-and-answer session and an opportunity to check out the kindergarten classrooms at Grant. Call 216-529-4203 for more information. The event starts at 6:30 pm in the Grant Elementary cafeteria.

Note: Students must be 5 years old on or before September 30, 2024 in order to be age eligible to enter kindergarten in fall 2024.

THE MAYOR’S CORNER

Marijuana In Lakewood

As you likely know, Ohio voters, including Lakewood voters, overwhelmingly approved a state ballot initiative (Issue 2) in November that has altered state law regarding recreational use of marijuana and businesses associated with it. That new law took effect on December 7th, and among other things, it makes it legal for individuals to use and possess limited amounts of marijuana plant material (a maximum of 2.5 ounces) and marijuana “extract” (up to 15 grams).

What Issue 2 did not do was set clear law on how recreational marijuana will be sold commercially or how permits for retail dispensaries, cultivators, or processors will happen. The law actually provides for a “Division of Cannabis” at the State level that will establish standards and procedures for licensing requirements for cultivators, processors, and retailers within

by Meghan George
Mayor/Safety Director City of Lakewood

nine months of the law taking effect. Those regulations (whenever they are eventually created) will affect how Lakewood’s local ordinances guide the location and rules for any proposed recreational marijuana dispensary in our community’s borders.

In addition, the Ohio Legislature has sent clear signals that it will be revising the legislation passed by voters. (Issue 2 was a ballot initiative, and not a constitutional amendment, so the legislature can change the law without asking permission from voters). The back and forth on those revisions has been hectic and confused, and there is no timeline on when any changes to the laws may be finalized and take effect.

With all this in mind, the City of Lakewood recently passed a moratorium

in any way affect the parts of Issue 2 that made it legal to possess limited amounts of marijuana plant material or “extracts,” or other parts of the law not related to retail sales, cultivation, processing. Lakewood is not attempting to interfere with that, and our officers in Lakewood are aware of the new law on personal possession and use and are following it. The recently passed moratorium in Lakewood only affects retail activity for recreational marijuana.

My administration looks forward to getting more clarity from the State of Ohio on this topic in the near future. Our departmental Directors and City Council will then work together to address the need for any local ordinances and regulations that are in the best interests of our Lakewood community.

rimum on the issuance and processing of any permits for cultivators, processors, and retail dispensaries of marijuana. This moratorium allows the Administration and City Council the necessary time to consider whatever changes to the law happen and whatever regulations are eventually set forth by the State of Ohio’s new “Division of Cannabis.” Lakewood’s government can then align our local ordinances, and especially our zoning code, to determine where to allow, limit, or prohibit cultivators, processors, and retail dispensaries in our community. The new moratorium has no effect on the two medical marijuana dispensaries that currently operate in Lakewood.

I also want to make it abundantly clear that this moratorium does not

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Lakewood League Of Women Voters 100th Anniversary 100 Pillars Spotlight:

Cindy Strebig

by Carol Thum

What is it about Cindy Strebig that makes her a pillar of the League of Women Voters after joining just five years ago? Born in North Ridgeville to a truck driving father and a part-time accountant mom, Cindy was the first in her family to graduate from college with a Masters degree in Physical Education from Ohio University. A self described activist, Cindy works with the board of the Cleveland Stonewall Democrats, is on the Board of the Lakewood Family YMCA, a member of the Cuyahoga Democratic Women's Caucus, GRR, the Lakewood Democratic Club, Block Captain on Baxterly Avenue, a member of the Cuyahoga County Central Committee and an Executive Committee Member. As if that isn't enough, she is running for Lakewood City Council to represent Ward 3.

Cindy joined the League of Women Voters after seeing the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument in Washington, D.C. with her wife, Kate. "There on the wall was a timeline from



Cindy Strebig, right with Mary Warren, left, reminding us to vote!

the suffragist movement to the League of Women Voters. The light bulb went on. I thought, Here are my people! The voting activists transformed and are still here. As soon as I got home I looked them up and found that there is a chapter right here in Lakewood." Since joining Cindy has served on virtually every committee. Three years ago she founded the Mary

Warren Impact Scholarship program which has since awarded nineteen \$1,000 scholarships to Lakewood High School seniors. "I am so excited that we are able to help educate at the high school level. Teaching the importance of voting is critical to the success of our democracy. The education can start with younger children too. At the Lakewood Arts Festival, we have a faux voting booth where kids can vote for their favorite princess, super-hero, sport, and ice cream flavor. Even if they don't quite understand the importance of it, at least we start to show them what it's all about. One person, one vote. Everyone gets one vote. Sometimes the vote goes your way and sometimes it does not. We accept the result and move on."

"The League does intensive studies on the issues to take informed positions and I'm glad to see that we're moving in the direction of some activism. The League is educating the public with the Facts About Ohio's Issue 1, what it is and is not. It does not affect parental consent or have anything to do with gender affirming care. This is disinformation intended to stir fear and anger. We literally just had a public forum on this at the library. The lies spread by the opposition to confuse and create mistrust have to be recognized, pointed out, and

disregarded as the garbage that it is." When asked about some of the strongest influences in her life, Cindy credits her mother. "My Mom taught me that you can't let anybody tell you who you are. It's OK to question the rules, and the motives. No one is better than you and we all have to work together and live together, so let's do that!"

"The Lakewood Chapter of the League of Women Voters is talking about doing a Women in Politics Forum with the young people in the high school AP government class so that young women can see themselves in politics, know that there is a path for their success, and that they can thrive and survive in this business. Somebody recently came up to me at the Arts Fest and said, 'You know, I've never missed an election.' That really impressed me, and I want to challenge the young women at the high school to do that too, never miss an election, and tell me about it at the Art Fest in 20 years. I think that when these young women start to vote, and they're paying attention, and they never miss an election, that they are going to change the world."

Carol Thum is a writer and active member of the Lakewood Chapter of the League of Women Voters.

Nickie Antonio's Letter To Ohio Senate Regarding The Rights And Treatment Of Transgender Families

December 11, 2023
To: Members of the Ohio Senate
RE: Sub House Bill 68

Dear colleagues, I write to share my opposition to Substitute House Bill 68, currently in the Senate Government Oversight Committee. This legislation is significantly different from the bill that the Senate voted out in the 134* General Assembly, which focused on banning transgender athletes from participation in sports, legislation I also oppose.

This bill, should it pass, portends dire consequences that would affect families in Ohio with transgender children receiving medical care. Because this bill includes a ban on gender-affirming care for transgender minors, even with parental consent, families will also be denied mental health care and support for their children. This action would jeopardize the health and well-being of those currently under a physician's care by requiring an abrupt legislative, rather than a medically prescribed, end to their treatment.

To quote a letter from the Healthcare Provider Community: "This bill takes away the rights of parents and creates a situation where their children will no longer receive the care that they need and that their parents support. Parents of transgender children face an extraordinarily difficult situation, as do their kids. These parents have the ultimate responsibility to care for their children, and Sub House Bill 68 undermines that obligation."

I am especially struck by the sheer lack of regard and respect for parents' rights in this legislation. In all opposition testimony to the bill, parents and providers spoke about the importance of affirming the needs of the children in their care and protecting them from harm.

The Ohio Children's Association tells us that there are 2.6 million kids living in Ohio. Around a third of the individuals diagnosed with gender dysphoria begin medical treatment under the age of eighteen. This is 0.0003% of the population of minors in Ohio.

I continue to be baffled by the legislative urgency in micromanaging a complex medical condition that affects a small, misunderstood segment of the population.

I urge that the Senate not move this bill forward. If more time is needed to gain understanding, then perhaps Substitute HB 68 should be referred to the Senate Subcommittee to hear from healthcare experts on the current situation of transgender health care in this state.

As legislative leaders, I would hope that we could provide compassion and support for all our families in Ohio and take the time to gain understanding, not condemnation, on circumstances out of our own lived experience.

Sincerely,
Nickie J. Antonio
Senate Minority Leader
Ohio Senate | Senate Building 1
Capitol Square, Columbus, Ohio

LAKEWOOD DENTAL GROUP

A group photo of the Lakewood Dental Group staff, consisting of approximately 15 people of various ages and ethnicities, all smiling and standing in front of a wall with framed certificates.

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LAKEWOOD SCHOOLS

'22 Alum Kellyn Donohoe
Shining Example Of Vision Of Lakewood Graduate

continued from page 1

KSU basketball pep band, is a member of the honors fraternity, Phi Sigma Pi, and is part of the Dress Up for Downs club on campus. And

she earned a 4.0 GPA her first year! Kellyn taps into her growth mindset to try out new things in college and has relied on her collaboration and communication skills to be a successful member of the organizations she is part of. Her fraternity offers opportunities to be a globally aware citizen and show empathy through its emphasis on community service.

No surprise that this summer Kellyn is a valued member of not one, but two staffs as she works at GV Art & Design and the Recreation Department's Safety Town program, where she helps children learn how to be safe in their community. She hopes one day to work with children full time as an educational assistant. We have no doubt that Kellyn will approach fulfilling that goal as she does everything in her life, with determination and a small on her face!

Happy Holidays From
Lakewood Board Of Education President
Michael J. Callahan And Family



Pictured left to right are Michael, daughters Kenna and Mary Frances, son Liam, and wife Kristyn.

Happy Holidays From
Colleen Clark Sutton

Dear Fellow Lakewoodites,

Happy Holidays
and Happy New Year

Here's a special shoutout of gratitude to:

1. Music teachers and students at Garfield, Harding, and Lakewood High School for a full schedule of concerts celebrating the holidays and showcasing their hard work and practice;

2. City of Lakewood Leaf Collection Crew who are continuing to suck up leaves even as we read this edition of LO;

3. Linda Beebe for 40 years service as a Lakewood School Board Member plus several years as a classroom teacher prior to that. Her breadth of knowledge about and commitment to the community of Lakewood is extraordinary.

Cheers!
Colleen Clark Sutton

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Indoor Track is Open!

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LO HOLIDAY LIGHTING CONTEST



Let the Voting Begin LO Holiday Lighting Contest

continued from page 1

votes to: Lakewood Observer, PO Box 770203, Lakewood, Ohio 44107

The voting process ends December 25th, any votes after will not be counted.

Votes will be tabulated at midnight on December 30th, and announced on

January 1st. The winner will appear on the front page of the print version of the Lakewood Observer. Other homes MAY appear in the paper as well.

During this time of turmoil, political upheaval and social division, let's work together to make this the best possible holiday season for everyone.

Good luck and thank you to all.

Holiday Thoughts And Why We Do The Holiday Contest

by Jim O'Bryan

I took this photo over 20 years ago and it might have had the biggest impact on my life. I no longer have the originals; all that is left of this epiphany of enlightenment is this low-rez out-of-focus copy.

It is one of my favorite memories/photos, especially during Christmas. I was out driving around when I stopped the car to take the photo, I was amused by the colored window blankets over the windows.

As I looked around the neighborhood, most of the neighbors had done nothing. Then it hit me, at least this family had taken the time to brighten the neighborhood and add to the lives of others. Who hasn't used sheets or blankets as temporary blinds? To color coordinate for the holidays is many steps above that.



It is an overt act bringing joy to the world, something missing in too many people's lives these days.

Next time you drive around and look at holiday lights, marvel at the big amazing displays. But stop, and take in the little ones. Think back to your first strand of lights and how you spent hours thinking about how to hang them just right. Who knows how or why the decisions were made, but the basic reason is the magic -- an effort to wish everyone, "HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT!"

This holiday season, I encourage all to slow down, give to charities that help with those who are in need, and take a second to brighten your neighborhood and world.

To View All The Homes
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To VOTE
Use This QR Code



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GREETINGS OF THE SEASON



Happy Holidays to our wonderful Lakewood community! As we wrap up another year, it's a time to reflect on the moments that made us smile and the challenges that made us stronger. Let's cherish the warmth of shared memories, laughter, and the joy of giving. This season, may your homes be filled with love, your hearts with kindness, and your spirits with hope. Wishing everyone a festive and peaceful holiday season. Cheers to a bright New Year ahead!

Holiday Greetings
From The
Shachner Family

Happy Holidays!
Wishing you and
your loved ones a safe and
happy holiday season.

Sincerely,
The Shachner Family



Olivia, Jason, & Michelle Shachner

SEASON'S GREETINGS
FROM KYLE BAKER!

I wish you all the hope, wonder, and joy that the season can bring! It has been a tremendous privilege, responsibility, and honor to be elected and serve as the Ward 1 representative on Lakewood City Council. Please accept the warmest of holiday wishes from me and my family. Here's to an incredible 2024 for Lakewood!

Kyle Baker, Lakewood City Council Ward 1



Holiday Greetings

Seasons Greetings to you, your family, and friends!
May all your Holidays be Merry and Gay!
And may you find peace, tolerance, kindness and charity to carry you through the new year.

Sincerely,
Lakewood City Councilperson Elect, Cindy Strebig, and Kate Baney.



L to R: Andrew Harant, Quinlan Owens, Sarah Kepple

by Sarah Kepple

Whether you're welcoming a college student home for break or decking a tiny tree in your first apartment, there's nowhere like Lakewood for the holidays! Some of our favorite family traditions are picking up our tree at Lakewood Garden Center on the weekend of Light

Up Lakewood and visiting local shops to find unique stocking stuffers. Whatever your tradition, we hope that this season is merry and bright for you and your loved ones.

Happy Holidays,
Sarah, Andrew and Quinlan

Happy Holidays From The Bullock Family
To our Lakewood neighbors,

Blessings from our family to yours this holiday season and our sincerest wishes for a happy new year!



The Bullocks (Tom, Molly, Tommy, William, and Bridget)

LAKEWOOD CARES

Community West Foundation Awards \$765,500 In Fourth Quarter Grants

by Maria Estes

The Community West Foundation Board of Directors approved \$640,500 in fourth quarter grants to nonprofit agencies that are located in Cleveland, Western Cuyahoga and Lorain Counties. An additional \$125,000 was distributed through their Community Impact Fund bringing the grand total to \$765,500. The Community Impact Fund was established for donors who want to invest alongside Community West’s mission knowing that contributions would be distributed directly to grantees quarterly.

For the fourth quarter, Community West Foundation provided grants to community service nonprofits that provide a variety of services and other unique programs.

Organizations receiving grants: Cuyahoga County:

Carolyn Farrell Foundation for Brain Health - Offers arts enrichment to help with isolation and improve the quality of life for individuals with Alzheimer's and Dementia

Community of Hope - Creates communities and a sense of belonging for homeless youth and young adults who age out of foster care without a family; links youth to mental health services, job programs, school tutoring, GED courses, and parenting support

Ed Keating Center - Provides recovery services in a sober living environment for men and women struggling with chemical addiction

Frontline Services - Backbone of behavioral health services in Cuyahoga County for those with the highest barriers to services including individuals who are homeless, severely mentally



Lakewood Community Services

disabled, in psychiatric crisis, and those who have been traumatized by violence

Journey Center for Safety and Healing - Serves those affected by child abuse and domestic violence through a 24-hour helpline, emergency domestic violence shelter, trauma services, and the Justice System Advocacy Program

Lakewood Community Services Center - Provides bi-monthly home delivery of food to low and extremely low-income clients in Lakewood, Rocky River, and Westlake

May Dugan Center - Addresses inequities in access to health care, food, and living wages through behavioral health and basic needs services, Seniors on the Move programs, Reception & Placement, and their Trauma Recovery and Education Resource Centers

Merrick House - Provides Moms First program to reduce racial disparities in poor birth outcomes and infant mortality in the City of Cleveland

Nueva Luz Urban Resource Center - Provides people living with HIV/AIDS with wraparound services including housing assistance, legal aid,

addiction recovery, and food programs to address the root causes and impacts of systemic poverty

St. Paul’s Community Outreach - Meets near west side residents’ needs through food pantry, hygiene, and basic medical support, phone access, and clothing ministry; provides medical information, bus tickets, vouchers for birth certificates and IDs, and referrals; serves as an overflow men’s shelter

site

Scranton Road Ministries - Works to break the cycle of poverty through a legal clinic, academic enrichment center, and youth jobs partnership

Seeds of Literacy - Improves lives through literacy by providing one to one adult education and GED tutoring in physical classrooms and online

Transformations by Austin Angels Cleveland - Only organization in Northeast Ohio providing volunteer, community support to fostering families to ensure healthy, affirming, and lasting relationships

West Side Catholic Center - Provides food, clothing, shelter, job training, rent subsidies, and case management through their Resource Center, Workforce Development Program, Moriah House shelter, the Family Engagement Program, Zachaeus Housing Solutions, Culinary Academy, and Family Success Network

Maria Estes is the Community West Foundation's Marketing & Communications Director.

Lakewood Charitable Assistance Corporation Holiday Food Drive Wraps Another Successful Year

With the help of all our wonderful volunteers, 300 Lakewood households received bags full of food for the upcoming holidays! Thank you to everyone who helped over the past two days, we really couldn’t do it without you!



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4 Items	\$11.25	\$13.75	\$18.25	\$21.25
Deluxe	\$12.00	\$14.75	\$19.50	\$25.00
Extra Items	\$.75	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$1.75
Chicken	\$2.25	\$2.75	\$3.75	\$4.75
Extra Cheese & Special Toppings	\$1.75	\$2.25	\$3.25	\$4.25

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SPECIAL TOPPINGS: Artichoke Hearts, Tomato, Broccoli, Chicken



SLEEP RESEARCH STUDY



Case Western Reserve University is conducting a research study on the sleep behavior of teens.

Study Purpose:
Information from this study will help us understand how social factors may shape teen sleep.

Eligible Participants:
Boys and girls 11-14 years of age and a parent or legal guardian. Teen must not have a diagnosed sleep disorder or other major chronic illnesses or disorders. Teen and parent must be able to read and speak English. Only one teen per home may participate.

Where and What:
At your home. The study consists of approximately three 1-hour home visits over a 2-week time period. The study involves tracking your sleep, gathering some information about your sleep environment, and completing questionnaires.

Compensation:
Teen and parent participants will be compensated for their time.

If you are interested in this study, please contact:
Study Recruiter, Lynda Owens
Phone: 216-368-4128 Email: Lynda.owens@case.edu

This study is being conducted at
Case Western Reserve University, School of Medicine
by Dr. James Spilsbury, Principal Investigator
email: James.spilsbury@case.edu.

This study has been approved by
Case Western Reserve University Institutional Review Board,
STUDY20201856

LAKEWOOD CARES



The Season Of Giving At O'Neill Healthcare

by Amy Reinker

O'Neill Healthcare is embracing the season of giving by giving back to our surrounding communities in a variety of ways. Notably, our team at O'NeillHealthcare Middleburg Heights is giving back by volunteering their time at a local shelter and adopted a family with The Littlest Heroes Pediatric Cancer Foundation, while our other facilities combined to donate 350 pounds of food to five different local food banks. Grounded in the values of family, our six O'Neill Healthcare locations are dedicated to giving back to the neighborhoods we serve, especially during the holiday season.

O'Neill Healthcare Lakewood

kicked off the season with a food drive starting in early November. Contributions were collected in Lakewood's lobby and all proceeds were donated to Lakewood Charitable Assistance Corporation. Over 50 pounds of food were collected and delivered to Lakewood Masonic Temple on November 17th. This contribution went towards feeding over 300 families for the Thanksgiving holiday!

The vibrant spirit of giving at O'Neill Healthcare is embodied by our residents, who actively engage with our activities department to create crafts to donate throughout the community. This year, residents at our Lakewood facility played a crucial role in creating care packages for children in third-world countries, ensuring they receive Christmas gifts. Additionally, they crafted heartfelt Christmas cards for U.S. troops stationed overseas, spreading joy and gratitude during the holiday season.

O'Neill Healthcare takes pride in contributing to the resources of the surrounding community, and we express thanks to our community members, residents, and families for their thoughtful donations. All O'Neill Healthcare facilities are active in their communities, and frequently host events open to the public. If you are interested in hearing more about our upcoming events, taking a tour of one of our 5-Star facilities, or becoming a volunteer, please call (440) 808-5500 or visit ONeillHC.com.

Roots Of Resilience

by Jeff Woodward

He isn't the most majestic arboreal specimen in Lakewood – but he must be among the most mighty.

When I bought the property at 2257 Emily in 1997, the front yard was tree-less. A few years later, I planted a Bradford pear tree – “Brad” – near the middle of the yard. Brad grew, and he flourished, and he provided shade. He was wonderful.

He was 30 feet tall and had just been professionally pruned when, in the middle of the night on Oct. 30, 2012, Superstorm Sandy barreled into town and huffed and puffed and split him like a banana. Top to bottom. Right down the middle.

That morning I peered out the kitchenette window only to see half of a vertical Brad still standing. It was so strange; so saddening. I cleared away what I could of my fallen friend and called the tree guys. A few days later, they cut down the rest of Brad, dug out his roots and hauled him away. RIP Brad.

I debated my options. In September 2013, a local nursery delivered and planted a healthy King Crimson Maple smack-dab in the middle of the yard. Not far from where Brad had been parked. At 6 feet tall, “The King” was a little beauty.

Not long after I started lovin’ on The King – with autumn setting in – I noticed, of all things, this hearty-looking growth sprouting, a couple feet the other side from where Brad had rooted. I tried to pull it out, but it wouldn't



Brad Jr. this December growing strong.

budge. I said, “OK, whatever you are, I'll deal with you next spring.”

By mid to late spring of 2014, the “weed” was bulkier, growing in a moderately curved shape out of the ground. What is this, I thought? I tried digging it out, to no avail. I hacked at it a bit. No dice. Whatever it was, it wanted to live. So I let it be. And it grew. It grew more. And it grew quickly. And yes, it grew evident that my trusty tree guys didn't quite remove all of Brad's roots. And Brad Jr. was alive and well as its successor.

Good tree sense tells me Brad Jr. and The King are too close together; that they will compete for moisture and nutrients, and that the growth of both will be stunted. But God sense tells me to just let 'em be. Yes, I see the numerous splits in Brad Jr.'s bark, a sign

continued on page 11

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LAKEWOOD BUSINESS

Lakewood’s New Vegan Restaurant:
Black Market Meats



Owner Todd Kronika in the window, author Marie Kirksey and son Marquae Walls at the cash register, and Christina Osborne.

by Marie Kirksey

If you're like me, a vegan living in Lakewood, you're always looking to try something new. Have you tried our new vegan delicatessen, Black Market Meats? If you haven't, you have no clue what you and your taste buds are missing.

A vegan deli concept, who would've ever thought of it? The owners and operators are Todd Kronika (who has been a plant-based eater for like 20 years) and Cory Hajde, a very brilliant restaurateur. Todd's sister, Candice, is also a part of this delicatessen. She's usually working the deli counter with smiles and offering a suggestion if you're unsure of which option to try. Black Market Meats offers an array of different sandwiches on a weekly basis. The house-made meats in combination with other local ingredients make up delicious sandwiches with names such as butter mushroom, chicken relish,

salami Italian & hummus on sour-dough just to name a few.

If you're not in the mood for a sandwich, they have vegan sides. These are not your grandmother's sandwich sides, unless she's vegan. They range from different salads like potato & broccoli to hummus and soups. They've recently added vegan cookies to the menu, but you have to get them while they last.

The next time you're craving a deli sandwich with a delicious vegan side but you don't want to travel far, go to Black Market Meats Delicatessen. They're located in the east of our city at, 15613 Detroit Ave. The hours are Wednesday thru Sunday from 12-6p. Be sure to mention this article to get the owners to blush.

Black Market Meats
15613 Detroit Ave,
Lakewood, OH 44107



Intergenerational Holiday Party At Cove

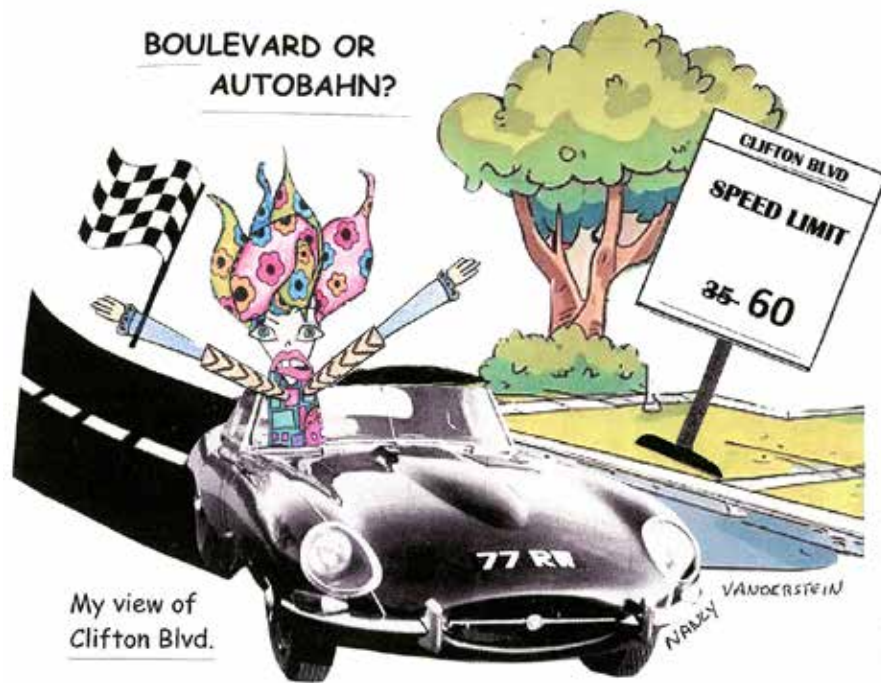
by Nancy Feighan

Oh, what fun we had at last Friday's Intergenerational Holiday Party at Cove! We crafted, chatted with Mrs. Claus, played games, painted ornaments, enjoyed a delicious potluck, and wrapped up the day with a cheerful movie. People of all ages, from babies to older adults, had a fantastic time!

Dear LO editor,

This is how I feel when I drive down Clifton Boulevard. Someone is always leaving me in the dust or following so closely you can see their nose hairs.

Thanks, Nancy Vanderstein





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LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Good News, Great Joy, All The People

by Holly Shaheen

At Christmas Eve church services growing up, the pastor had an annual tradition. He would split our congregation into 3 groups, and assign them each a phrase to yell out when he pointed at them. One group was “Good News,” another “Great Joy,” and the final group, “All the People.” He would spend several minutes pointing at various groups, conducting them like an orchestra, until the words were really stuck in our heads. And stick they did. While I remember little else about what was said during those Christmas Eve sermons, a few decades later I can still see the congregation shouting, “Good News, Great Joy, All the People!”

If you’re familiar with the Christ-

mas story, or at least A Charlie Brown Christmas, you probably recognize the reference from the Gospel of Luke. An angel appears to a group of shepherds late at night to tell them about a miracle, saying, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:10-11)

A lot of imagery during this season focuses on the humble location where Jesus was born, from nativity scenes to songs like Away in a Manger. As the first-time mom to a 6-week old son, this year I’ve been thinking more about how this Savior came into the world, rather than where he arrived. When

we think of powerful beings, whether humans or God, probably the last thing that comes to mind is a newborn baby. They are completely dependent on those around them for care and protection. Yet God chose to send his Son to us as a newborn baby, in the same form that every one of us enters the world.

From the beginning of his life here, Jesus unites himself to us in the very core of our humanity. And as the Christmas carols and nativity scenes remind us, his arrival is not proclaimed to kings or powerful politicians, but to shepherds in a field. As an adult he sought out people from every walk of life, spending his

time with fishermen, the sick, Roman Centurions, outcasts, religious leaders, adulterers, wealthy rulers, and small children. He is truly a Savior for all of the people.

Regardless of who you are, there is good news for you this Christmas Eve, and that good news leads to great joy for all who hear it. “Hark!” the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

Holly Shaheen is a Lay Catechist at St. Anselm Anglican Church in Lakewood. If you’d like to hear more about the good news of Christmas, please consider joining us at 4 PM on Christmas Eve, or visiting another church in the area.

Roots Of Resilience continued from page 9

of vulnerability. His lot are susceptible to wind damage, as I’ve learned. “This tree should be removed before it lands on your house,” I have been told.

True, someday Brad Jr. will be gone. And (spoiler alert) so will I.

Today Brad Jr. stands strong, sprawling more and more with all the summer rain. He and The King and I are getting along just fine. And I really need their shade now – especially since the awning that hung over my west-facing front door fell victim to the stubbornly hellacious winds this past spring and has gone the way of Brad Sr.

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