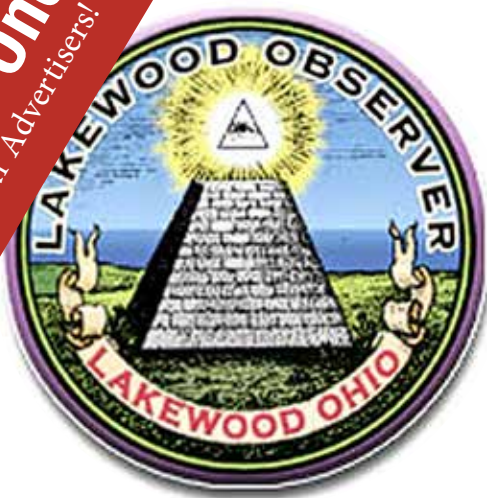


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THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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Volume 20, Issue 6, March 20, 2024

"The great gift of Easter is hope." - Basil Hume

Fire And Ice Hockey Game March 23rd: Lakewood Fire Department, LHS Hockey Teams And Alumni Face Off

by Seth Andregg

Join us Saturday, March 23 at Winterhurst from 4pm to 7pm for a fun filled community event to support the special education students in Lakewood High School's MILES Unit!

Watch our very own Lakewood Fire Department face off in a thrilling hockey game vs. the Lakewood High School hockey program!

Tickets are \$5 and are available for pregame purchase at www.lakewoodfirefighters.com or at the door on game night (cash only). Doors open at 4:00pm with puck drop at 5. Kids under 5 are free!!

Concessions will be available along with a 50/50 raffle, \$5 sideboards and \$1 Chuck-a-puck with awesome prize packs from local donors!!



Last year's Fire and Ice event pitting Lakewood Fire against LHS Hockey Alumni was not only a huge success, it was a great afternoon for the family while supporting the people that are always there for us-- Lakewood Fire Department. See you there!

All proceeds will be directly benefiting the students of the MILES Unit and will be used locally in the community to teach students valuable daily living skills, on community based outings, for classroom supplies and to provide experiences to

students that they otherwise would not have access to!

We hope to see you at the game!

Winterhurst is located at 14740 Lakewood Hts Blvd.



The city is discussing the sale of 1450 Belle Ave.

Weed, Deeds And Speed: Three Meetings At City Hall

by Theodore Babcock

Lakewood City Hall hosted three meetings on Monday, March 18, 2024. The Public Safety Committee,

Housing, Planning, & Development Committee as well as Lakewood City Council met at 6:00, 6:45 and 7:30 respectively.

continued on page 3

Keep Lakewood Beautiful To Host 'Pop Up, Pick Up, Pour Up' Cleanup Event On March 27



Keep Lakewood Beautiful to Host 'Pop Up, Pick Up, Pour Up' Cleanup Event On March 27

by Matt Bixenstine

Keep Lakewood Beautiful is pleased to announce its first 'Pop Up, Pick Up, Pour Up' event of 2024. Join our volunteer-led group on Wednesday, March 27, at 6 pm at the northwest corner of Madison Avenue and Warren Road to do good, have fun, and make friends.

Pop Up - Meet at the northwest corner of Madison Avenue and Warren Road near University Hospitals Urgent Care (14800 Madison Ave) at 6 pm. Bags, vests, gloves, and litter tongs will be provided.

Pick Up - Help us to pick

up litter and beautify the public spaces and commercial corridors along Madison and Warren.

Pour Up - Afterwards, around 7, we'll head to Red Rose Cafe to pour up a drink (pay as you go) in celebration of a job well done.

Visit our Facebook event to learn more. This event will be postponed in the event of inclement weather.

We hope you can join us to beautify our community!

Matt Bixenstine enjoys all things Lakewood, especially walking his basset hound through Madison Park.

Do The Bunny Hop And Hop On Over

by Naomi Schiffrik

Hop on over to Grace Lutheran Church, 13030 Madison Ave., on Saturday March 23 at 9:30 am for an Easter Egg Hunt Extravaganza. Children ages 3-10 and their families are invited to join us for a morning of fun. Come play games like Bunny Golf and Guess the Number of Jelly Beans to win prizes. Make crafts including an Eas-

ter necklace, a magnet and a standing cross. Decorate your own cookie and enjoy eating it at the refreshment center. Have your picture taken with the Easter Bunny. Color a bag to collect your prizes and crafts and the eggs you find on your Easter Egg Hunt which ends at 11:00 am.

This fun-filled event is free and open to the community. Anyone interested



will also be able to tour our preschool which is enrolling students now for the 2024-25 school year.

The Easter Bunny will be looking for you.

Lakewood Wins Academic Challenge

by Dr. Charles Greanoff

Kudos to Shannon Katzenberger, Rowan Brown, Yasmine Elhachdani and Academic Challenge Advisors Autumn Sabin and Jason Saksa. (Note--LHS actually had 590 but still beat Mayfield with 420 and River handily). These students are hard working, engaged learners, and those of us that have had them in class are very fortunate. Long Live Lakewood.



THE MAYOR’S CORNER

Improving And Celebrating Our Parks

Lakewood’s parks and greenspaces are rightly treasured and highly used by our residents. The City of Lakewood is always working to ensure that these jewels are consistently maintained. We also regularly evaluate how the parks are used, what updates are needed, and opportunities for improvements based on resident priorities and needs. This year, our Planning and Development Department is once again working through community input and engagement on potential updates to multiple parks.

At Lakewood Park, we are working through development of a Waterfront Access Plan that aspires to increase public access and exposure to our city’s greatest natural asset – Lake Erie. Outreach has been ongoing for months, and the City and our design team from SmithGroup recently hosted an open house that drew dozens to offer feedback on renderings of the proposed plans. The recommendations include exciting ideas to achieve the goal of building the connection between the people of Lakewood and our Great Lake. You can see the concepts here: <https://www.lakewoodoh.gov/lakewood-park-waterfront-access-feasibility-study/>. The City is excited about the potential to achieve this plan and will continue to refine it as we explore how to fund the recommendations.

We are also completing another planning process for Lakewood’s second largest city park, Madison Park. The result of this work, and partnership with the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, is a master plan that lays out the future vision for this important and heavily used community asset. Once again, the team at City Hall was successful in securing outside funding for the plan, with over 85% of the costs coming from a Cuyahoga County Planning Commission grant. We expect the master plan to be adopted this Spring.

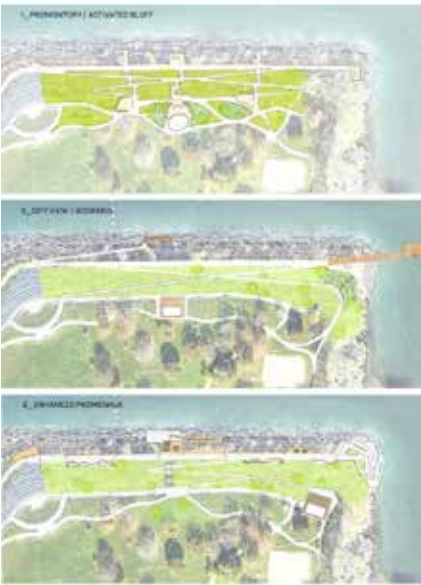
Even as we position our largest parks for maximum benefit, the City also is highly focused on our neighborhood parks, and public input is essential there as well. A community-wide online survey and an in-person meeting at Cove Community Center were both concluded recently regarding Merle Bunts. For Niagara Park, planning outreach is open now through an online survey and a public workshop on Tuesday March 26th from 3:30pm - 5:30pm in the Hayes Elementary School library. We all look forward to the ideas that develop to

by Meghan George
Mayor/Safety Director, City of Lakewood



photo by Jacob Chabowski

PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS



cost effectively maximize the benefits of our parks. We can all look forward to seeing the concepts from these plans put into action in the months and years to come.

In related news, I want to close by expressing my gratitude to Lakewood residents for the fantastic response to the Tree Giveaway Program sponsored through the City of Lakewood’s Tree Advisory & Education Board. We had 100 trees to give away, one per household that applied, and those trees were rapidly claimed in a matter of hours. This is another example of how everyone in Lakewood can play a role in keeping our city beautiful and help maintain and build on our tree canopy. A healthy tree canopy has multiple benefits – from addressing stormwater volume and helping to clean the air to carbon mitigation and simply making Lakewood a more attractive place to live. Let’s all continue to do our part to care for and improve the health of Lakewood’s trees.

keep these neighborhood assets continue to shine.

All of these park planning efforts are key to maintaining the high standards for public assets that are part of our DNA here in Lakewood. The City will never rest on its laurels and always look at ways to creatively and

Lakewood Clock Repair



Your Independent Source for Lakewood News & Opinion

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Lakewood Observer

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THE CITY WITH TED

Weed, Deeds And Speed:
Three Meetings At City Hall

continued from page 1

The Public Safety Committee heard presentations from and asked questions of Law Director Ernie Vargo and Chief Prosecutor Myriam Miranda regarding changes to Section 513.01 of the Codified Ordinances as it pertains to Adult-Use Marijuana. Director Vargo explained that a group in the Law Department has been meeting to work on this section and expects to have a final draft prepared for Council to review in 4 - 6 weeks. Ms. Miranda assured the committee and members of the public that police officers would be trained and given updated protocols as Lakewood adapts to the legalization of Adult-Use Marijuana.

The Housing, Planning, & Development Committee discussed a number of city-owned properties that the city is looking to sell by partnering with a licensed real estate broker. The committee failed to send this action item along to council for approval because of Committee Chair Thomas Bullock's apprehension around selling the property at 1450 Belle Ave. The brick building across Belle from the pit that used to be Lakewood Hospital has housed offices of the Cleveland Clinic as well as the Lakewood Child Care Center. The Chairman seemed truly troubled by the prospect of selling the parcel as he



The home at 12984 Lake Ave which the city plans to sell.

reminisced aloud about negotiations to procure it during the closing of the hospital. Bullock was under the impression that collecting rent from tenants there was a source of income for Lakewood and did not want to agree to part with the building if it was adding to the bottom line. Director of Planning & Development Shawn Leininger stated that the city is spending "hundreds of thousands of dollars" to maintain the building and that it is a risk for the city citing the condition of the edifice. Leininger also cited insurance cost as a point against keeping

the property in the city's real estate portfolio. This agenda item was deferred and will be revisited the next time the committee meets.

The City Council Meeting lasted 13 minutes and was over at 7:49 pm. The longest discussion on any one item was a resident's concern about a \$458 charge for a sidewalk repair in front of his house. He stated that when he initially asked about the sidewalk when it was marked for repair with spray paint by the city he was told that there was no issue with it and it would not

be repaired. One year later when the homeowner was out of town he received a phone call stating that the sidewalk was going to be repaired at his expense. Public Works Director Chris Gordon addressed the gentleman at Council President Sarah Kepple's prompting and confirmed the stated timeline of events. He offered to speak with the concerned citizen directly after the council meeting to resolve the issue and he did do so. After the respectful exchange Mayor Meghan George explained that this public comment highlighted a known issue in the Public Works Department. She expressed a desire to improve the Sidewalk Replacement Program, implying that there have been other instances of marked sidewalks not being visited by workers in a timely manner.

The three meetings started ten, five and six minutes late respectively. There seemed to be little regard for punctuality despite the triple-header on the schedule. One member of council even walked over to me to shake my hand at 6:07. My bicycle seat would have had a few fewer snowflakes on it at the end of the night if everyone had been seated and ready to start on time.

Ted Babcock is a photographer living in Lakewood.

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LAKEWOOD SPORTS

Dr. G's Lakewood Ranger Round-Up: Lakewood Prevails In OHSAA Finals

by Dr, Charles Greanoff

March 2: Lakewood Rangers vs Hudson Explorers

To beat a tough and physical Hudson squad, the Lakewood Rangers needed to play with peak level effort and mental toughness. They did just that, and after 32 tense minutes, behind a great team effort and some clutch plays, the Rangers prevailed in

the OHSAA Sectional Final 58-55.

Lakewood held a small lead most of the way, but when the Explorers finally took the lead late in the 3rd quarter, junior guard Luke Vannucci (13 points) coolly hit a transition 3 pointer from the top of the key--perhaps the most important basket of the game-- halting Hudson's momentum and calming their increasingly engaged fans. From there, junior guard Lucas Seguire

used his superb ball handling skills to score 6 of his game high 16 points in the decisive fourth quarter. Great team defense on the last two Hudson possessions meant a win for Lakewood and a welcome reprieve from a nail-biting overtime period. The three senior starters, in their last game at the East Gym, played strong at both ends. Jack Gowan (11 points) cashed in three 3 pointers, had two steals, and helped

stake the Rangers to an early lead. Dominic Peck (6 points) scored 4 critical points late, each time pushing the Lakewood lead to 3 points. Senior Drew Jablonski was vintage Drew, fiercely battling for rebounds against the much larger Hudson squad, finishing strong at the rim (14 points), and, most of all, setting a tone--and standard--of intensity that lifts the whole team. It was all hands on deck today--the student section was all that and more--loud, proud, positive and engaged. The pep band and cheer squad did their part and then some. The whole Ranger family seemed to adopt our Softball teams mantra--Mudita--an ethic that celebrates the achievements of others. Hats off to Hudson, like Lakewood a community-based team that played hard and represented their school and town well. Congratulations to Coach Cammock, his staff, and of course the players for their never back down attitude. The Rangers go to Twinsburg to face St. Ignatius Wednesday night in the District Semi-Finals. The squad from 44107 are decided underdogs, but of course one thing is assured--our Lakewood Rangers are one team, from one town, that will give it their all. Long Live Lakewood

Dive In To Lakewood Rec's Underwater Egg Hunt!

by Matt Demaline

Grab your bathing suits, towels, baskets and goggles for Lakewood Recreation's annual Underwater Egg Hunt. This year's event will be held Saturday, March 30, 2024 at the Lakewood High School Pool beginning at 9:30am.

Children are split up into age groups for the hunt. All children ages 6 and under must be accompanied by an adult in the pool; no separate registration fee

is required for the adults accompanying younger children. Eggs can be redeemed for prizes after the hunt.

Don't be fooled by the name; not all the eggs sink. Approximately half of the eggs float at the surface. The other eggs are spread out on the pool bottom, varying in depth from 3.5 feet deep to 9 feet deep. There are a variety of activities in the pool for the children to participate in when not diving for

eggs. There are pool toys out for the little ones, and, always a favorite, the high dive for the older kiddos.

Pre-register and save - \$8 registration available only through March 28. Registration is available online at recreation.lakewoodcityschools.org.

We look forward to seeing everyone for this year's hunt.

Lincoln Jump Rope Club Raises Over \$10,000 For The American Heart Association



by Christine Gordillo

Lincoln fourth and fifth grade Jump Rope Club members performed for students, parents and staff for the school's Kids Heart Challenge celebration of the end of the two-week campaign. The Kids Heart Challenge

focuses on whole body well-being, helping students improve their own health and better their character while raising life-saving donations for the American Heart Association to help kids with special hearts. Students raised \$10,830 for AHA this year,

boosting the school's total to \$135,749 since 1999! Kudos to the students and to PE teacher Nicole Anderson for such great spirit and big hearts!



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LAKEWOOD SCHOOLS



Proud To Wear Publisher Hat Roosevelt Fifth Grader Starts Her Own Newspaper

by Christine Gordillo

Emily’s newspaper hobby is a true example of employing all of our Vision of a Lakewood competencies!

The newspaper sprung from Emily’s interests in business, writing, reading and entrepreneurship. She printed her first issue as a fourth-grader and aimed for a weekly schedule but soon found that those deadlines came too quickly so The Sparkle Times is now a biweekly.

The publication is a terrific blend of articles on pop culture, current events both nationally and globally - a recent issue turned a focus on Ukraine - polls, a craft how-to, and yes/no debates on hot topics such as should self-driving cars replace regular ones.

Not only is Emily a publisher, but she’s a boss as well. She currently has four student-employees that she recruited from placing a hiring ad in one of her issues. Each person earns about a quarter per article. Emily said she definitely feels the pressure when the printing deadline looms, but she said it’s also when she is able to just crank it out the best.

When she sees that new issue of The Sparkle Times is when Emily says she can finally take a breath and admire her and her team’s work. “It feels like you’ve really accomplished something,” Emily said.

We’d say that you certainly have, Emily!

Lakewood City Schools Receives “Tech Boosts” Award From Cox Communications

by Jeff Lavery

Despite the important work non-profits and community organizations do in the communities they serve, many are lacking the modern technology tools needed to perform their missions to the fullest. To bridge this technology gap, Cox Communications today announced it has awarded grants to nonprofit groups committed to investing in technology equipment for the betterment of its patrons and mission. In Ohio, the company awarded a \$10,000 “boost” to Lakewood City Schools.

This marks the seventh year of the Cox Communications Tech Boosts program, and the goal remains the same: to help nonprofits invest in technology equipment and services that enrich the lives of community members while fulfilling their missions to the fullest.

This technology grant is awarded to organizations which reinforce intellectual prosperity and are committed to improving humanity. The nonprofit must demonstrate how the organization will positively impact one of four categories with its Tech Boost award. These include: Environment and Conservation; Health; Early Childhood Education; and Empowering Families and Individuals for Success.

You can read the rest of this article online at: lakewoodobserver.com

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Lakewood Public Library

Children’s And Youth Services Programs

by Jeffrey Siebert

Just Baby ‘N Me

For You and Your Birth to 24-Month-Old Baby
Just Baby ‘N Me is a lap-sit story time ideal for babies from birth through early walkers. The focus is on rhymes, songs, finger plays and exploring short books together. Registration is required. Register for each session separately.
Session 1: March 4 - March 28, 2024
Session 2: April 1 - April 25, 2024

Main Library-

Mondays - 10:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
Wednesdays - 10:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m.
Thursdays - 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Madison Branch-

Thursdays- 11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Pre-school Story Time

For You and Your 2 to 5-Year-Old Pre-schooler.
This pre-school story time is ideal for walkers, new talkers, and learning early literacy skills. You and your toddler and preschoolers will enjoy short books, songs and rhymes. The focus is on skills with your participation as a model. No registration is required.
March 4- April 25, 2024

Main Library:

Tuesdays: 10:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Wednesdays: 11:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Madison Branch:

Thursdays: 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

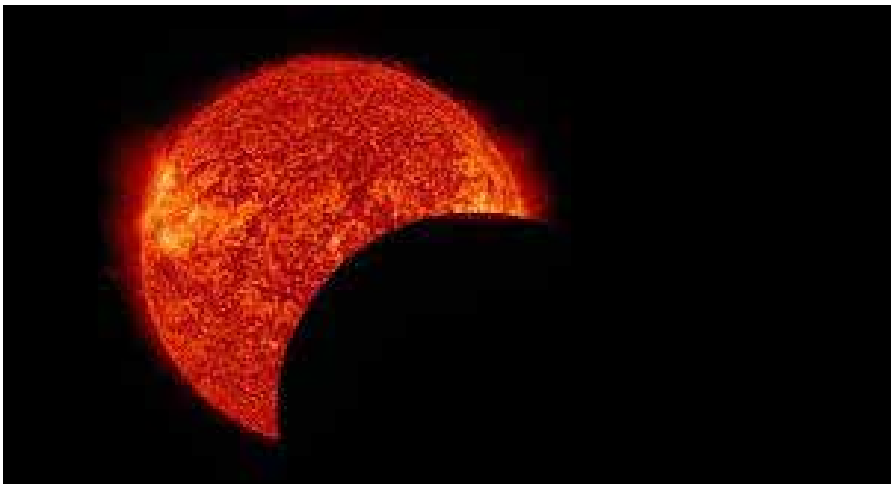
Pajama Party

For You and Your 2 to 6 Year-Old Child
Make the Library a part of your bedtime routine with an evening story time. Children are encouraged to wear their favorite pajamas and bring their stuffed animal friends to snuggle. Join us as we wind down for the night. You and your children will enjoy short books, songs and rhymes. The focus is on skills with your participation as a model. No registration is required.
March 4- April 23, 2024
Mondays: 6:00-6:30 p.m.
Tuesdays: 6:00-6:30 p.m.

Family Weekend Wonders

Looking for weekend entertainment for the whole family? Look no further! Drop in to the Library’s special weekend story time. Your whole family will enjoy these programs full of enthusiastic stories, engaging activities, entertaining music and clever crafts. Family Weekend Wonders Drop-In Story Time is offered every weekend throughout the year and features a different theme each week to keep things engaging. No registration is required.
Main Library- Fridays and Saturdays at 10:30 a.m.
Madison Branch- Fridays at 10:30 a.m.

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



Upcoming Events

by Lisa Calfee

“Stories from a NASA Photographer” Presented by Marv Smith

Marv Smith served as the Lead Photographer at NASA Glenn Research Center for thirty-seven years until his retirement in 2023. Join us as he shares one hundred of his NASA photos, along with the intriguing stories behind them. The result is a visual history of this landmark institution. Free eclipse glasses will be available after the program while supplies last.
Wednesday, April 3, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
Main Library Auditorium

Documentary - “Eclipse Over America”

The April 8, 2024 eclipse will be the first total solar eclipse visible over Lakewood since 1806, putting us directly in what is known as the ‘path of totality.’ Prepare for the celestial spectacle with Nova’s Eclipse Over America. The film documents the events surrounding the August 21, 2017, path of totality for both scientists and the public, while explaining the significance of this once in a lifetime phenomenon. Free eclipse glasses will be available after the documentary while supplies last.
Sunday, April 7, 2024
2:00 p.m. (60 minutes)
Main Library Auditorium



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RELIGION

What Would Jesus Do?

by Meghan Cliffel

“It’s like looking up the skirt of the Catholic Church,” my sister remarked as we flipped through the catalog where you could buy: Mass. From the communion wafers—the body of Christ—to the Crown of Thorns, all of it: for sale.

I went to church every Sunday for eighteen years of my life. As a kid, I distanced myself from most of what was said on the altar by using sign language to have conversations with my sister, or lip-syncing what priests recited weekly.

As a teen, I pinpointed why I tuned out. How the words from the altar didn’t embody the fullness of things we could be talking about: The complexity of this messy, human experience and finding meaning, compassion, and love amidst it all. Nor speak to me as a woman—not reflected in leadership, rights not championed.

And so sign language turned to Sundays driving around and getting donuts—not forgetting to grab the flyer from St. Malachi’s or St. Luke’s to prove I’d gone to church.

But there were moments when they had me: Listening to a homily by Father Hritz at St. Malachi’s where he told a story, spoke from the heart. From the voice of love.

And too late I’d learn that was what the whole thing was about—what

Jesus himself embodied—before power obstructed the view and led the Church to dangle the keys to proving one’s worthiness through strict rule-following to build power to hold itself together. Instead of softening, evolving to continually channel the voice of compassion and love. The voice of Jesus.

The moments with the Father Hritz’s of the world were too few and far between and the dissonance between loving people who were cast as sinners—loved who they loved, lived with who they loved unwed, chose not to become a mother when they weren’t ready—too great. I left the church all together.

It was easier to leave behind than the stories I had swallowed of where I should feel shame. Those would take me into my 40s to shed.

When I read about the Cleveland Catholic Diocese’s new policy* a few weeks ago around gender-affirming care and LGBTQ rights, I wondered whether the dissonance that caused me to leave might be growing for some still part of it.

Reading about a policy that is developmentally inappropriate: My three-year-old son (until he tells me otherwise) wears a dress 30 percent of the time. I blushed when he first wore his sisters’ hand-me-down sparkly dress to their soccer games—the grooves of my own conditioning deep.

But I learned from the early childhood experts in preschool who greeted him with openness, “I love your dress.” Who doesn’t want to sparkle?

And an all-out war on the LGBTQ community still connected to the Church: the contours of the policy incenting a modern-day witch hunt.

I was reminded of flipping through the catalog that day. The moment I pulled back the curtain on the wizard and realized Catholicism is not just a faith but also a business. With a budget for things like: communion wafers, the Crown of Thorns, payroll.

And when the Diocese of Cleveland refuses to evolve—engage in better business practices—patrons can boycott the business part—even while keeping their faith. Show up outside on Sundays in service of returning to compassion; or in tough conversations with parishes, instead of passive in the pews. With-

hold donations and tuition dollars to Catholic schools until the organization reflects Christian values. Give the Diocese a chance to course-correct, choose compassion and love—find Jesus.

Before everyone takes their business elsewhere.

It feels far afield—standing outside churches with signs on Sundays, withholding money until we’re sure it’s being used to reflect Christian values—and yet reminds me how different love can look. It makes me wonder: What would Jesus do?

(*Ed’s note: The policy prohibits staff and students from undergoing gender-affirming care, using pronouns different than those affiliated with a person’s biological sex and compelling church/school staff members to tell the parents of a child who might be transgender)

Meghan Cliffel is a writer and mindfulness teacher who resides in Lakewood with her husband and three children.



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MARCH 29 | 7PM
EASTER SUNDAY MARCH 31
8:30AM | 10AM | 11:30AM

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SPRING WEATHER OBSERVED

Tornado Season Starts Early In Ohio

by Debra O'Bryan

The weather this past week in Ohio has done just about everything.

Warm and sunny, beautiful early Spring days to violent hail-producing thunderstorms with torrential down-pours. Unfortunately, it also saw eight tornadoes destroying homes, barns, and most importantly life. Three people lost their lives in Indian Lake in Logan County when an EF2 tornado swept through in the night with winds of 136 mph. Over 20 people were hospitalized with various injuries.

Jim and I drove down to Plymouth on the edge of Crawford/Richland Counties to see how much damage had happened there. We found a destructive trail through farmland that was over ten miles long. We saw debris scattered over pristine fields that are ready to be planted. Metal roofing from barns and out buildings was strewn and twisted everywhere, up in the trees that were still standing and all over the countryside. The shearing off of trunks from mature trees was unbelievable. Most trees were twisted beyond saving.

We met Casey and his father-in-law who lost everything. The house was gone. Their barn was gone. The doublewide that was parked out back

was found on the neighbor's property tossed over a tall natural tree/brush barrier. It was smashed, twisted and a total loss. The front porch of their home was all that was left. The good news is that there were no fatalities in Plymouth. Everyone there was okay, including their livestock. The father and son-in-law were not there that evening. They were just grateful to be alive and safe. "Everything can be replaced, we have our family, that's all that matters," he said.

The turnout of the community was inspiring to see. Everyone with a tractor and a tool belt showed up to help their neighbors out. Clearing roads, piling debris, putting on temporary roofs and whatever else was needed for people to remain in their homes. More rain was expected. But for the grace of God. Prayers were said and answered that day.

The communities hit are going to be picking up the pieces for a long time. Literally.

Insurance claims were made, adjusters were out, and rebuilding was happening. It all takes a toll on people's lives and their livelihood in rural Ohio. It could just as easily have occurred here in Lakewood. In such a densely



photos by Jim O'Bryan

The Plymouth twister was only a small EF 2, on the ground for less than 10 miles, only 200 yards wide, with winds limited to 120mph. At the same time the destruction was incredible. It passed to the left of this house but still snapped the tree and took part of the roof off.

populated area, we may not have been so lucky.

As storms become more severe every year, everyone should take the time to become prepared. Make sure your home and/or renter's insurance is adequate and up to date. Take a walk-through video, showing and describing your belongings if you have to do a claim. Have an emergency plan for your family and pets: a specific place

designated in the basement away from windows, the furnace and hot water heater. If no basement is available, then under the stairwell or in an interior closet is the next best. Get in the bathtub if all else fails.

Keep your important papers together. This can't be stressed enough; a safe box or even if it's just a folder that you can grab and keep with you. It should include your policies, mortgage note/deed, passports, birth certificates, marriage licenses, and anything else you consider important and difficult to replace.

As far as your property goes, if you have warning and time, secure as much as possible. Put the car in a garage, rope all of your patio furniture together tightly to help prevent it from taking off. Put garbage cans, BBQ grills and potted plants in the garage as well. Always...always have at least a few days of food and water on hand for your entire family.

If you are a victim of storm damage, take photos of the damage in and out and report it asap.

We know Lakewood will turn out to help its neighbors, it has in the past and will again. Let's just hope it's not in the near future.



Casey and his father were not at home at the time. The next day they found both homes on the property gone.



photos by Jim O'Bryan

This was standing on the front porch looking back through where the house was, and then past the double-wide that was behind it. All gone! The trailer landed over the trees in the back.

LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Lakewood Kiwanis
Builder's Awareness Week

by Anna Bacho

March 18-22 2024 is Kiwanis International recognition week for Kiwanis Builders. The Kiwanis Club of Lakewood is proud to sponsor a Builders Club at Harding Junior High.

Builder's is a youth leadership club in the Kiwanis family for middle school. Each Builders club has a school/administrator advisor and Lakewood Kiwanian advisor. The club officers are elected at the beginning of the school year and installed by a Kiwanian officer.

After that is in place, the voting of projects by the kids is done for the year. Our Builder's projects include food

drives, dog blankets for The Alaskan Iditarod Race, and fundraising efforts for world projects, such as UNICEF. The kids learn that they have a voice in the club and need to make the commitment to complete their projects.

Leadership in school and community is supported by both the school faculty advisor and Lakewood Kiwanis.

Kiwanis International Builder's motto is "Building Leaders" and Harding School Builders are doing that today. Join our club to volunteer: www.LakewoodKiwanis.org

#KidsNeedKiwanis

LWC Women Honoring Women 2024 Spring Fundraiser:
Thrift-Store Fashion Show
Sustainable Style!

by Nancy Patterson

The Lakewood Women's Club (LWC) Annual Spring Fundraiser -- Women Honoring Women will be held, once again, at Vosh/Georgetown on April 11th at 6pm serving appetizers and drinks with the cost of admission. This event helps fund our scholarship program that each year awards a female Lakewood resident who is pursuing a higher education. This year our scholarship will be in honor of the late Patty Ryan, past President & CEO of the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce. The evening will be a celebration designed to recognize the wonderful accomplishments of Lakewood women in business, non-profits, policies, schools and all walks of Lakewood life!

The Thrift Store Fashion Show will showcase models focused on reusing and recycling previously owned clothing. Today thrifting is more than just an affordable practice; it's a form of self-expression. With a wide range of one-of-a-kind items, you are able to find unique pieces that reflect your own style. I speak from personal experience and have been enjoying the hunt for spectacular items for more than 30+ years!

We look forward to seeing you soon! Please purchase your tickets today and join us!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/women-honoring-women-2024-tickets-809731036327>

A heartfelt thank you to these participating stores:

Tia Winfield, Co-Owner - Value World (Lakewood)

"We are honored to contribute to the Lakewood Women's Club annual fundraiser, 'Women Honoring Women,' particularly with this year's theme of a Thrift Store Fashion Show. It's a joy to unite with fellow Lakewood women business owners and community leaders in celebrating the remarkable achievements of our local women while also supporting the dreams of future generations through scholarships. We are thrilled that this year's runway will showcase an array of thrifted treasures, not only adding a unique flair to the event but also symbolizing a commitment to sustainability and fostering opportunities for women within our local community."

Emily Butler, Lakewood Luxury Consignment (Lakewood)

From an in-person interview with Torey Worron, LWC President and Co-Chair of WHW.

Torey: Tell us how you started your store and what your passion is and how this all came together?

Emily: So I started my store in Scranton Pennsylvania in 2011 and it was because I like to shop and I don't want to pay retail. All the thrift stores

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Easter Egg Hunt (And Palm Procession)

by Cindy Dugan

Please join us at Lakewood Presbyterian Church for our palm procession and Sunday morning worship on March 24, 2024 at 9:45 am.

We will usher in Holy week by waving palms as we parade through the sanctuary. All ages are welcome. We will meet at 9:45 am in the Lucas Youth Parlor below the sanctuary to receive palms.

After worship, LPC would like to welcome children, infants to 5th grade, to participate in our annual Indoor Easter Egg Hunt. Each child who registers can collect a set of colored eggs to exchange for candy and prizes.

Registration is required to reserve your set of eggs. Meet on our lower level in Lawther Hall at 11:20 am. Please register via the signup genius on our Facebook event or email akenedy@lakewoodpresbyterian.org.

All community members are welcome!

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Chicken	\$2.25	\$2.75	\$3.75	\$4.75
Extra Cheese & Special Toppings	\$1.75	\$2.25	\$3.25	\$4.25

AVAILABLE TOPPINGS: Pepperoni, Sausage, Mushrooms, Onion, Green Peppers, Red Peppers, Anchovies, Ham, Bacon, Fresh Garlic, Black Olives, Hot Peppers, Ground Meat, Pineapple, Jalapeño Peppers

SPECIAL TOPPINGS: Artichoke Hearts, Tomato, Broccoli, Chicken

LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

What You Should Know About Credit Scores And Bankruptcy

by Tonya Sams

Most consumers know that credit scores and bankruptcies can impact their financial well-being but don't understand how. Credit scores can determine whether someone can get a loan and if their interest rates will be low or exponentially high. There are things that consumers should be aware of to keep their finances stable.

One area that causes confusion for consumers is how to dispute discrepancies on their credit report.

“You can write a letter to the three credit bureaus – Equifax, Experian and TransUnion- that includes documentation to show the bureaus that their reports are incorrect,” said Matt Alden, a Senior Attorney in the Economic

Justice Group at The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. “The credit bureaus would then have 30 days to investigate the inquiry and write a response to the consumer stating that they will delete, keep, or change the error on the report. If the credit bureaus will not change the incorrect information, the consumer can hire an attorney and respond to the bureaus according to the Fair Credit Reporting Act.”

Credit pulls can also impact your credit score. Hard pulls are made when you want to borrow money from a lender for car and home loans or when applying for new credit cards. Too many hard pulls can decrease your credit score. Soft pulls are made when a company pulls your credit to

verify your name, address, work history, payment history, if you filed for bankruptcy and more. Some soft pulls are made without the consumer's permission. An example of this is when you receive mail from auto and home insurance, credit card and loan companies. These companies have already pulled your credit to determine that you pre-qualify for their offers. Soft pulls don't affect your credit score.

Another area that consumers struggle with is bankruptcy.

“You should file for bankruptcy if your wages are about to be garnished, you’re facing repossession or foreclosure, or you can no longer afford to make the payment,” said Matt. “You should also file if you have more than \$10,000 of unsecured debt that you can’t realistically pay off, facing an IRS collection or if the Department of Education is coming after you for student loans.”

One myth about bankruptcies is that it will ruin someone's credit forever.

“Bankruptcy does not kill credit because your credit is already tanked. Not making the payments is not going to make your situation any worse,” Matt said. “Most people still have an income, and they can get secured credit cards. Most secured credit cards require at least \$300 on them and must

be paid in full. You can use it to buy groceries, gas, and car repairs. They can help to re-establish credit.”

If you have brief questions about money issues including debt and bankruptcies, call the Legal Aid Economic Justice Info Line at 216-861-5899. Need further assistance? Legal Aid may be able to help! To apply for assistance, call 888-817-3777, or complete an online intake 24/7 at lasclev.org.

Tonya Sams is the Development & Communications Manager at The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland.

LWC Women Honoring Women 2024 Spring Fundraiser:

Thrift-Store Fashion Show

Sustainable Style!

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and consignment shops sold things back then that I felt like younger generations could not shop there or it was stuff that they really didn't want so that led to getting things that I thought people would want more and were less easy to find on the higher end of fashion.

Torey: Where do you go to find your accessories and clothes for your customer?

Emily: People bring them to me, mostly local people, also out of state, I have people shipping things because I had a shop for 4 years or 5 years before I moved here.

Torey: So do you do a lot online or is it all personal where people come into the store and you help them put their outfits together?

Emily: People come into the store and some people contact me on my phone through texting. So I do a lot of business over my phone.

Torey: How long have you been here?

Emily: I've been here since 2016.

Torey: Has Lakewood been a friendly environment for you as a women business owner and running the store?

Emily: I love Lakewood.

Torey: So you have gotten the support that you needed?

Emily: Yes, I live in Lakewood and Lakewood has been perfect.

Bethany Ehrman, Assistant Director - Common Threads (Fairview)

“Our organization operates as a Social enterprise under Building Hope in The City (BHITC) and established our first retail thrift store in Fairview Park in 2016. Additionally, they support our Hope Center in Cleveland, which provides assistance to refugees and immigrants. I am looking forward to collaborating on this event!”

Contact LWC for more information:
lakewoodwomensclub@gmail.com

LWC website: <https://www.lakewoodwomensclub.org>

Nancy Patterson is the Women Honoring Women Co-Chairperson for The Lakewood Women's Club.



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COVE COMMUNITY CENTER



by Nancy Feighan

The Cove Community Center was the most festive place in town on the morning of Fri March 15th.! The St. Patrick's Day celebration featured Irish music, Pat Slife on the bagpipes, and a pizza lunch. Thanks to our seniors and staff for dressing up and getting into the holiday spirit!

Meet Me At Cove



submitted by Nancy Feighan

During my pregnancy, two friends suggested the Lakewood Family Room's Wednesday parent group for lactation and newborn support. I joined shortly after my daughter's birth, finding immense support and friendship. Battling postpartum depression, I found solace and camaraderie with fellow parents, realizing I wasn't alone. As my daughter grows, the Family Room remains our haven for play and connection. I'm grateful to Ms. Jess, Cove Community Center staff, and volunteers for making us feel like part of the family.

Megan and Lily

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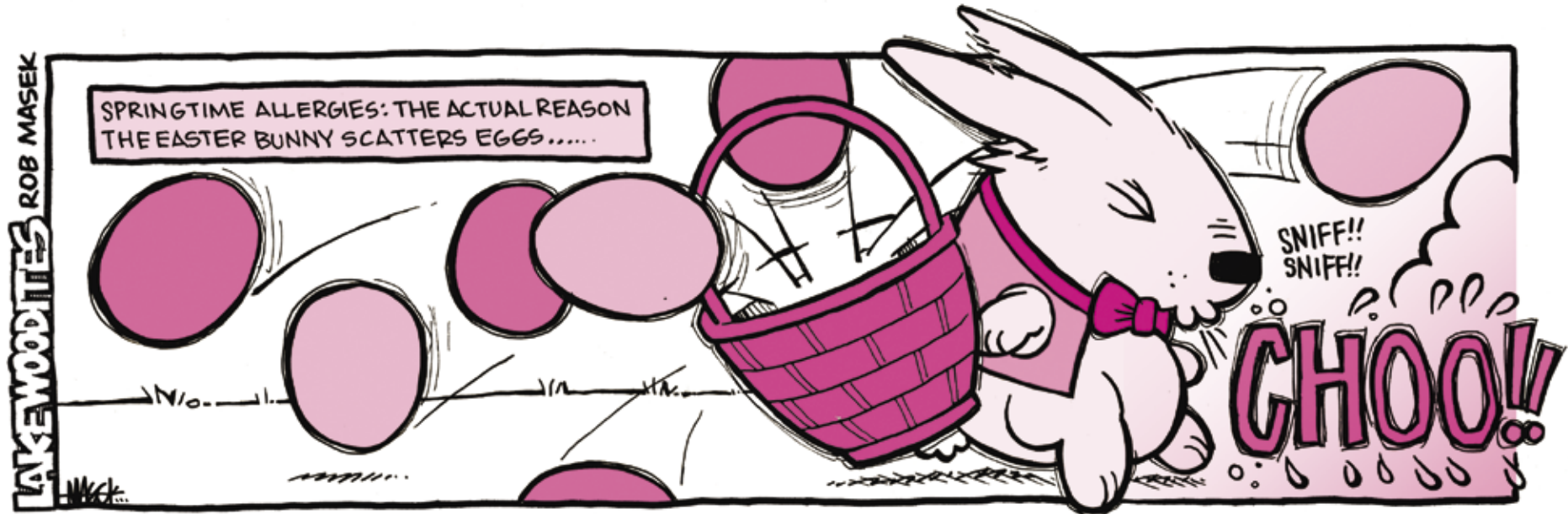
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