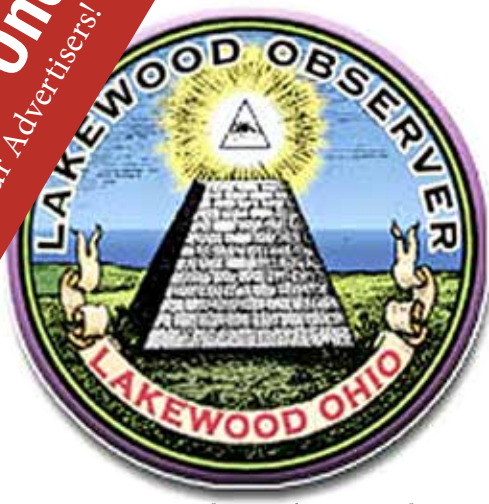


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“Home is a place you grow up wanting to leave,
and grow old wanting to get back to.” - John Ed Pearce

THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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Volume 20, Issue 9, May 8, 2024

Hooray For Hollywood, Part 10



Overnight the old Steve Barry lot became “Little Hollywood” as Lakewood is rediscovered.

by Jim O’Bryan

Almost overnight, the old Steve Barry lot was filled with semis, various trucks and strange housing units. After a quick read of the name on the trucks: “Haddad’s” it became clear, Hollywood was back in Lakewood, Ohio!

This time it was for a \$50 million dollar production for HULU. Shawn Simmons is the director of this high speed thriller whose working title is “Stickshift” and will be called “Eenie Meanie” when it reaches the small screens around the world. The movie has a common Hollywood story line. A person is dragged back



photos courtesy of IMDb

The stars of “Sidekick” aka “Eenie Meanie” left to right: Samara Weaving, Steve Zahn, Randall Park. Together they represent nearly 250 movies, including acting, writing, directing and producing credits.

into their criminal past to save a loved one. This one has Australian actress Samara Weaving (40 films, 2-time Producer, and 1 time director), actor Steve Zahn (93 films, 1-time director, 4-time producer), and Randall

Park (173 films, 8-time director, 4-time writer.) This time, the girl is the reformed getaway driver who comes back to help her ex-boyfriend.

They will be filming
continued on page 8

GardenWalk Lakewood Hosts Free Plant Swap

by Jeanine Gergel

Looking for some new plants to brighten up your home or garden? Join GardenWalk Lakewood for a free plant swap on Sunday, May 19, 2024, from 1 to 3pm at Cove Park at 1294 Cove Ave.

Come together with your fellow gardeners to swap divided perennials, seeds, cuttings, plants, pots, tools, and

tips, all while learning more about GardenWalk Lakewood and our mission. Nothing to swap? No problem! There will be plenty of items to help you on your gardening journey. The event will be held under the pavilion, rain or shine.

Volunteers are also needed before the plant swap at noon for a spring clean-up event at the Cove Park pollinator gar-

den. Please join us!

And save the date for the third annual GardenWalk: Saturday, July 20, 2024. The list of participating gardens and a map will be posted in early July to the GardenWalk Lakewood website at www.gardenwalklakewood.org. This free event will be held rain or shine.

Keep Lakewood Beautiful Humus And Perennial Flower Sale Returns May 11

by Matt Bixenstine

There’s no better time than now to get your garden thriving, and Keep Lakewood Beautiful is here to help turn your thumbs green.

KLB announces the return of our annual Keep Lakewood Beautiful Humus and Perennial Flower Sale taking place on Saturday, May 11, from 9 am to noon at the parking lot of Old Stone House at Lakewood Park.

Come get your bags of “black gold” for your gardens

(humus = \$5/bag) and shop from a fabulous selection of attractive perennials that tend to be local, native and hardy, while serving as pollinators for bees and butterflies.

Native plants will be available from Meadow City Native Plant Nursery, a Cleveland-based nursery focused on plants that can grow in nature within our region. Offerings include: Herbs, Milkweed, Coneflowers, Heuchera (Coral Bells), Leucanthemum (Shasta Daisy),

Monarda (Bee Balm), Peonies, and many other perennials.

This annual event serves as a fundraiser for Keep Lakewood Beautiful, a volunteer-driven organization committed to community beautification in our city. Cash and checks only, please. Visit our Facebook event for more details. Thank you for your support!

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



The Lakewood Ranger Purple And Gold Classic: GRANT WINS!

by Leslie Favre Krogman

On the corner of Bunts and Franklin, in the LHS Gym, the annual Lakewood Ranger Purple & Gold Classic took place in front of a rowdy, exuberant and supportive crowd, cheering on their respective 5th grade school squads. Fans and spectators showed up in force creating an electric atmosphere, feeding off of the energy of the Women’s Final Four.

Tip-off began at 8:30am with Emerson and Harrison going back and forth all game. You can’t kick off a tournament

any better than with a game winning shot. With 6 seconds left, a right side short jumper sent Harrison into the 2nd round earning their first ever tournament victory!

Game number 2 featured Grant and Lincoln, who slugged it out for 32 minutes, with Grant emerging victorious. The final 1st round game was a cross town rivalry with Roosevelt facing off against Horace Mann. Both teams gave it their all, playing hard,

continued on page 8

New Harding Middle School Principal Named

by Christine Gordillo

The Lakewood Board of Education at its April 15 meeting approved Willoughby Middle School Principal Christopher “Chip” Plush as the next principal of Harding Middle School, beginning Aug. 1, 2024. Plush has spent the last eight years as an administrator for the Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools.

Plush began as a high school house principal and then moved into an assistant principal role at the middle school level before assuming the principal job at Willoughby Middle School in 2021. He began his educational career as a language arts teacher at Willoughby South High School.

Among many accomplishments while principal at Willoughby Middle School,



Christopher “Chip” Plush is the next principal of Harding Middle School.

Plush and his team earned the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce 2023 Momentum Award in recognition of significant improvement in growth and achievement on the Ohio School Report Cards.

Plush earned his undergraduate degree in education from Dayton University and

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THE MAYOR’S CORNER

Lake Avenue Speed Limit To Decrease On June 3rd

As you may have heard, the City of Lakewood announced last week that we will be reducing the speed limit on Lake Avenue from 35 miles per hour (MPH) to 30 MPH on Monday, June 3rd. The City arrived at this change only after a comprehensive process of data collection, analysis, and interaction with residents and State of Ohio. After this thorough process, we believe that reducing the speed on Lake Avenue is warranted and fits into Lakewood’s overall commitment to enhancing safety for our residents and visitors.

The process to evaluate whether a speed reduction was justified was complex and years in the making. The addition of bike lanes on Lake in 2020 was seen as a key factor in considering the change. Following repaving and installation of those bike lanes, the City heard from residents asking for a reduction in speed to ensure cyclists and pedestrians were safe along this primarily residential street.

Although Lake Avenue is not a state route, the City still needed approval from the Ohio Department of

Transportation (ODOT) to make the change. Before applying to ODOT, the City spent years collecting and analyzing data at five different points along Lake Avenue. That data was gathered in both 2021 and 2023.

The City of Lakewood’s Planning and Engineering departments worked together to gather information on Lake Avenue including vehicle speed data and an inventory of physical characteristics of the corridor (how many driveways, pedestrian counts, land use). Data was gathered continuously for a week at a time on multiple occasions. Interestingly, the data collected revealed that the average speed of cars was 30 MPH, which indicates that drivers were self-adjusting to the new conditions on Lake with the addition of the bike lanes.

The Lakewood Police Department was also involved in the process. Chief Fischer of LPD signed off on the application that was submitted to ODOT for

review and approval. The City used a methodology required by ODOT to do its analysis. Earlier this year, ODOT ruled that the speed should be changed to 30MPH for the entire stretch of Lake Avenue in Lakewood.

As you can see, there were a number of departments that partnered to navigate a complex process to evaluate and now implement this change, including Lakewood public works, engineering, planning, and police departments. I appreciate the combined efforts taken by the professionals from each of these departments. Lakewood City Council was also important to this process and deserve recognition. Councilmembers provided a strong voice in favor of reviewing the speed limit on Lake Avenue. This is another great example of

our branches of government working well together in Lakewood.

As we implement the new speed limit, giving advance notice is important to the City. We must be fair to drivers before we implement and enforce the new limit, and we also want to get the word out so people know and obey this new traffic law in Lakewood. With this in mind, we have placed very prominent signage on Lake Avenue to give an entire month of clear notice that this change is coming. We are also pushing the word out through local news outlets, social media, and the City website.

Once the new limit is in place, we hope it has a meaningful effect by decreasing risk for everyone who uses Lake Avenue, from walkers to cyclists to drivers and everyone in between. The City of Lakewood will continue to evaluate other opportunities to enhance safety in our city and on our streets.

by Meghan George
Mayor/Safety Director, City of Lakewood

Foster Pool Fill-Up



from City Hall

One more sign that summer is nearly here: the Lakewood Public Works team has begun the process of filling and preparing Foster Pool!

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Lakewood Observer

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CITY HALL OBSERVED

You Should Go To City Hall

by Theodore Babcock

There is a regularly scheduled City Council meeting on Monday May 20th at 7:30 PM and I can't go. There will probably be a few other people from the community there but maybe not. There have been a few meetings this year when I was the only person in attendance who was not a member of the council or a city employee. These meetings are open to the public and streamed online but public interest seems to be very low.

The future of the Lakewood Pit (aka Holespital), recreational marijuana laws, Lakewood Park and Madison Park upgrades, the Bunts Road overhaul, transportation safety practices, the use of tens of millions of dollars of public money and much more are all ongoing conversations at City Hall. Most of these topics are discussed with zero input from the public. Sometimes there is an eComment submitted. Most of these projects have public meetings in advance where our voices can be heard. But the public voice is almost always absent at the committee and council meetings where these issues are finalized and voted on by our elected representatives.

Do you know who your council representative is? At election time do you usually vote for whoever is already there because things are fine, or vote for the other person because you aren't happy with something that happened? Voting is absolutely crucial and also the bare minimum you can do to influence the future of our community in the way that you would like to.

Last week I watched our elected officials debate whether or not adults should be able to smoke weed on bar patios and it seemed like they were basically guess-

ing how you felt. More importantly, they were going off of their own personal feelings. Is that the way you would like these decisions to be made?

Some of you would be thrilled to come to a meeting and see how your council representative stands up for your best interests. Some of you will probably be a little disappointed.

All of these committee and full council meetings allow you to make a public comment. You can also call or email any member of city council any time you please about anything you like. I would encourage you all to do this.

A small group of likeminded individuals with somewhat regular attendance can have great influence over the policies and decisions made by our city. I have watched it happen.

These meetings are all held in the City Hall "Auditorium." It is a conference room with a stage. The entrance is at the rear of City Hall which is located at 12650 Detroit. There is plenty of parking for your car and a few spots for your bicycle. The bicycle people are friendly so if you don't get there in time to lock your bike to the bike racks you can lock it to one of their bikes. Just find them when you get inside and let them know.

When you walk in that rear entrance there is an elevator on your right that you can take to the second floor. You can also take the stairs which are through the door past the elevator. At the top there will be two security guards with a metal detector if you are there on a council night. This metal detector is very sensitive. Your belt buckle or watch will set it off. If you are there on a night of just committee meetings there is no security. Walk down the hallway and use any of the three doors to enter the "Audito-

rium." You can sit anywhere in the two groups of black and metal chairs.

You can sign up for public comment at the table with the blue table covering. Public comment is usually at the end of the topic if you signed up to speak on a specific agenda item, or at the end of the meeting if it is a general comment. Press the button on the podium so the light turns green. Council President Kepple will ask you to state your name and address and keep your com-

ment to five minutes. If you don't say your address, they won't stop you and force you to. You can usually go for 6-7 minutes without being interrupted but there is a timer for you to look at.

Let me know if anything interesting happens at the meeting. I'm sorry I can't be there. I'll see you on June 3rd. Come say "hi." I have yellow shoes and a tennis ball colored bike helmet.

Theodore Babcock is a photographer and a Lakewood resident.



Mayor Meghan George delivering the State of the City Address at Cove Community Center. You can watch the entire 2024 State of the City Address at... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivSe7Dqu3Do>

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LAKEWOOD SCHOOLS

In Tune And In Stride: A Lakewood Teacher-Student Duo Is Breaking Barriers In Music And Sports

by Deb O'Bryan

Amid the early afternoon clamor of band rehearsals at Harding Middle School, a remarkable story is unfolding in the world of music and mentorship. Aiden Ardelean and Etienne Massicotte, a student-teacher duo, both of whom are visually impaired, are taking a unique approach to ensuring Aiden's success in music, and beyond.

Aiden Ardelean, a young trumpet player with a keen ear and a passion for Romanian and Serbian music, faces unique challenges due to his severe visual impairment. Unable to read printed materials, Aiden's journey into the world of music requires a modified approach. Etienne, whose visual impairment is less severe, draws from his experience having learned music in a traditional setting and tailors his teaching methods to meet Aiden's needs.



photo by Felicia Ardelean

In their one-on-one sessions, they utilize an age-old approach – learning by ear. Instead of relying on visual cues, Aiden learns to recognize notes by their names and their sound. Knowing Aiden's passion for Eastern European culture, Etienne selects music that aligns with both Aiden's preferences

and the required band curriculum. This not only helps Aiden develop the skills on the trumpet recommended for his age-level, but also ensures that Aiden can enjoy making music that resonates with his family's heritage.

Outside of their lessons, Etienne noticed Aiden's boundless energy and penchant for darting through the school's halls, which Aiden learned to navigate with a cane, and has since memorized. Understanding the potential hazards, and wanting to create an outlet for Aiden's budding athleticism, Etienne took it upon himself to introduce a solution – running together outside of school, on a tether.

Etienne became familiar with the technique of running with a tether during triathlon training camps at the US Olympic and Paralympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. Running tethered to a guide is standard practice for visually-impaired athletes in adaptive sports, and requires the guide to give cues and instructions to ensure safety while preserving the independence of the athlete.

Aiden's mother, Felicia Ardelean, recalls countless memories of her son riding his bike and running around their neighborhood in Lakewood while she and his father attempted to supervise him but could not keep up. His parents were torn between protecting him and encouraging his independence. "He loves the speed," Felicia says, "but it was a lot of work getting him to understand it's a safety issue. The world is scary and mom knows because I'm his eyes." Aiden has the corner of Hilliard and Victoria memorized, but could only stay in his neighborhood where he knows the surroundings. As his determination to be active only continued to grow, Aiden's mother watched from afar, reminding him, "mommy gets really scared."

Etienne is a seasoned triathlete and a finisher of some notable races including Ironman 70.3 Chattanooga and the Escape From Alcatraz triathlon in San Francisco. Drawing on these experi-



photo by Felicia Ardelean

ences as well as his training in adaptive sports, Etienne is humbled to be helping Aiden develop the mobility and independence that he and his family are seeking. Aiden and Etienne can now be seen running, tethered at the waist, at the Lakewood High School track, with their hopes set on running the Guardian Mile in Cleveland, OH on July 27th, 2024.

As Aiden enjoys his newfound abilities, Etienne is using this unique opportunity to raise funds for a Chicago-based charity called Dare2Tri. Dare2Tri is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting athletes with disabilities, and is sponsoring Etienne to run the Chicago Marathon on October 13th, 2024. In order to be eligible to participate, Etienne must meet a fundraising goal of \$1,500 for the organization. On behalf of Dare2Tri, the Ardelean family, and the Lakewood Band Program, we hope that you consider donating to support this cause online at: <https://p2p.onecause.com/2024r2rchimarathon/etienne-massicotte>

All donations to Dare2Tri are tax deductible. For more information about Dare2Tri, visit <https://dare2tri.org/>

New Harding Middle School Principal Named

continued from page 1

was awarded a master's degree in educational administration from Cleveland State University.

Plush expressed his gratitude and excitement about his new role at Monday's Board meeting: "I am truly thrilled and grateful to be able to serve

this diverse and supportive community," he said. "I am committed to serving the city of Lakewood by being highly visible, putting relationships first, building an outstanding school culture, and always placing student learning at the forefront of what we do. We will take care of students every single day at Harding Middle School."

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LAKEWOOD EDUCATION

The Good, The Better, And The What The Heck - Part 2

by Trish Hendy

The Good: Communicating with the Board is the right of every stake holder in Lakewood. Here's some information that may help. At every Board meeting there is a time for public communications when you step up to a microphone and address the Board publicly. Policy 0169.1 is "Public Participation at Board Meetings." The policy starts with ..."public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest..." This is a longer policy but it is extremely specific. Here are examples of do's and don'ts. "Anyone having a legitimate interest in the actions of the Board may participate...", "Attendees must register their intention to participate..." (Sign in as you enter.) "Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three (3) minutes duration..." and "All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer (normally the board president); no person may address or question Board members individually..."

The frustrating part for many is it will feel like you are speaking to Mount Rushmore. You go up to the microphone and make your concerns known to the group of people sitting on the stage and not of them answers except to say, "Thank you."

Superintendent Niedzwiecki

explained that since becoming superintendent it has been her practice to reply to questions and concerns brought to the podium at Board meetings herself, as Policy 1100 states: "The Superintendent shall be the chief executive officer of the District." Further, any Board member is also available to hear concerns, but most, if not all, concerns deal with the operations of the district, which she oversees. (The Board is the policy-maker not the manager of day-to-day concerns.) Therefore she calls and discusses concerns over the phone, or schedules a meeting with the individual. If she doesn't get back to you before the next meeting you can call, email or speak at the next meeting. If that sounds scary, the email address of every Board member is on their page of the LCSD website, Board of Education tab. Some rumours are that you cannot address a Board member privately. Not true but just remember the Board members are speaking for themselves and not the Board.

Regular Board meetings are the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month. There is lots of information at Lakewood-cityschools.org. Go the Board tab to access policies and member information. For livestreaming and viewing archives of past meetings and many school events head to youtube and search for "Brent Kallay."

The Better: Congratulations Rotary

Scholarship winners: Speech 1st Elizabeth Schuldt, 2nd Sophia Lipowski, 3rd Ava Cuffari and 4th Lana Collins. Visual Arts 1st Reagan Bratko and HM Tegan Hendzel. Music 1st Jake Hirsch, 3rd Bode Smith and HM Eileen Brady.

What the Heck: Let's talk! Did you know that students can get high school and college credit at the same time. The program is called College Credit Plus (CCP); it is administered by the Teaching and Learning Department and is available to all LCSD grades 7th-12th grade. College credit is recognized by most universities and colleges in the state of Ohio. It all starts with a meeting at Lakewood High School "LHS Advanced Options Night." Mr. Steven Ast, Director of Teaching and Learning has supplied us with the power point from the informational meeting <https://tinyurl.com/bdeeh2c2> well as Ohio Department of Education and Work Force CCP. <https://tinyurl.com/mrt69ax7>

Courses at LHS are currently taught by our very own Lakewood High School teachers and they following the syllabuses provided by the college offering the credit. Teachers who teach these classes must have a master's degree in their specific area making them adjunct faculty of the institution. Lakewood High offers the following classes at LHS in partnership with the respective institutions: Anatomy & Physiology

(LCCC), Intro to Psychology & Social Psychology (U of Akron), Spanish (LCCC), Chamber Ensemble (Hiram), Wind Ensemble (Hiram), Symphony/Chamber Orchestra (Hiram), Survey of American Music (Hiram), Musicianship I (Hiram), College Algebra & Trigonometry (Tri-C), College Composition (LCCC), Strategies for Success (Tri-C). Also students may opt to go to one of the campuses of Cleveland State, Tri-C, Baldwin Wallace, Lorain CCC or Franklin.

Even though LHS has started offering CCP courses, they have not replaced the rigorous Advanced Placement (AP) courses that LHS also proudly offers our diverse student population. AP courses are regulated by the college board.

Both AP and CCP classes give LHS students a grade point average (GPA) boost and are paid for by our taxpayer dollars and give our students the skills they need for college and could save their family tuition money depending on the college they elect to attend. Either way, our students win because they are challenged. Superintendent Maggie Niedzwiecki would like to see every student at LHS take either an AP or CCP course. She understands that it may seem overwhelming, but she believes that every student is capable of reaching this high level of education.

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GOVERNMENT

Part 1:
Your Voice In Ohio Policy, A Series

by Tristan Rader

Fast and furious is how many of us could describe our daily lives. Between juggling work and getting kids to soccer practice, taking care of elderly parents, and barely finding time to sit down and pay bills, most of us don't have time to understand how our state legislature affects our daily lives. Most of the news we randomly catch amid our busy lives centers around what's happening on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., obscuring how our state legislature touches our community and daily lives.

In the Ohio Legislature, where your local state rep serves as your voice in state government, many decisions are made that improve or worsen our lives.

For many hard-working Ohioans struggling to make ends meet, laws passed by the state legislature can improve working conditions in the state, raise the minimum wage, affect your hours and shifts at work, and also impact what benefits you are entitled to, like paid leave, sick time, and unemployment.

Laws that make it easier to obtain and carry high-powered weapons used in school shootings, restrict reproductive rights even in cases of rape, put up roadblocks to the legalization of marijuana, make life difficult for LGBTQ+ communities, and impact climate change often begin in our state legislature in Columbus.

Your state legislators must adhere to their oath to uphold the Constitution of Ohio and authentically represent those who elected them. They have a moral responsibility to lead with compassion, accountability, and transparency; whether they take those responsibilities seriously is another question. From fighting for worker's rights, public and bike trans-

portation, accessibility, a cleaner, safer environment, and gun safety to fighting for rights and protections for the LGBTQ+ communities, they are your voice in state government.

Unfortunately, too often, they serve other, less moral, and even corrupt interests, like the big utilities and the radical right groups who fund their elections in exchange for cash bailouts, or restricting reproductive rights.

The "House Bill 6" bribery scandal is a cautionary tale of how \$61 million in bribes enabled FirstEnergy to manipulate the statehouse into passing legislation that served corporate rather than public interests, effectively raising your electric bill to bail out unprofitable dirty coal and nuclear plants. This bribery scheme highlights a critical failure in the democratic process, where elected officials, compromised by corporate money, neglected their duty to the public.

The scandal underscores the importance of transparent and effective communication between state representatives and their constituents. Vigilant oversight, clear communication, and active participation in the electoral process ensure representatives advocate for their constituents' interests and prevent future misconduct.

In a world where powerful interests often shape government policies, ensuring transparency and maintaining a dialogue through platforms like this one is crucial. By being informed about legislative actions in Columbus that impact your everyday life, you can better engage with and hold your representatives accountable. This dialog is vital for preserving a democracy that truly serves its people, not just the interests of a wealthy few.

In future issues of the Lakewood Observer, I will expand on the role

the Ohio Legislature plays in worker's rights, health care, public education, voting rights, LGBTQ+ rights, public transportation, and more while explaining how your state representative can positively impact your daily life, and what you can do as a citizen to stay informed and get involved.

I welcome your perspective. I would love to hear your take on how the state legislature has or can impact your life or how you would like it to.

You can write me at tristan@tristan-rader.com

Tristan Rader is a Lakewood City Councilman and Ohio Director for Solar United Neighbors. He is currently the Democratic Nominee for State Representative in House District 13. He lives on St. Charles Ave. with his wife, Caitlin.

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LAKEWOOD OBSERVER



The Lakewood Hospital Site

by Dan Cuffaro

The site of the former Lakewood Hospital is an amazing opportunity that deserves a world class development.

Imagine that the centerpiece of the site is a pedestrian walkway, that gently slopes downhill from south to north. This treelined walkway would be surrounded by townhouses varying in size and cost. At the south end of the walk would be a small park that invites residents of the surround neighborhoods to stroll through the site. The northwest end would have a plaza that connects 'The Walk' to Detroit Avenue & Belle, and by extension to Lakewood Park.

The northwest plaza would be surrounded by larger mixed-use commercial properties (cafe/restaurant below, offices above) and perhaps

live/work apartments. As the buildings extend south, they would be smaller scale to match the surrounding neighborhoods. The site would be carefully intersected by one way streets with reserved street parking, and former hospital basement would become a foundation of below grade parking (given that it is already excavated, parking would essentially be on the ground level).

The facades facing the surrounding neighborhoods would have a residential feel, while those along Detroit would be larger scale and more grand.

Imagine high quality materials, beautiful landscaping and people-scale structures carefully placed to take advantage of sunlight and shade.

This would be a legacy enjoyed by residents for generations.

Hooray For Hollywood, Part 10

continued from page 1

through the end of the month at various locations around the city. If you see them filming, please give them space. While we can argue about what an inconvenience it is, or how much tax deferment they get, it is hard to argue that it isn't good for a community from the fees they get paid, to local purchases of food and various items from daily needs to gifts, down to, in most cases, a sense of pride when the final product hits the streets. The best way to see a little part of Hollywood is to give them room. During the shooting of "White Boy Rick" with Matthew McConaughey, he wandered into a local bar with his daughter. Someone posted it immediately and the place became a zoo. He left, and never went back. and never went back. Meanwhile The Coffee Pot would place him at a back table where he quietly ate breakfast most mornings. No one likes being interrupted while eating or working.

We should also be honest about the real reason films are being shot in Lakewood, and in Ohio: Tax credits. These state tax credits are so large that most states only offer them for a year or

two, then take time off. While we love to believe Cleveland was chosen for the Marvel movies based on being a great city, or because superstar directors the Russo brothers (Joe and Tony) came from here, the tens of millions of tax credits coming from the state and the city are the real attraction. Like many industries in this day and age, they go where they get the best benefits. For what it is worth, privacy is also a valuable asset.

Other films shot in Lakewood that I can remember are:

"With This Ring"

"American Splendor"

"Draft Day"

"My Blind Brother"

"The Christmas Heart"

"Pinned" -- a wrestling film from Lakewood's Norman brothers

"White Boy Rick" with Matthew McConaughey, and "The Final Goodbye," another one that used The Shore Restaurant, Westlake Cleaners and Trios Bar which is now Woodstock BBQ. Also the murder mystery, "Beautiful Garden" where they filmed for 2 nights at Ross Beverage.

The Lakewood Ranger Purple And Gold Classic: GRANT WINS!

continued from page 1

but Roosevelt managed to claim the W. Second round action, the returning champion Hayes, faced the upstart Harrison squad. It seemed there was a lid over the rim for the first quarter but things began to roll as the teams settled into a rhythm. The game was frantic, neither team backing down, which resulted in another game winning shot - Harrison advances! Grant and Roosevelt had a grudge match, both teams running and gunning, taking each other's best haymakers and when it was all said and done, Grant survived and advanced.

We had a special guest group play the National Anthem, the Lakewood Suzuki Strings. It was a most moving and beautifully played anthem; we have secured them for next year, you do not want to miss out on their performance. Team introductions got the crowd fired up for the 2024 Lakewood Ranger Purple & Gold Classic championship game! This year's Cinderella story Harrison vs a well-seasoned Grant squad. A juggernaut of a game, that was decided in the final quarter of play. Both teams left it all on the court, each playing its 3rd game of the day and squeezing whatever strength they had left.

A famous Vince Lombardi quote comes to mind at the end of this game, and the culmination of the tournament, because of how hard these students played:

"I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of

battle - victorious." - Vince Lombardi

For the 3rd straight year, a new champion was crowned: Grant Elementary School, coached by Janet Trentel.

The prestigious Commissioner Cup trophy, was presented by our Community Recreation & Education Commission members who attended, Bill Fraunfelder, Art Gold, Chris Mehling, Joe Stolitza and Tom Zigman, all volunteers and invaluable contributors to the success of our department.

This tournament wouldn't have been possible without the support of our new event sponsor, The Christine Newton (C.N.) Estate. The CN Estate generously covered the costs of our jerseys, coaches' shirts, officials' fees and other tournament expenses. Thank you to Drug Mart, who donated 25 cases of water and funds towards the event.

Thank you to all the coaches and volunteers for their time, energy and dedication to all the teams. We appreciate the officials and scorers for their professionalism. The Lakewood Athletic Boosters manned a delicious concession stand and kept the hungry masses fed.

We were able to collect over 2 van loads of donations to take to the Lakewood Community Service Center, our Lakewood School community always comes up big for those in need.

All teams and coaches represented their schools and the Lakewood City District by displaying amazing sportsmanship, tireless energy and #RangerPride!

At the end of the day, WE ARE ALL RANGERS!

Mark it on your calendars: 2025 Purple & Gold Classic: April 5th 2025!

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LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Lakewood High School's Long History Of After Prom

by Patricia Neligan Barley

After Prom 2024, Enchantment Under the Sea was an extraordinary success, a testament to several parents' and community members' dedication and hard work to add joy and community to our schools. I could fill an entire page by naming people and businesses who donated their time and goods to help make the evening a splash.

Our senior class of over 300 found a unique and memorable haven after their Senior Prom at Windows on the River, a feat that sets us apart and one we can all be exceptionally proud of.

Lakewood High School has a long-standing tradition of offering students

a fun and safe place to go from 11:30-2:30 a.m. After our seniors enjoy their fancy prom, they get to come back to the high school for a fun evening of festivities meticulously planned by the senior parents, who not only decorate the venue with the secret theme of the night but have food and various activities to enjoy, as well as a chance to win a raffled off item.

This year's secret theme was Under the Sea, with a dash of glow, and the planning started last fall. The students were treated to glowing glasses and leis to go with the beachy theme and a glow-in-the-dark henna artist, with a sizeable glowing octopus generously loaned to us by Garfield Middle Schools PTA. In the main gym, the kids were treated to a bounce house, obstacle courses, 360 photos, a simulated surfboard, enough food to feed an army, and a glow room with a glowing octopus.

Thanks to Pam Williams in the bookroom at Lakewood High School for steering our ship from the initial meeting this past fall and to Heather Kama-Starr for being our fearless captain since that first meeting.

The time, effort, and creative energy that went into the event's planning gave me another reason to show gratitude to my family, and I call Lakewood home. It would take two entire Lakewood Observers to thank the MANY parents, grandparents, restaurants, and businesses. We had



clean up. Thank you to all who helped, including our incredible administrators and teachers at Lakewood High School who went to prom and after prom.

Parents spent countless hours purchasing, constructing, planning, and putting together this fun-filled evening. This event was funded by ticket sales, fundraising, donations, and support from our local PTAs; past After Prom themes have included Alice in Wonderland, Casino Night, Night at the Museum, and Monte Carlo, to name a few.

This class started their high school careers remotely, and I am extremely grateful they were able to enjoy their prom and, after prom, celebrating all of their achievements over the past four years together. It was a fun experience for me and I really enjoyed getting to know a few new parents. As Dr. G says, Long Live Lakewood!

several committees: decorations, food, security, fun, and games. This was a large team and community effort.

After photos at Lakewood Park, several parents picked up food donations, and some stayed until 4 a.m. to

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MAY

ARIES:

This month, the Sun & Jupiter are partnered together for the Zodiac. The Ram has the lucky duo in the 2nd house of finances. Buy Mom something special & then do something adventurous.

TAURUS:

You’ve got it going on in your own Bullpen. Cook a gourmet feast, spruce up the house, and have Mom over for dinner. She will never forget this. Then it’s all you, Bull.

GEMINI:

The Twins have got their action going on behind the scenes. Why don’t you make what you’re doing for Mom a surprise, I’m sure it’ll be double the pleasure.

CANCER:

The Crab is joining the friendship arena for Mother’s Day; the more, the merrier. For once, Crab, let somebody else cook for you or take you out; you deserve it.

LEO:

The Lion’s Den is centered around work & career this month. Pull yourself away from the office long enough to make Mom the center of attention on her special day.

VIRGO:

Foreign shores are calling attention to our Virgos this month; maybe Mom is due for a trip abroad with you footing the bill. Go somewhere where the mind can be enlightened at the same time.

LIBRA:

The energy is focused on other people’s resources this month. Whenever the extra cash comes from, I’m sure you’ll brighten Mom’s day with flowers & chocolates.

SCORPIO:

The Scorpion’s intense energy is focused on personal & business relationships this month; remember who brought you into this world & surprise Mom.

SAGITTARIUS:

The Centaur energy this month is focused on health; this would be a good time to go on one of those adventurous hikes you like so much: bring Mom along.

CAPRICORN:

It’s about time the Goat had some fun; the spotlight is shining on romance & creativity... If there are children and Mom involved, the more the merrier, enjoy.

AQUARIUS:

The Aquarian’s eccentric taste can be displayed for all to see on the home front this Mother’s Day; surprise them with something unconventional & futuristic.

PISCES:

The fish is hanging around the community pond this Mother’s Day & you’re not traveling solo; you’ve invited the whole gang to come on over to your pond.

Eva Starr, the local astrologer, has been studying the moon & stars since she could read. You can reach Starr at evastarr@evastarr.com & her website evastarr.com

Razzle Dazzle ’24, Where Everything Old Is New Again, Cover To Cover

by Lynn B. Johnson, MFA

Beck Center for the Arts’ Creative Arts Therapies program participants and volunteers performed for sold-out audiences the last weekend of April.

Creative Arts Therapies at Beck Center offers music therapy, and art therapy, as well as adapted and inclusive dance, music, theater, and visual art for people with disabilities.

The 22nd annual Razzle Dazzle inclusive theater performance, “Everything Old is New Again – Cover to Cover,” featured original versions of beloved songs, with cuts to updated cover versions.

Thirty-eight cast members produced a show rich with dancing and humor. The crowd-pleasing production included audience participation in a conga line. Other audience members were also pulled from their seats to dance in the aisle during the show.

This year’s show art by Ryan Finley of @ArtbyRyanFinley was a stylized cassette tape. It was printed on every

performer’s T-shirt.

The four Razzle Dazzle performances were made possible by their presenting sponsors, the O’Brien Family and Community West Foundation. The Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities was the production sponsor and hosted a literature table with resources before every performance.

Lynn B. Johnson, MFA, APR is the Communications Administrator for Cuyahoga DD.



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COVE COMMUNITY CENTER

Update! Lakewood’s ME/WE Family Education And Support Group

by Chitra Walker,

The Lakewood ME/WE Family Education and Support Group has been meeting on Saturday mornings at Lakewood’s Cove Community Center since May 13, 2023. The meeting can be accessed both virtually and in person. This unique program which provides education and support for family members who are concerned about a loved one’s abuse or addictive use of alcohol or other drugs is the only such program which is funded and supported by a municipality. Sponsorship of the program is

made possible by Opioid Settlement funding. The meetings are facilitated by Jim Joyner a licensed chemical dependency counselor clinical supervisor who has over 50 years of professional experience in the field of substance use disorder treatment, prevention, education and professional training.

From its beginning almost a year ago, the meeting attendance has grown to an average of more than 15 persons per meeting. The program is different than most other family support programs in that it offers education covering 10 different topics over a 12-week cycle as well as facilitator lead peer support group. Participants learn what addiction is and what it is not. They learn how to offset the negative impact a loved one’s addiction can have on family members. A key fact is that the Group specifically addresses the impact of the disease and particular suffering of family members of those who have the disease. They are taught how to reset healthy boundaries and that their loved one’s addiction is not their fault, not their fix and not their fight. The peer support group portion of the meeting provides a safe and understanding opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings and be supported in their efforts to

affirm the importance of self-care.

Over the last 8 months, it has been heartwarming to watch this group come together and healing start to happen. “I can see myself change in how I talk to my daughter now,” one attendee said at a recent meeting after she described her experience before she started attending the meetings. “I have a plan now for when he comes home,” says another, whose loved one is soon to be discharged from a treatment program. “This program has changed the way I approach not only the relationship with my son, but with all my other relationships as well,” says a third person.

It is powerful to experience the connection between people who once felt alone in their anxiety about their suffering loved ones, who now feel the comfort and strength from others who have shared their own experience of the disease. While there is a particular camaraderie in the hybrid version that is unusual, whether in-

person or online, all can experience and see healing in themselves and others as it happens.

I am thrilled that the City of Lakewood offers this unique opportunity to learn, heal and grow to families who have undergone the ravages of Substance Use Disorder (SUD). As a citizen of Lakewood, I am proud our city stepped up to use available funds to be a unique and real part of the solution to the terrible problem of alcohol and other drugs in our community! Lakewood is a wonderful example to other cities in our County and elsewhere.

If you have any questions or if you would like to participate in the Saturday weekly meeting, please call (216) 780-3883 Monday – Friday, 11:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. You MUST pre-register to participate.

Chitra Walker is Community Resource Specialist, Lakewood Area Collaborative, Division of Youth.

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Meet Me At Cove: Alexis, Frances, and Basil

submitted by Nancy Feighan

This space for family and community is a lifeline for us parents. It means we’re not alone, struggling to teach our kids at home. It shows that raising kids is a team effort, with support coming in many forms. When my child has been talking to me for two hours straight, we can come here for a change of scenery. On other days, I enjoy chatting with other adults and learning about parenting tips, kids’ programs, and local info about Lakewood. My husband, Ben, joins us here sometimes too.

Alexis, Frances (4) and Basil (2)



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