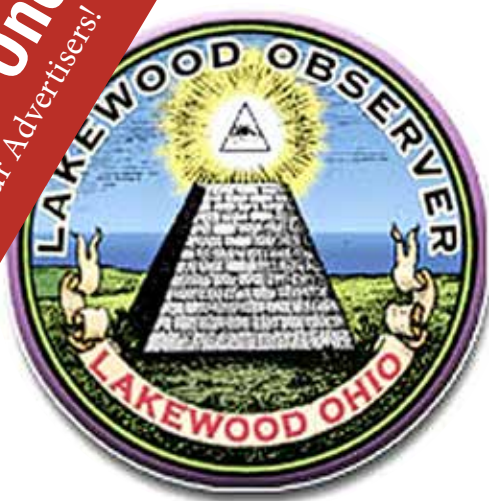


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“Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.” - Warren Buffett

THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Founder of Award Winning Observer Community-Written Newspapers & Websites

Volume 20, Issue 14, July 17, 2024

Saturday, August 3, 2024 10AM-6PM

Lakewood Arts Festival

Original Art, Original Music, Original Food

by Katherine Isenhardt

For one breezy summer day, Detroit Avenue from Belle to Arthur, becomes a creative oasis and brings artists of all disciplines together with 15,000 collectors and art lovers. The juried festival hosts

over 175 regional and national artists displaying painting, prints, photography, art glass, ceramics, sculpture, jewelry and more.

Returning to the festival this year will be Billy Ritter featuring handmade and

atmospherically fired ceramics. Emily Joyce is a vitreous enamellist, creating wearable art and small sculpture with a balance of playfulness and elegance. This year's stellar jewelry selection includes hand forged timepieces and jewelry by Alexander Draven of The ExCB and Mimi Antonetti of Nautilus Creations of Pittsburgh. Utilizing steel, titanium, copper and brass, Antonetti interprets variations of European, Persian and Japanese armor styles in her jewelry.

The festival is pleased to welcome back Korey Smerk, known for his architectural photos of The Old Arcade and drone shots of downtown Cleveland and Whiskey Island. Dynamic metal sculptures blending classic and contemporary forms are individually crafted by Thomas Yano. His work appears in collections and exhibitions in New York, Chicago, Miami and more. Fine art prints and painting selections include works by George Kocar, Chuck Wimmer, our "Best of Show 2023" and Brian Jasinski of Grey Cardigan.

Live performance is another aspect of original art to appreciate at this year's fest. Twelve bands appear on two stages at The Andrews Stage and the City Center Park Stage featuring Charity Evonna, Hot Club of Cleveland, Chris Allen, Country Honk Acoustic, Maura Rogers and The Bellows, Opus 216, Moon Echo Garden and more.

Originally founded in 1978, festival proceeds fund local arts grants and an annual scholarship for graduating high school seniors from Lakewood, continuing to art school. Additional grants for arts funding include The Beck Center, Lakewood High School and more. To support scholarship giving, or for festival information visit www.lakewoodartsfest.org.

continued on page 4

Thank You, Lakewood!

by Jason Shachner

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your Ward 2 representative on City Council since 2020. I will be resigning my position effective August 5th to accept a new opportunity in public service. This decision comes with a mix of emotions, but primarily, I am grateful that I have been able to have worked alongside such dedicated public servants and with an incredibly engaged and vibrant community.

During my tenure, we faced unprecedented challenges, particularly with the onset of the pandemic. I drafted the legislation that expanded outdoor dining options to support our local businesses, a testament to our resilience and adaptability. We also made significant strides in housing by permitting the building of accessory dwelling units, providing more housing options for residents. Additionally, I prioritized public safety by committing ARPA funds to ensure that a High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) is installed on Madison Avenue between Westwood/Morrison



and Victoria/Reveley, which is going out to bid in the next few weeks.

As I continue my career in public service elsewhere, I am confident that Lakewood will continue to thrive. Our efforts have set a strong foundation for the future, and I am excited to see the continued progress and positive direction of our city. Thank you for your support and kindness, and for the opportunity to serve our community.

Jason Shachner is the Vice President of Lakewood City Council and the Ward 2 Councilmember. He is currently serving as an Assistant Law Director for the City of Cleveland. He can be reached at Jason.Shachner@lakewoodoh.gov

Due To Overcrowding Lakewood Updates City Pool Policy

from City Hall

With the heat of summer in full force, both Becks Pool and Foster Pool have seen continued high usage this year. On multiple occasions, Foster Pool has reached full capacity and we have had to turn away swimmers seeking admission.

Both the City of Lakewood and the Lakewood Recreation Department hold the safety of pool users as our highest priority and we continue to jointly monitor the situation ongoing.

Due to safety concerns and a need to avoid overcrowding, we have updated our admissions and usage policies. This includes restrictions on any non-resident day passes so that each non-resident must be accompanied by a Lakewood resident on a one-to-one basis.

This policy started on Sunday, June 23rd.



Day pass admissions will require one of the following documents as proof of residency:

- Driver's License or State Issued ID
- Utility bill from current year
- School ID
- Report card
- Existing season passes will continue to be honored.

Please visit the Lakewood Recreation Department website for further details.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT’S PAGE

Thank You, Outgoing Councilmember Jason Shachner

Applications Sought For Ward 2 Councilmember

by Sarah Kepple
Lakewood City Council President

Hi Neighbors,

At the Monday, July 15th meeting of City Council, it was announced that current Vice President and Ward 2 Councilmember Jason Shachner will resign from Council effective August 5th, 2024. Pursuant to Articles 2.1 and 2.2 of the Charter, Council has 60 days from that date to appoint. Therefore, Council will begin to accept applications for the position immediately.

An applicant must be a resident of Ward 2, a registered voter of the city and a resident of the city for at least one year to qualify for consideration. The candidate appointed to this position will serve until December 31, 2025. In the next municipal election in November of 2025, voters will determine the individual elected to serve the final two years of the unexpired Ward 2 Councilmember term. The appointed



Ward 2 Councilman Jason Shachner receives a Resolution for his service to the City of Lakewood.

individual may run in that election if they wish to continue the role.

Interested Ward 2 residents, please submit a cover letter and resume in PDF format to the Clerk of Council at council@lakewoodoh.gov. Applications will be accepted until August 23, 2024. I expect candidate interviews to be held and a subsequent appointment

to be made in early September. I and my fellow At-Large Councilmembers Tom Bullock and Tristan Rader will continue to serve Ward 2 residents in the interim.

I encourage interested individu-

als to join us for the Ward 2 Council Community Conversation on August 6th from 6-7pm at the Main branch of Lakewood Public Library at 15425 Detroit Ave to meet fellow Ward 2 residents, hear some of their ideas and concerns, and learn about items currently in progress in the City. The Ward 4 Council Community Conversation on August 20th from 6-7pm will also provide an educational forum. All are welcome at both events.

Though it is our duty to begin to look to the future with this appointment, I also wish to express my gratitude to outgoing Ward 2 Councilmember Shachner for his dedicated service to our city. Regular readers of this publication will no doubt remember with appreciation his many informative “View from

continued on page 10



Your Independent Source for Lakewood News & Opinion

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Lakewood Observer

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Isn't it time you joined this effort to report community news while preserving our history?

THE MAYOR’S CORNER

Early Returns Show High Homeowner Interest In Heritage Home Program

by Meghan George
Mayor/Safety Director, City of Lakewood

In March of this year, the City of Lakewood began partnering again with the Cleveland Restoration Society to provide access to the Heritage Home Program for owners of Lakewood homes built over 50 years ago. With the return of Heritage Home, Lakewood homeowners can once again access professional guidance and low-cost, below-market-rate financing to upgrade and maintain our community’s impressive stock of historic homes. The City was recently provided a snapshot of early use of the program, and the interest in the program is impressive.

By way of background, the Heritage Home Program has two main aspects. First, it provides free, impartial, and independent technical assistance and advice for home repair and maintenance projects. That can mean anything from help finding and evaluating suitable contractors to general advice on repairs and remodeling down to helping owners pick out a paint color scheme that fits with the

charm of their century-home. Second, Heritage Home also connects homeowners to affordable loans for home projects, with rates as low 2% fixed, provided by local banks. That is a huge benefit in light of the interest being charged in the market in recent years, helping homeowners get their projects done without breaking the bank.

Restoration Society staff provided the City with a snapshot of usage for the first two months of the program, and in a short period of time, over 350 Lakewood homeowners reached out to the Restoration Society to inquire about Heritage Home Program resources. Out of those contacts, 53 site visits were performed, and an 18 additional off-site technical assistance contacts were performed. Finally, nine homeowners applied for loans in the first month alone, with a value of nearly \$450,000. Overall, projects where Home Heritage was involved in just that short period

of time exceeded \$3 million.

What this early data tells us is that there was pent up demand for this kind of assistance in Lakewood, and it bodes well for our homeowners being able to improve and maintain their residences. We suspected the program would be popular when over 100 Lakewood residents attended the first informational meeting on March 7th at Lakewood Library, and this early information is proving that expectation correct.

I once again encourage anyone

considering a repair or improvement to consider checking in with the team on the Heritage Home Program. The technical assistance is free, and The Cleveland Restoration Society is a non-profit, so they are not out to use this as a way to upsell you a product. Consider a call to the Restoration Society at 216-426-3116 or visit the website: www.heritagehomeprogram.org.

Lakewood continues to be blessed with an abundance of beautiful, historic homes. With the Heritage Home Program now in full effect, we have one more way to make sure these gems continue to shine for centuries to come.

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24 hours in class and 8 hours of on-the-road offered at Lakewood High School
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Youth football registrations are now open.

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Lakewood Public Library Programs

Upcoming Events

by Lisa Calfee

Meet The Author - “Gift Me with Flowers While I’m Present”
by LaTonya Fenderson-Warren
Wednesday, July 24, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium
LaTonya Fenderson-Warren is a soul poetess and author. Her fourth book, “Gift Me with Flowers While I’m Present,” encourages you to live now, love now, and gift flowers to your loved ones while they can enjoy them. While shedding light on social issues that are normally downplayed, she wants her art to become a voice for those who feel silenced. Books will be available for sale and signing at the event.

Meet The Author - “The Edge of Doubt” by David Miraldi
Wednesday, July 31, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium
Delve into the captivating world of true crime legal drama with David Miraldi’s Edge series inspired by actual cases from Northeast Ohio. Miraldi, a seasoned civil trial attorney and native of Lorain, Ohio, artfully weaves gripping narratives that throw open the hidden intricacies of the American justice system. Books will be available for sale and signing at the event.

Literary Cleveland Presents: Poetry Open Mic
Saturday August 3, 2024, 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Main Library Front Porch
Join us on the library’s front porch during the Lakewood Arts Festival and enjoy poetry readings from experienced poets, participants from the writing workshops and even inspired festival goers. We encourage everyone interested in sharing their own poetry to sign up at our table during the festival.

Film- “Spellbound” (1945) directed by Alfred Hitchcock
Sunday, August 4, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. (101 minutes) Main Library Auditorium
Knit & Lit Book Club: “Tom Lake” by Ann Patchett, Tuesday, August 20, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Meeting Room

Booked For Murder Book Club:
“The Golden Spoon” by Jessa Maxwell, Thursday, August 15, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Multipurpose Room

Children’s And Youth Services

by Jeffrey Siebert

Adventure Begins at Your Library
Friday, May 10, 2024 through Monday, August 12, 2024 at the Main Library and Madison Branch
For all children and youth from birth up to those entering twelfth grade. Read for fun and rewards. Participants will be entered into weekly drawings for prizes and gift cards. Readers can check online or in person. Finishers receive a certificate of completion and a new book to keep. Registration is required.

Adventure Begins at Your Library Scavenger Hunt
Friday, May 10, 2024 through Monday, August 12, 2024 at the Main Library and Madison Branch
For all ages. Children are invited to participate in the Summer Reading Club scavenger hunt by looking for pictures of road and traffic symbols they might find on their next adventure. The pictures are found throughout the Children’s and Youth Services area of the library. The hunt lasts all summer. When you finish, turn in your scavenger hunt sheet to be entered in a drawing for a prize. No registration is required.

The Wonderful World of Bubbles
Friday, July 26, 2024 3:00pm - 4:00pm , Main Library Multipurpose Room
For the whole family. Bubbles and science are taken to a new level of fun at this entertaining show. See square bubbles, bubbles that change shape, bubbles that walk a tight rope and even a person inside of a bubble! This is a laugh out loud comedy show for all ages. No registration required.

Eager Engineers Camp
Monday, July 22, 2024- Thursday, July 25, 2024
Monday, August 5, 2024- Thursday, August 8, 2024
Madison Branch- 9:30am-10:30am in the Madison Branch Meeting Room
Main Library- 11:30 am-12:30pm in the Main Library Multipurpose Room
For Students in First through Fifth Grade. Eager Engineers is about hands on learning with Lego’s, K’nex, Citiblocs and more. Your child will be exposed to ideas like simple machines, anatomy, design, architecture and aerodynamics. Every class will introduce an educational concept, and then participants will build it! This creates excitement, discovery and self-confidence. Join us for Flying Objects, Citibloc Big Ben, K’nex Balance It, Lego Dragon Race and more. Registration is required for each session.

Harry Potter’s Birthday Extravaganza and Storytime
Saturday, July 27, 2024 2:00-4:00pm in the Main Library Activity Room
For Students in First through Sixth Grade. Join us in celebration of Harry Potter’s 44th Birthday in an extravaganza filled with reading, music, arts & crafts, games, and play. Dress up, discover your dormitory, choose a name, make a wand, test your Hogwarts knowledge, and send Harry a birthday card. Reservations are not required.

Family Weekend Wonders
Main Library- Fridays and Saturdays at 10:30 a.m.
Madison Branch- Fridays at 10:30 a.m.
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.

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

Starts Today Third Annual Most Distinguished Tree Contest

continued from page 1

and photograph the trees for you.

3) **MAIL** - Send addresses with category to: Lakewood Observer/TAEB Tree Contest, PO Box 770203, Lakewood, OH 44107 (again, we will happily go out and photograph the tree) Don't forget to include your name as the nominator!

Selection Process: Once the nominations are submitted, Lakewood residents will be asked to vote on their pick for each category through an online voting process that provides the photos, categories and addresses of the trees, so you can go see them in person, as you should. Voting will commence on August 21st and end on Sept. 2nd. After votes are tabulated, the trees with the most votes in each category will be named the 2024 Most Distinguished Tree of Lakewood for that category and the nominating resident(s) will receive a prize. The top 2 runners-up trees in each category will also be identified. We will explain more on how to vote in the August 21st issue of the paper.

Results will be posted on the Lakewood Observer website and in print on September 4th, and highlighted on the Tree Advisory and Education Board’s webpage at www.lakewoodoh.org.

Sponsorships Available: Various Lakewood companies have been or will be asked to sponsor the contest and provide contest prizes. Their sponsorship will be included in all news and social media posts related to the contest. Prizes may include gift certificates or gift cards, products, as well as tree saplings ready to be planted.

If you would like to be part of this wonderful nature contest and donate a prize(s) please contact us at: production@lakewoodobserver.com

The Tree Advisory and Education Board collaborates with the City of Lakewood on urban tree policies and practices, promoting the City’s tree programs and educating residents regarding responsible tree stewardship and the benefits of tree planting on private property. We encourage you to consider planting a tree this year on your private property! The city of Lakewood is offering discounted pricing for tree planting through their preferred vendor who will be planting over 400 trees on city properties and tree lawns in 2024. Please see: <https://www.lakewoodoh.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Private-Property-Plantings-June2023.pdf>

Private Yard Opportunity - Leave a Legacy - Put Down Roots in Lakewood and Plant a Tree in Your Yard

Have you been thinking about planting a tree in your yard?

Here is an opportunity to purchase a shade tree at a reduced price for your private yard!

The City of Lakewood would like to help citizens purchase and have planted shade trees for their private yards to help us increase the urban tree canopy.



The City of Lakewood will be placing an order for shade trees for the upcoming Spring and Fall planting seasons.

Residents can purchase a shade tree AND have it professionally planted in their desired yard location at the same pricing that the city pays (plus applicable tax).

Residents can contract with The Greenleaf Group Inc. for the purchase and planting of a shade tree on their private property.

To select a tree and place an order, contact The Greenleaf Group Inc. at (330) 441-6326 or by email at greenleafgroup@hotmail.com to sign-up.

Mention that you are part of the City of Lakewood Shade Tree Purchase Program.

All trees will be professionally planted under ODNR Division of Forestry and Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association approved methods. ALL TREES come with a 1-year warranty.



“To exist as a nation, to prosper as a state, to live as a people, we must have trees.” - Theodore Roosevelt

2024 Senior Scholarship Recipients

Cameron Wereb

from Lakewood City Schools

Cameron Wereb certainly made the most of her four years at Lakewood High and in doing so, made a significant impact at LHS through her leadership, community service and outstanding academic achievements. Cameron was one of Lakewood High and the Class of 2024's six National Merit Commended Students, a prestigious nationwide honor.

Her extracurricular involvement reflects Cameron's broad interests, curious nature and desire to serve and improve her community whether in school or out. Cameron was captain of the LHS Mock Trial Team, a member of the Club Identity/Race & Diversity Leadership Team, National Honor Society, History Club and the Lakewood Ranger Marching Band Color Guard.

Her commitment to community service was evident through her volunteer work with Lakewood Con-



Cameron Wereb will attend the University of Michigan in the fall studying film.

gregational Church Childcare, the H2O service organization, and The Fairytale Foundation. Cameron's high school career is a testament to her dedication, leadership, service and compassion. Cameron received the Class of 1960 Scholarship and the Pearl Ann Bodle Class of '50 Memorial Scholarship. She will attend the University of Michigan in the fall studying film.

Bode Smith

from Lakewood City Schools

Bode Smith is the student who leaves you marveling at how they manage to accomplish so much while remaining grounded, kind, and well-rounded. His academic success, highlighted by a perfect ACT score, is just one of the many remarkable achievements Bode has earned during his four years at LHS.

Bode's passion for music has brought him numerous awards and honors. As a member of The Lakewood Project, he has consistently showcased his musical prowess. He served as Concertmaster for the Chamber Orchestra for 3 years and was also a member of the Four Seasons String Quartet. He was selected to the Northeast Ohio Regional Orchestra in 2022.

Beyond his musical achievements, Bode has shown a strong commitment to academic excellence and community service. He is a member of both the National Honor Society and the Tri-M Honor Society, organizations that recognize outstanding scholarship, leadership, and service.

Oh, and Bode even finds time to hold down a part-time job! In every endeavor, Bode Smith exemplifies the qualities of a true scholar and good person!

Bode received the George P. Read Music Scholarship and will attend Ohio University to study music performance. Best wishes, Bode!



Bode will attend Ohio University to study music performance.

Meredith (Edie) Barcelona

from Lakewood City Schools

We aren't sure how Edie Barcelona had time to sleep during her four years at LHS. With music in her veins, Edie is a skilled and passionate dancer who studied at the Beck Center for the Arts and also took private piano and vocal lessons. She was a member of the LHS Chamber Choir and Fourtes and served as a volunteer choreographer for the musicals at Harding Middle School. Edie also performed with the Barnstormers and in the Lakewood Congregational Church youth musicals and was a marching band and drill team member.

When she wasn't honing her musical talents, Edie was diving with the LHS Diving Team, researching and presenting historical topics with the history club, and was involved in both the National Honor Society and French Honor Society. Just as she is a determined dancer and musician, Edie also displayed near perfection in her academic performance tackling a schedule full of AP and honors classes. Her list of awards and achievements is impressive and ranges from winning the



Edie intends to attend the Toronto Metropolitan University.

Lakewood/Rocky River Rotary Club Speech Contest and Rangerette of the Year to the Governor's Merit Scholarship from the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

Edie received the Dr. Lisa Hanson Fine Arts Scholarship and intends to attend the Toronto Metropolitan University and will no doubt continue to be an outstanding student with a bright future.

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LAKEWOOD SCHOOLS

Observations On The District: The Good, The Better And The What The Heck:

by Trish Hendy
The Good:

A special Board meeting was held several months ago on April 29th. This is how it was described: “The Superintendent and Cabinet members provided Board members with an update on matters pertaining to the 2023-2024 school year and discussed planning for the 2024-2025 school year and beyond.”

What is the cabinet? Superintendent Niedzwiecki explained: “(The) Cabinet comprises the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Treasurer, and all of the Directors at the Central Office. Over the years, a few have lived in Lakewood, attended Lakewood schools, or graduated from Lakewood. To date, I do not believe anyone lives in Lakewood.”

Directors in the cabinet are HR, Operations, Student Services, Teaching and Learning, Technology, Community and District Activities. (Correction: the Director of Operations lives in Lakewood.) Can the cabinet be considered an advisory group for the superintendent? “Yes. In addition, they become experts in their fields.” The Cabinet also presents to the Board and makes recommendations regarding Lakewood and the future of our schools and community.

The Better:

It’s Lakewood, and summer means camps, camps, camps where learning is fun: Pony Camp, Rock On! And Strings on Fire, Kids Connection, Safety Town, Build a Bot Camp, Ranger Roundball Camp and Lakewood Girls Summer Basketball Camp to name a few. There are also more in our community from the Beck Center to Lakewood Public Library. At all the Lakewood outdoor spaces there is lots of laughing and sounds of fun.

The What the Heck?

First: *Cabinet members are not required to live in Lakewood, and the Board isn’t required to record special meetings and make them available to the public.*

I am sure the Lakewood community appreciates all the work that cabinet members put forth for our students. However, a couple of years ago a cabinet level administrator told me that I was tone deaf to the Lakewood community. Since I was stunned, I missed the opportunity to reply, “At least I live In Lakewood.” That’s a powerful group of administrators with no 24-hour connection to our community. Walking down our streets, mowing the lawn, hanging out at a coffee shop or cheering on softball games to truly understand the effect of the choices being made.

If we had known that they were presenting information about the current and future state of our schools, then the Lakewood stakeholder would be more informed about the future of our schools. We can’t dispute the members’ qualifications in their fields, but how in tune are they with our community? Like regular meetings, perhaps “special” meetings should be recorded to make sure the information that the cabinet shared could be easily accessible to the Lakewood community.

But since they are not recorded, how do you find out what happened at a special meeting? Wouldn’t it be easier if all meetings (regular and special) were videotaped and archived so the community could watch and learn? In the meantime, if you want to be added

to the special meetings list email kent.zeman@lakewoodcityschools.org.

Second: *The Board needs more clarity with regard to what they are doing in executive sessions.*

Recently, I contacted Mr. Zeman with a question regarding Executive Sessions. Specifically, this is the practice of holding executive sessions prior to the public meeting which the public is not allowed to attend. But hold on--executive sessions can only occur by a motion and second for adjournment during a regular or special meeting.

His answer? “Out of courtesy to the public, the board notices the meeting with the new start time and indicates the board will be immediately entering executive session.” So, the meeting before the general meeting is to meet in executive session. “On occasion, the board needs to meet in executive session.”

So, let’s investigate the “on occasion” comment. This school year starting 9/5 thru 6/12 there were 24 regular/special meetings. Nineteen of them adjourned for executive sessions. Sure do wish I got a paycheck for that “occasional” timeline. Every single time they adjourned it was only for “consideration of the employment of public employees.”

According to LCSD website “The motion and vote to hold that executive session shall state, with specificity, which one or more of the approved matters listed in R.C. 121.22(G) are to be considered at the executive session but shall not list any matter in which the Board (or its designees, committees, or sub- committees as applicable) has no intention of considering.” Read that as you will. Does it mean that the Board is required to announce which of the 8 reasons from R.C.121.22 are to be discussed or does it mean only one is needed to meet the criteria?

Is the Lakewood School Board breaking a rule? I googled to get an answer.

“Each executive session discussion must be limited to the purpose or purposes stated. It is unlawful to state only one purpose for an executive session,

then discuss a second topic (although an executive session may be called for the purpose of discussing several topics provided that the motion lists the purposes for each) (Vermilion Teachers’ Assn. v. Vermilion Local School Dist. Bd. of Edn., 98 Ohio App.3d 524, 648 N.E.2d 1384 (6th Dist.1994)). Similarly, in State ex rel. Hicks v. Clermont Cty Bd. of Commrs., 2021-Ohio-998, the court found that a public body cannot simply list all eight statutory reasons to go into an executive session unless every single reason was applicable and actually to be discussed. <https://tinyurl.com/yf33cys9>

Why does this matter? Integrity within the School Board should matter. The community deserves the information that the state dictates. Does it make a difference to say “consideration to hire” versus “negotiating a contract”? According to R.C. 121.22, it does.

So just a little rule, why bother to even worry about it? For the board to function, it must have the trust of our community. My second-floor bathroom had a little drip, drip, drip one time. Something we probably wouldn’t have noticed even if we were home. But that drip, drip...well it brought the ceiling down in my kitchen.

School Board regular meetings are every 1st and 3rd Monday at 7pm. You can watch live or later on youtube. Search “Brent Kallay”. This is also where you will find a number of activities that have been recorded throughout the school year.

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OBSERVER FORUM

Healthy Lakewood Foundation Awards \$212,500 In Community Grants

by Sharon Schuldt

The Healthy Lakewood Foundation (HLF) Board of Directors awarded \$212,500 in 2024 funding for its Community Grants program at its July Board meeting. Additionally, the Board committed \$170,000 in 2025 funding for eight organizations receiving two-year grants. Overall, twelve area organizations were granted funds to advance programs that address health and well-being in the Lakewood community.

HLF's Board President Becca Baas explains, "Through HLF's Community Grants Program, we're investing in the vital work of local non-profits making a tangible difference in Lakewood. These organizations work directly in our community to address critical issues like food security, housing stability, and social connections. By providing substantial, multi-year funding, we're not just supporting individual programs – we aim to build the long-term capacity of these essential community partners."

HLF places a priority on programs that support low-income single-parent families, children and youth, older adults, and immigrants and refugees.

- Funding included awards to:**
- LakewoodAlive for the Senior Outreach and Support (SOS) Program, offering comprehensive services that includes aging in place assessments, low-cost home improvements, the Lakewood Paint Program and other community resources for senior residents to increase their safety at home.
 - Lakewood Community Services Center (LCSC) for their food delivery program that provides essential home-delivery to low-income individuals and families in Lakewood.
 - Barton Center for the Healthy

Connections Program (HCP), offering free, regular low-impact physical activities and social opportunities for seniors, including art and music therapy, chair yoga, tai-chi, community events, and more.

- Asian Services in Action, Inc. (ASIA) for support to newcomer and refugee residents in Lakewood through food resources, parenting groups, summer and after school programming for school-age children, translation services, and additional wraparound services.

Journey Center for Safety and Healing for the Justice System Advocacy Program (JSAP) for domestic violence victim advocacy in the Lakewood Municipal Court. Funding also supports training for Lakewood police officers, domestic violence education classes, safety planning, and connections to resources in the community.

Additionally, the HLF Board awarded a \$55,000 System-Level Grant to the Division of Early Childhood, a program of the City of Lakewood's Department of Human Services, over two years for the Lakewood Childcare Scholarship program. Funding offers support for children and their families, enabling parents to maintain stable employment while ensuring their children receive high-quality, regulated childcare.

See the complete list of grant funding awarded on HLF's website. HLF's next funding opportunities are the Systems-Change Grant LOI process that opens on August 12, 2024 and the Neighborhood Opportunity Grant process that opens on August 19, 2024. More information can be found on our website.

Sharon Schuldt is the Healthy Lakewood Foundation - Foundation and Grants Coordinator.

Legal Aid Helps Clients Struggling With Legal Issues Regarding Money

by Tonya Sams

Money issues can cause an enormous amount of stress and fear. Concerns about money can determine where you live, if you will be able to have basic needs met, the quality of life you will have and more. Money stressors not only include size of your paycheck and debt, but also include employment and unemployment issues, foreclosures, estate planning, taxes, and bankruptcy. The Economic Justice Group at The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland helps clients navigate these difficult legal matters surrounding money.

"The Economic Justice Group provides direct representation for clients needing legal assistance related to money and advocates for systemic change that will result in greater economic stability for our client community," said Barbara Barreno-Paschall, Senior Attorney in the Economic Justice Group. "The five legal areas that the Economic Justice Group focuses on are employment, consumer, tax, bankruptcy, and estate planning."

When assisting with employment issues, Economic Justice attorneys help clients remove barriers to employment such as sealing criminal records or applying for a Certification of Qualification for Employment (CQE), sealing and expunging juvenile records, and employment discrimination.

Those clients experiencing consumer legal issues are assisted with mortgage and property tax foreclosure, debt collection lawsuits, car repossessions, student loans, payday loans, auto title loans, and medical or nursing home collection.

Economic Justice attorneys also help clients settle disputes with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) about personal federal income taxes and file for Chapter 7 bankruptcy protection. They also help with estate

planning, including helping clients with wills and clearing tangled property titles.

There is one area of law where the Economic Justice Group receives the most requests for assistance.

"Historically, we get a huge number of requests for bankruptcy assistance. We saw a drop off during the pandemic when debt collection was paused, but our bankruptcy numbers have been increasing over the last year," said Barbara. "Individuals who have low-income often find themselves in financial situations in which they have accumulated debt that they are unable to pay off, no matter how much they would like to do so."

The state of the economy has a huge effect on bankruptcy cases.

"As prices have risen due to changing economic conditions, it has become harder for our client community to keep up with increased living expenses, such as housing costs, transportation, and food when their wages are not increasing at the same rate or when they are on a fixed income such as Social Security," Barbara said. "For many Americans, they are one car accident or health emergency away from not being able to pay their bills each month because they have not been able to save due to increased costs and stagnant wages."

Are you experiencing legal issues regarding employment, consumer issues, tax, bankruptcy, and estate planning? If you have brief questions about money issues 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.



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Deluxe	\$12.50	\$15.25	\$20.00	\$23.50
Extra Items	\$0.75	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$1.75
Chicken	\$2.25	\$2.75	\$3.75	\$4.75
Extra Cheese & Special Toppings	\$2.00	2.50	3.50	4.50

Available items: Pepperoni, Sausage, Mushrooms, Onion, Green & Red Bell Peppers, Anchovies, Ham, Bacon, Fresh Garlic, Black Olives, Hot Peppers, Ground Beef, Pineapple, Jalapeno Peppers Special Toppings: Artichoke Hearts, Fresh Tomato, Broccoli, and *Chicken

LAKEWOOD CARES

Safe Cycling
In The Seasonal Heat

by Kenneth Knabe

Cyclists are in their glory now that summer is officially here. Many – including me – cycle often during the hot days and rides tend to be longer, and sometimes go later, thanks to extended daylight.

The first couple rides in higher temps feel harder as the body adjusts, but proper nutrition and hydration can help keep you safe and feeling your best. In my book "Cycling Rights: Second Edition" local fellow cyclist Dr. Mark Davis suggests drinking a bottle of water before even getting on your bike, and 16-20 ounces per hour (within 15 minutes) once riding. Plain water is fine for a shorter, under an hour ride. If going longer, consider adding electrolyte powder to your water bottles. (Notice that I said "bottles," plural!) Instant glucose such as Stingers, Shot Blocks, and Skratch available at local Lakewood bike shops like Spin, Beat Cycles and The Bike Spot and running shops like Second Sole can be helpful. Post-ride you've got a window of 45-60 minutes for nutrition replenishment. Drinks with whey protein and branch chain amino acids can aid in recovery. And if night cramps are an issue, try magnesium supplements or – my personal favorite – liquid pickle juice! Also, consider planning your



day earlier in the morning or later in the evening when temps are generally cooler.

These steps can help you avoid everything from dehydration (with potential muscle cramping) and bonking ("hitting a wall" as your body's glycogen stores become depleted) to more dangerous situations like heat exhaustion, and heat stroke (a bona fide 911 medical emergency). Familiarize yourself with the symptoms of heat-related illnesses before jumping into longer rides, and always use common sense when the temps and humidity are soaring.

<https://www.cdc.gov/extreme-heat/signs-symptoms/index.html>

Enjoy your summer by riding safely and legally!

Ken Knabe is Greater Cleveland's Bike Attorney promoting cycling safety and representing cyclists injured by careless drivers. 14222 Madison Avenue Lakewood, OH 44107 (216) 228-7200



Lakewood Women's Club
Awards Scholarship

by Margaret Wetzler

Each year, the Lakewood Women's Club (LWC) awards a scholarship to young woman graduating from high school who plans to continue on to a higher education institution.

This year we are proud to announce that Emily Potoczak, Lakewood High School graduate, Class of 2024, is this year's scholarship honoree. Emily applied to almost 20 universities, and has declared Biology/Pre-Med as her major at The Ohio State University.

Emily has achieved at a high level in the classroom, on the volleyball court and softball diamond, and in our community. She has been recognized as a 5.0+ GPA Fall and Spring athlete (Volleyball and Softball), and graduated from high school with an overall GPA over 4.75.

She began high school classes in middle school, and earned college credits while in high school. Her class schedule over four years of high school was filled with numerous AP and advanced classes.

Outside the classroom and the playing fields, Emily spent many hours volunteering with Help to Others (H2O) and volleyball and softball camps. Emily says: "I believe that I have made a positive impact on my community through acts of service. I started volunteering as early as possible so I would be able to help others around me. It began in sixth grade when I joined my community's youth service program, Help to Others (H2O), and certainly have not stopped. I have been able to work myself up the ranks and to become even more involved. I love the feeling of being able to be a part of something greater than myself. Service and volunteering has definitely shaped me into the person I am today. The rewards have been very plentiful. I have been able to see the faces of the people I have helped light up. It makes me feel like I am doing the right thing in this world. I have also learned about many different backgrounds and that has shaped me to the person that I am

today. Whether I am helping someone who is younger than me or someone who is older than me, they have all taught me valuable lessons".

The Lakewood Women's Club is a philanthropic organization that hosts a fundraiser each year entitled "Women Honoring Women", with proceeds supporting our Scholarship Program. The money we raise through our celebration that honors and awards business and community women leaders, is paid forward to our scholarship honoree. It's a wonderful way to continuously support and recognize the young women just starting out and as well as noteworthy, established women in Lakewood.

This year, our scholarship was named in honor of Patty Ryan, former president of the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce, and a true champion of Lakewood, who passed away in 2023. Her husband Jamer, and two of her three daughters, Abby and Caty (Tess was unable to attend), were at our Women Honoring Women event on April 11 at Vosh to help us remember Patty, and to present Emily with her check. At the time of the event, we presented a big, blank check, as the proceeds of the event would determine the amount of the scholarship. Our very generous attendees allowed us to give Emily a regular size check in the amount of \$3000!

"As chair of the 2024 scholarship committee, I applaud all of our applicants. The breadth and depth of their studies, extra curricular activities, leadership roles both in school and in our community is impressive. Each applicant had a unique story to tell, making the decision to select a winner difficult. Congratulations to Emily, we are excited for her to continue to grow, learn and excel at The Ohio State University. Honoring Patty Ryan with this year's "named" scholarship was a special moment, and helped us all to remember the gift of kindness that is so easily shared," said Margaret Wetzler, this year's committee chair.

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LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Hixson's Legend Lives On Christmas In July Sale

by Matthias Burke

Here in the heart of Lakewood, a town known for its tight-knit community and timeless charm, stands "Hixson's," a beloved shop that has been a cornerstone of the town for over seventy years. William Hixson, the shop's namesake, and owner, passed peacefully in December of 2022 leaving many unanswered questions regarding what would happen to the one-of-a-kind store. I am pleased to tell you that the store and William's legacy live on.

What many people didn't know is that Mr. Christmas was a collector of all things, and we are ready to share those precious items with his loyal customers to keep his spirit alive. Throughout our store we have uncovered many hidden gems that are awaiting their new homes. Some of these items

include never before seen stained glass windows, Tiffany-style lamps, and architectural elements. There is an array of vintage and antique oriental collectibles including art, furniture, and textiles. Spread the word and help us pass on these one of a kind items for generations to come.

Of course, it wouldn't be Hixson's if we didn't mention Christmas! Please join us for our **Christmas in July sale which will feature 30% off ALL things Christmas throughout the store. The sale will run from July 21st through July 26th from 12pm to 6pm. Hixson's is located at 14125 Detroit Avenue (216) 521-9277**

Current proprietor of Hixson's, Matthias Burke, is a firefighter who has worked with Bill Hixson since he was 14 years old, and is passionate about retaining the history of the store.

Applications Sought For Ward 2 Councilmember

continued from Page 2

Ward 2" articles, which proactively provided regular updates to constituents. Vice President Shachner's legislative accomplishments include legalizing bee-keeping, protecting pollinator plants, permitting accessory dwelling units, and establishing common sense regulations on adult use marijuana. He has been a staunch advocate for increased public safety infrastructure, including allocating funds for an additional crosswalk on Madison. I have been continuously impressed by his effectiveness as a legislator and deeply appreciated his fierce allyship in the fight to protect reproductive rights.

As Councilmember Shachner leaves to embark on a new professional opportunity to continue his public ser-

vice career, I hope you will join me in thanking him and wishing him and his family all the best.

Family Room Fun At Cove Park



by Nancy Feighan

In the summertime, Jessica Parker, Program Manager of Department of Human Services, Early Childhood, transforms Cove Park into a wonderland for children and their adults. The park comes alive with laughter and creativity on Mondays (3-6 PM) and Tuesdays and Thursdays (10 AM-noon). Kids create chalk masterpieces, blow bubbles, zoom around on toy trucks, and climb the jungle gym, and much more.

Jessica's initiative makes Cove Park a special place for families, strengthening community bonds during the summer months.



Council recognizes July as Disability Pride Month.

A Lakewood Guitar?



by Gary Rice

Greetings Fellow Lakewoodites,

Did you know that there's a world-renowned "Lakewood" guitar company that was named after our city? Sure is! In the '80's, an ambitious young man named Martin Seeliger in Germany had just completed his guitar building training, and decided to start his own very high quality steel string guitar company. Germany had been well known for classical nylon-stringed guitars, but

steel string acoustic guitars were very much a specialized market, and quite frankly, the '80's were a rough time for guitar companies, in any case. It was the era of the synthesizer, and many guitar companies around the world were going out of business, left and right.

Still, Mr. Seeliger was a highly talented (and optimistic) guy, and he was convinced that there would always be a market for a superlative hand-finished fairly-priced acoustic guitar, but then, there was the problem of finding a name for it. After perusing a map, his finger fell on Lakewood, Ohio. He loved the name Lakewood, and it stuck! Over the next 30 years, Lakewood guitars would consistently represent the highest pinnacle of sound and quality. Guitars could be purchased either off the shelf, or custom designed to suit the needs of the original player.

Not long ago, I found a used Lakewood guitar in a local store, and had the opportunity to evaluate it, which did not take long, as it immediately went home with me. You don't see too many Lakewood guitars around, and this was the first one that I'd laid eyes on.

I immediately contacted Mr. Seeliger and informed him that "Guitar Guy Gary" had one of his guitars, and that I happened to be a long-time Lakewood resident, as well! He seemed quite pleased.

I think that it's really cool that our city's name has been so well represented around the world by this very special guitar maker!

Back to practicing my guitar...



On July 8, the memorial procession carrying Cleveland Police Officer Jamieson Ritter came through Lakewood. Lakewoodites turned out for it including Lakewood Fire, Police, Mayor Meghan Goerge and members of City Hall. Officer Jamieson who was only 27 was killed in the line of duty trying to serve a warrant. God Speed.

COVE COMMUNITY CENTER

Meet Us At Cove:

Meet The Division Of Aging Wellness Team

by Nancy Feighan

Meet our dedicated wellness team at Cove Community Center, where a combined 64 years of experience and dedication to wellness is evident. Committed to promoting health and community spirit through the Division of Aging, our team offers transformative practices such as Adapted Jazzercise, Silver Strength, Qigong, slow flow chair yoga, Tai Chi, and line dancing. Each program is designed to enhance physical well-being and foster inner peace, ensuring a holistic approach to wellness for all participants. If you're 60 years of age or older, join us at Cove and embark on a journey towards a healthier, more vibrant you.

Patty McGuire, Adapted Jazzercise Instructor

Since 2010, Patty McGuire has specialized in adapted Jazzercise for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Her classes at Cove combine physical movement with diverse music, providing physical and cognitive benefits. Each session includes warm-ups, cardio, strength training, and stretching to promote overall health. The social aspect creates a supportive environment, combating depression and boosting motivation. Participants consistently report significant health improvements.

"I find joy in seeing people happy and fit," says Patty. She focuses on adapted Jazzercise and other tailored fitness activities to meet individual needs. Teaching at Cove allows Patty to foster unity among seniors and individuals with disabilities, cultivating a thriving community environment.

Adapted Jazzercise, provided free by the inclusive adult day care center Inner Peace, supports adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This class features extended, low-impact exercises with chair options for inclusive participation, promoting health and well-being through music and movement while embracing diversity.

Paul Zegarac, Wellness/Qigong Instructor

Nine and a half years ago, Paul Zegarac began his journey into health and wellness after being diagnosed with brain cancer. Seeking balance in breath, body, and mind, Paul discovered Qigong, a Chinese form of yoga. His dedication to this practice, focusing on body movement, breath, mental visualization, and stillness, has been a key part of his recovery. After knowing how much balance the practices brought him in his life, the rest of his life is dedicated to sharing them with others to make a positive difference in the world.

Recently, Paul began teaching Qigong to our senior participants, who report feeling lighter, more relaxed, and experiencing less joint stiffness. This is Paul's first time working exclusively with seniors, and he cherishes the sense of community it brings. Our participants eagerly anticipate his weekly Qigong class right after the last one ends.



Outside of Qigong, Paul is a nature enthusiast and has spent ten years working in cage-free daycare and dog rescue at the Mutt Hutt in Tremont.

Andrea Horvath: Certified Silver Strength Instructor

Andrea Horvath, a Certified Group Ex Instructor, has been guiding fitness classes for 12 years after a 30-year career as a social worker. Her fitness journey began at the Westshore Y, where staff encouraged her to become a certified group fitness instructor.

Eighteen months ago, while teaching at the Lakewood Y, Andrea heard her students raving about the Lakewood Division of Aging at Cove Community Center. She visited, proposed an exercise class for older adults, and quickly secured a weekly slot on Tuesdays at 12:30.

Andrea's "Silver Strength" classes focus on improving strength, balance, flexibility, and range of motion, significantly enhancing her students' physical fitness and well-being. She delights in their progress and champions the mantra: "use it or lose it!"

Joyce Roman, Slow Flow Chair Yoga Instructor

Joyce Roman has practiced yoga for 14 years and became certified in 2017. During the pandemic, Joyce's passion for yoga intensified, inspiring her to give back to the community through the practice of slow flow chair yoga. This gentle practice focuses on mindful movement and body awareness, offering participants a path to inner peace and well-being. Joyce appreciates its respectful approach to the body, creating a calming and accepting atmosphere.

Joyce values the respectful and mindful approach that slow flow chair yoga takes towards the body. This practice encourages participants to move with intention, fostering a deeper connection between mind and body. The benefits of this practice are numerous, including improved flexibility, reduced stress, and a greater sense of overall well-being.

At Cove, Joyce finds immense fulfillment in working with seniors, fostering a strong sense of community and camaraderie among her students. Since 2021, Joyce has seen her classes grow in popularity, now averaging 15 participants per session. This diverse

group of individuals comes together to experience the many benefits of yoga, from physical health improvements to mental and emotional rejuvenation.

Joyce's dedication to slow flow chair yoga inspires others, showcasing its transformative potential. Her work at Cove encourages a more connected and peaceful community, highlighting the serenity and resilience yoga can bring to life.

Jan Casey-Liber, Tai Chi Instructor

Jan has empowered seniors through Tai Chi for 12 years, seeing significant improvements in balance, flexibility, and pain reduction. Her calming exercises also help lower anxiety and improve blood pressure. As a senior herself, Jan understands the challenges of aging.

Teaching Tai Chi brings fulfillment, laughter, and appreciation from her students. With support from Barry Wemyss and Division of Aging staff, sessions run smoothly, enhancing everyone's experience. Join Jan at Cove to experience Tai Chi's transformative benefits firsthand.

Caroline Walters, Line Dance Instructor

Caroline Walters discovered her passion for teaching line dance in 2022 while volunteering at Cove Community Center. What started with a casual interest in line dancing quickly led to her leading sessions at the center. She's noticed a significant change in participants' moods when the music starts, often receiving praise for her song choices. She's delighted to see dancers' balance improve, accompanied by genuine smiles and positive feedback. Caroline finds immense joy in sharing her passion with others. "The appreciation and thanks from the participants mean a lot to me."

Join Caroline and fellow dance enthusiasts every Friday at Cove for an energizing session of line dancing. Experience the camaraderie and joy of movement—she's sure you'll love it.

Nancy Feighan is a Project Specialist II, at the Department of Human Services, City of Lakewood.

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Legal Aid thanks the Healthy Lakewood Foundation for its outreach support!