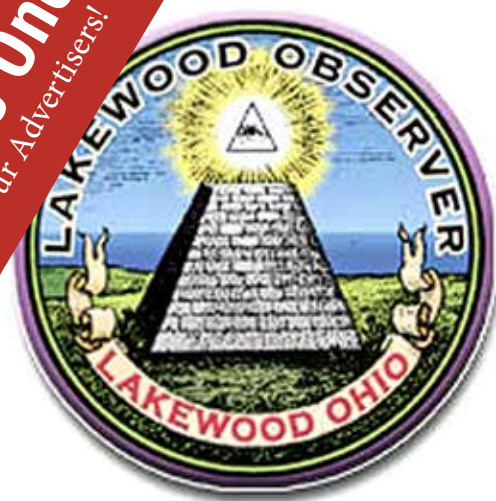


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THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Ohio's Longest Running Citizen Journalism Newspaper/Website, In The Journalism Hall of Fame

Volume 20, Issue 24, December 18, 2024

"No one is useless in the world who lightens the burdens of another." - Charles Dickens

LO's Holiday Decorating Contest 2024 Time To VOTE

by Debra O'Bryan

Voting Process -

Today, December 18, we are posting links to the nominated homes and asking people to vote.

You can vote three ways:

1) Follow these links to view all nominated homes and then vote on your top three.

2) View all nominated homes at www.lakewoodobserver.com/photoblogs

Return to the home page and click on Daily Question, enter three different homes by the number associated with the photo.

3) You can snail mail your votes to: Lakewood Observer, PO Box 770203, Lakewood, Ohio 44107

The voting process ends December 26th, any votes received after will not be counted. Votes will be tabulated at midnight on December 30th, and announced on January 1st. The top winner will



See over 50 nominated Lakewood homes in our online photo galleries, or our facebook page then vote for your 3 favorites!



See the entries in our Photo Gallery or our Facebook Page then follow QR code to vote.

appear on the front page of the next issue of the Lakewood Observer on January 8th.

During this time of tur-

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

Good luck and thank you to all who decorate for your family and neighbors.

Prizes are courtesy of Carabel Beauty Salon and Store, India Garden, Woodstock BBQ, and The Root Cafe.

If your business would like to donate a gift prize, for any of the various contests we have throughout the year, just give us a call. We are grateful for your support.

Lakewood Receives Statewide Recognition For Clean Energy

by Tristan Rader

On December 11th, the City of Lakewood received the Clean Energy Community Award at the Power A Clean Future Ohio (PCFO) Clean Energy Champions Awards ceremony in Columbus. Jill Bartolotta, Lakewood's sustainability manager, and I proudly accepted this award, highlighting our community's commitment to clean energy and sustainability.

This award celebrates Lakewood's completion of its Climate Action Plan—a bold roadmap for a cleaner, greener future. Through collaborative efforts, we have made significant progress toward ambitious goals, including achieving 100% renewable energy, expanding EV charging infrastructure, and saving taxpayer dollars through energy efficiency measures like transitioning to LED streetlights.

While completing the Climate Action Plan is a major



Manager Jill Bartolotta and Councilman Tristan Rader proudly accept the Clean Energy Community Award for Lakewood.

milestone, it also marks the beginning of the next chapter. Together, we've implemented initiatives such as a 100% renewable energy aggregation program and solar arrays on city buildings. These efforts not only reduce emissions but also save money and set an example for other communities.

As I prepare to leave city government at the end of this month, I'm incredibly proud of what we've achieved together. It's been an honor to help lay the groundwork

for renewable energy programs and advocate for sustainability initiatives that will benefit our city for years to come.

I want to thank Mayor Meghan F. George and the city council, led by President Sarah Kepple and Vice President Kyle G. Baker, for their leadership and dedication. Special thanks also go to Deepa Vedavyas from NOPEC, Joe Florida, Alyssa Johnson, and the PCFO team for their support and recognition.

This award belongs to every Lakewood resident who believes in the power of community action. Together, we've shown that meaningful change is possible. I'm confident that Lakewood will continue to lead the way toward a brighter, more sustainable future.

Councilman and State Rep-Elect Rader was elected to Lakewood City Council in 2017, and elected to the State Legislature this year and currently serves as the Ohio Director of Solar United Neighbors.

Harding Students Art On Display At LPL

by Christine Gordillo

Congratulations to the 10 Harding Middle School students whose artwork is now on display as at the main branch of Lakewood Public Library! Last night, friends and family attended the opening gallery walk to view the exceptional pieces. The art of Rio Blaze, Cecilia Collins, Caitlyn Fegely, Fiona Forni, Lillian Gingerich, T'Honest Holloway, Myroslav Pasternak, Braydon Raycher, Chloe Scharfield and Lily Swift will be on display for the next two weeks. And shout out to Mr. Vargas, Harding's amazing art teacher!



T'Honest Holloway, and her painting.



On December 4th, Senate Democratic Leader Nickie J. Antonio (D-Lakewood) celebrated the Ohio Senate's passage of Senate Bill 290, which would create the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library license plate.

Antonio Celebrates Passage Of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library License Plate Bill

by Bailey Culp

"I am proud to have the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library license plate pass unanimously out of the Senate," said Antonio. "As a parent and former educator, I have been pleased to work with the governor on this important piece of legislation that will benefit children across the state. I also want to thank Ohio's First Lady Fran DeWine for championing this program."

Residents of Ohio will have the opportunity to buy a special license plate with Dolly Parton and an Imagination Library logo for \$25, with the proceeds benefiting Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio. The funds will be used to cover operational expenses, such as

book distribution. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has provided one free book a month to Ohio kids aged 0-5 since 2019.

A study conducted by the Cincinnati Children's Hospital found that kids who participated in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library saw a 15.4% increase in Kindergarten Readiness Assessment in just three years from 42.9% to 58.3%. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio, brought by First Lady Fran DeWine, was a primary focus in Governor DeWine's State of the State Address given this year.

Senate Bill 290 now heads to the Ohio House of Representatives.

LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Antonio Celebrates Passage Of Senate Bill 100

by Jack Bradford

On December 11th, Senate Democratic Leader Nickie J. Antonio (D-Lakewood) celebrated the General Assembly’s passage of Senate Bill 100, her bill with state Senator Nathan Manning (R-North Ridgeville) to prohibit the installation of an electronic tracking device on someone else’s property without their consent.

“I am pleased to see Senate Bill 100 make its way through both the House and Senate with overwhelming bipartisan support,” said Antonio. “Ohioans deserve to have their fun-

damental rights to privacy protected, and our laws must reflect the changing environment created by emerging technology.”

The Senate concurred with House amendments that included strengthening the definition of ‘tracking device’, authorizing law enforcement to collect oral fluid samples from those arrested for operating a vehicle under the influence, and increasing the fines for repeatedly selling tobacco products to minors.

The bill now heads to Governor Mike DeWine for his signature.



Harding Math Class Donates 650 Cookies For Seniors

by Christine Gordillo

Mr. Kerney's sixth grade math classes at Harding came together and made 650 cookies to donate to Lakewood Community Service Centers meal program for seniors citizens in

Lakewood today! The cookies include hand-written notes letting recipients know the students were thinking of them this holiday! Amazing job, students and Mr. Kerney!

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 **Lakewood Observer**

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Friday, January 3, 2025	Wednesday, January 8, 2025
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THE MAYOR’S CORNER

City Enters Formal Agreement

Lakewood To Redevelop Former Hospital Site

by Meghan George
Mayor/Safety Director, City of Lakewood

I am excited to share some important updates on the downtown development process for the former Lakewood Hospital site. On Monday, Lakewood City Council approved a formal development deal negotiated between the City and the private development team of CASTO Communities and North Pointe Realty. This agreement spells out the final terms of the project and will allow construction to begin in the first half of 2025.

This agreement is a significant win for Lakewood on multiple levels, meeting the goals that our community set out during the initial visioning process. This development will bring with it hundreds of housing units with diverse options; thousands of feet of new commercial space; new jobs and income tax revenue; a welcoming public space;

high quality architectural and environmental design; historic preservation of the Curtis Block; and increased activity in the heart of Downtown Lakewood.

Key aspects of the development include:

Housing: 305 total units of housing, including 293 new apartment units (including a number of affordable units) spread across three buildings, five fully renovated units in the Curtis Block, and seven townhomes on Belle Avenue;

Commercial: approximately 25,000 square feet of new ground floor retail in addition to the renovation of the Curtis Block historic first floor retail space, all of which will add new energy to Lakewood’s already bustling

downtown business district;

Outdoor Community Space: a 17,000 square foot plaza and community space (situated between the Curtis Block and the five-story mixed-used building at Belle and Detroit) that will be used for frequent public events and gatherings. This plaza is in addition to a similar sized new public pocket park further south in the development and a linear park along Belle Avenue;

Parking: a total of 567 structured parking spaces, including a 536-space parking garage that will serve the development and also provide additional public parking, and another 31 garage spaces in the five-story mixed-use commercial / apartment building;

Design Aspect: key elements of the design will promote downtown vitality and walkability, including a pedestrian walkway behind the Curtis Block that connects the public community space and another new connection between Marlowe and Belle Avenues.

I want to thank City Council President Sarah Kepple and all the members of Council for their partnership in evaluating and approving the agreement with the developers. Their input and feedback over time was essential. I also want to extend my gratitude to the Lakewood City Schools for their role in supporting this agreement, especially Superintendent Maggie Niedzwiecki, Treasurer Kent Zeman, and Board of Education President Michael Callahan. I also must thank the members of our team at City Hall who worked so hard on this project over many years, especially members of the Planning and Development Department, the Public Works Department, and the Law Department.

Finally, I want to thank you, the members of the public, who attended multiple planning meetings that developed the original community vision and helped shape the final plan. Many voices were involved to ensure that this project was a success and aligned with that community vision set out years ago.

With the final development agreement now approved, the City and CASTO expect construction work on the site to begin in the first half of 2025. We all look forward to seeing the site come to life again as construction begins in the new year.



From Snow to Safety: Winter Fall Prevention Lunch & Learn

January 9, 2024 | 11:45am Registration | Event Begins at 12:00pm

Featured Speakers:
Cassie Rainey, PT Director of Rehabilitation at O’Neill Healthcare Lakewood
Krista Weartz, ATP Director of Sales & Operations at Central HME

Enjoy lunch at O’Neill Healthcare Lakewood while learning valuable tips from Cassie Rainey, director of rehabilitation, on how to best prepare for staying safe in the icy winter months. Also, hear from Krista Weartz, ATP of Central HME about the essential role of proper medical equipment in navigating the challenges of the winter weather!



O’Neill Healthcare
(440) 808-5500 | O'NeillHC.com

Please RSVP to Heather at
(440) 941-3380 by January 2nd

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1381 Bunts Road
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LAKEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY EVENTS

Upcoming Events

by Lisa Calfee

Meet The Author- “Family of Choice: Raising Each Other” by Corky Thacker
Wednesday, December 18, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. Main Library Auditorium
Family of Choice: Raising Each Other, draws on the author’s three decades of experience in the recovery community as well as her interest in roses and vintage homes (the first garden she created was featured in This Old House magazine). Books will be available for sale and signing at the event.

Film- “A Cloud Never Dies” (2022) Directed by Max Pugh
Saturday, December 21, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. Main Library Auditorium
A new biographical documentary of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, this film weaves together original film and photographic archives, telling the story of a humble young Vietnamese monk and poet whose wisdom and compassion were forged in the suffering of war.

Barbara Steffek-Hill Five-Star Matinee- “L.A. Confidential” (1997)
Sunday, January 5, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. Main Library Auditorium
With the backdrop of postwar Hollywood’s glitz and glamour setting the stage, three LAPD detectives struggle to tie together the mysterious threads of a massacre that may shake the Department—and the three men—to their core. Starring Russell Crowe, Guy Pearce and Kevin Spacey. Rotten Tomatoes recently declared L.A. Confidential the #1 movie of all time.

Booked For Murder Book Club: “An Unsuitable Job for a Woman” by P.D. James
Thursday, January 16, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium
Cordelia Gray is tough, intelligent and the proprietor of the Pryde Detective Agency. Her first assignment is to investigate the death of a student found hanged in mysterious circumstances. She delves into family secrets and soon realizes it is not a suicide but something more sinister.

Knit & Lit Book Club: The Fifth Season by N. K. Jemisin
Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Auditorium
A captivating fantasy novel set in a world constantly threatened by catastrophic geological events. It follows the story of three women with extraordinary powers, exploring themes of oppression, prejudice, and the resilience of the human spirit.

Children’s and Youth Services

by Jeffrey Siebert

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.
Winter Storytimes begin January 6, 2025

Just Baby ‘N Me
For You and Your Birth to 24-Month-Old Baby
Main Library:
Mondays- 10:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
Wednesdays: 10:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
6:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m.
Thursdays: 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Madison Branch:
Thursdays- 11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Just Baby ‘N Me is a lap-sit story time ideal for babies from birth through early walkers. The focus is on rhymes, songs, finger plays and exploring short books together. No registration is required.

Pre-school Story Time
Main Library:
Tuesdays: 10:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
and 11:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Wednesdays:
11:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Madison Branch:
Thursdays:
10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
For You and Your 2 to 5-Year-Old Pre-schooler. Children and their parents will enjoy stories, movement and songs for thirty fun filled minutes. The focus is on early literacy skills. No registration is required.

Pajama Party
For You and Your 2 to 6 Year-Old Child
Mondays:
6:00-6:30 p.m.
Tuesdays:
6:00-6:30 p.m.
Make the Library a part of your bedtime routine with an evening story time. Children are encouraged to wear their favorite pajamas and bring their stuffed animal friends to snuggle. Join us as we wind down for the night with quiet books, movement, fingerplays and songs. No registration is required.

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



Lakewood Seventh-day Adventist

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Please bring proof of family income or other documentation of emergent need

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THE LAKEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

would like to offer a heartfelt thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers who have supported and dedicated countless hours to our work this past year. From Ohio Heritage Camp to lectures, from Door to Door History Walking Tours to the Oldest Stone House opening season, to our Sales and Biannual House Tour, and everything in between, we truly could not have done it without you!

Thank You!



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LAKEWOOD SCHOOLS

Fourth Grade Lincoln Student Abel Sisco Wins Chamber Essay Contest

by Christine Gordillo

Congratulations to Lincoln Elementary fourth grader Abel Sisco on winning the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce's annual "Why I Love Lakewood" contest! Abel earned the right to join Santa to flip the switch on the city holiday lights at Light Up Lakewood Dec. 7. He also read his essay at the event.

Why I Love Lakewood

By Abel Sisco

Lakewood is more than just where I live, it's where I feel at home. There are so many reasons to love it, but three stand out the most to me: the food, the parks, and all the amazing people. I'm excited to share what makes Lakewood so special and why it will always hold a piece of my heart!

When it comes to food, Lakewood has something for everyone, but my favorites are Barrio, Master Pizza, and Malley's. Barrio is the place to



Abel Sisco

go for delicious tacos you can custom order, with toppings as crazy as you want them. Master Pizza's Cleveland Crimp crust is perfectly crispy and full of flavor. And walking into Malley's is like stepping into a candy filled wonderland. Nothing beats hopping on my bike with friends and riding over to Malley's for a sweet ice cream treat on a sunny day. These places don't just serve food, they're where fun, flavor, and community come together.

Next, Lakewood's parks are some of my favorite places to spend time. Lakewood Park is a standout with its wide open spaces, playgrounds, and sunsets that stretch across Lake Erie like a painter's brush stroke of warm colors. It's where families gather, friends laugh, and memories

are made. Kaufmann Park is another gem, especially for sports and playing in the water is a perfect way to spend a hot summer afternoon. Then there's Webb Park, a quieter spot that feels like a secret escape. It's the perfect place to relax, read, or enjoy a picnic under the shade of the trees. Every

park in Lakewood has its own charm, and together they make the city a place where adventure and nature are always close by.

But what makes Lakewood truly shine is its people. They're the kind of people who make you feel welcome the moment you meet them. One time, my family got a flat tire and thought we'd have to call a ride-share to get where we needed to go. But instead, a friendly Lakewood resident stepped in and offered us a ride. That's the sort of kindness you find here in Lakewood. Whether it's a friendly wave from someone walking by, a helping hand in a tough moment, or a group of volunteers pitching in to make the community better, Lakewood's people are always kind. They're the heart and soul of this city, turning every street into a place where you feel like you belong.

In conclusion, Lakewood is more than just a city. It's where the food is unforgettable, the parks are full of life, and the people are always there to make you smile. Every day, I feel lucky to call Lakewood my home. Thank you for letting me share my love for this incredible community.

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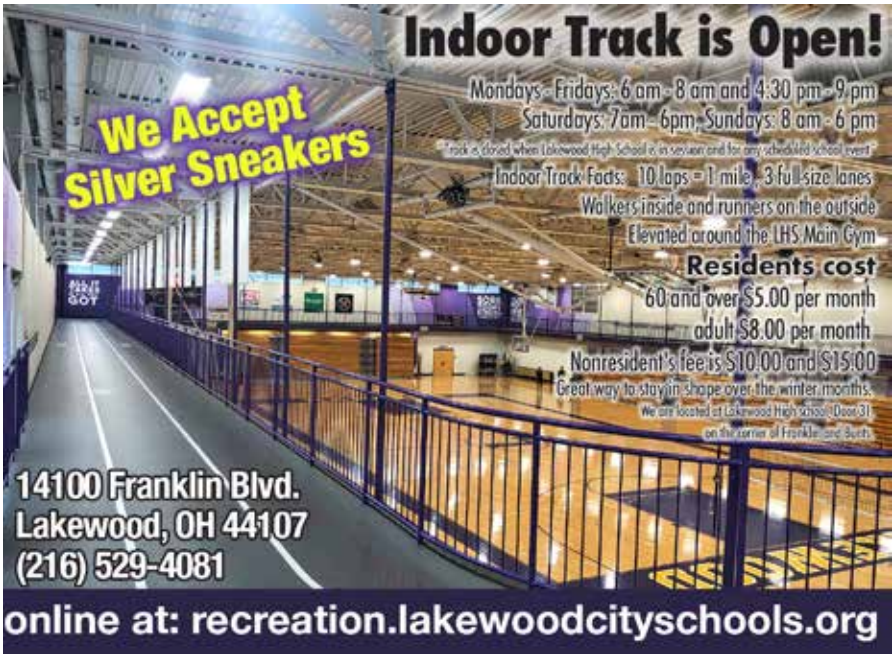
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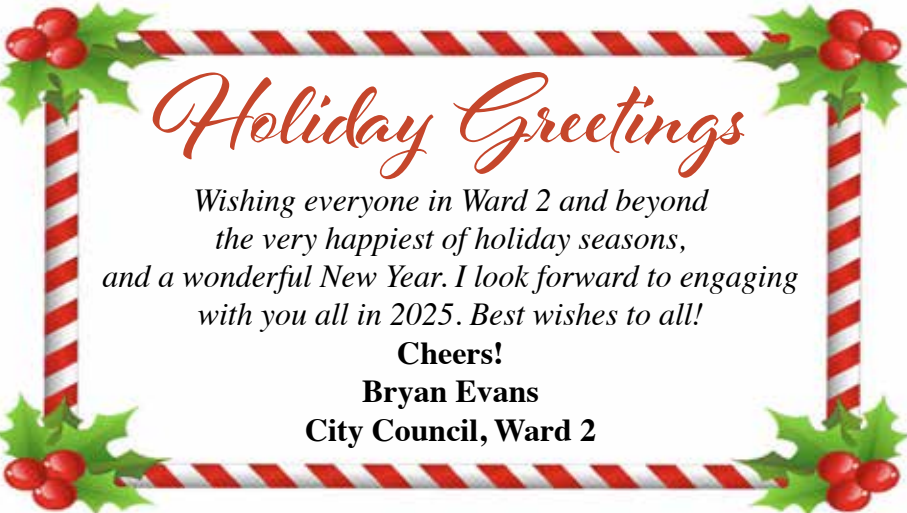
SEASON’S GREETINGS



L to R: Andrew Harant holding Agnes, Quinlan, Sarah Kepple petting Tonks

Wishing you and your loved ones a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season!

Sarah Kepple



Season’s Greeting From
Councilman Bullock & Family

Dear Lakewood Neighbors,
Season’s greetings, and best wishes to you and yours for a peaceful, joy-filled holiday season and a happy new year!
Sincerely, Tom & Molly Bullock and family



I wish you all the hope, wonder, and joy that this season can bring to you and your loved ones! It has been and continues to be a tremendous privilege, responsibility, and honor to serve as the Ward 1 representative and Council Vice President on Lakewood City Council. Please accept the warmest of holiday wishes from me and my family. Here’s to an incredible 2025 for Lakewood!

Kyle Baker,
Vice President of Lakewood City Council (Ward 1)



Season’s Greetings
Happy Holidays everyone!

From Council Member Cindy Strebig & Kate Baney



Cindy Marx
Ward 4
Council Representative

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



Holiday Greetings

Wishing everyone health, happiness and peace from our house to yours!

Nickie and Jean



Season's Greetings

As your State Representative, I am humbled to have represented Lakewood in the statehouse for the past 22 years. During this holiday season, may all that is beautiful and meaningful find its way to you, bringing you joy at the end of this year, while opening the New Year to peace and happiness for you and yours.

Michael P. Skindell



Holiday Greetings From Lakewood Municipal Court

Judge Tess Neff and her merry band of court employees send our warmest wishes for a happy, healthy holiday season and joyous New Year! With full hearts and fuller stomachs, we share a favorite recipe from the court:

Snow Balls

- 1 cup

butter, softened
- ½ cup

powdered sugar + more for dusting
- 1 teaspoon

vanilla
- 2 ¼ cups

all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup

finely chopped nuts

Heat oven to 400 degrees;

mix butter, ½ cup powdered sugar, and the vanilla in a large bowl. Stir in flour, nuts, and salt until the dough comes together. Shape dough into 1 inch balls and place about 1 inch apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 10-12 minutes until set but not brown. Remove from cookie sheet and cool slightly on a wire rack. Roll warm cookies in powdered sugar, cool on a wire rack, and roll in powdered sugar again.



Holiday Greetings From Tristan Rader

Season's Greetings from our family to yours! May your holidays be merry, your lights untangled, and your relatives slightly less opinionated this year!

Tristan and Caitlin Rader

A photograph of a man and a woman standing outdoors in front of trees. The man is wearing a dark jacket over a blue shirt, and the woman is wearing a light-colored cardigan over a black top.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE-ELECT

TRISTAN RADER

Ohio State House District 13 - Cleveland & Lakewood

Happy Holidays

From our family to yours

Wishing you and your loved ones warmth, joy, and peace this season!

- Tristan & Caitlin Rader

Photo by Friends of Tristan Rader

AROUND TOWN

Garfield Students Visit City Hall



Garfield Middle School’s BRIDGES students have been learning about local government and what a better way to wrap up the unit than with a trip to City Hall! Students were able to relate their learning to real world situations. The visit helped to foster the Vision of a Lakewood Ranger competency in global awareness and Citizenship as our students met with Mayor Meghan George, Judge Tess Neff, Officer Justin Jameson and Councilwoman Cindy Marx. We appreciate everyone at City Hall who helped make this a memorable experience!

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There was a small man with a wild-eyed stare
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Plucking whole loaves from his abundant grey hair

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Before you take the Leap into the over-commercialization of Christmas, remember to keep the True Meaning & Spirit of Christmas Alive in your Heart!

Merry Christmas!

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LAKEWOOD CARES

Indoor Riding During The Chilly Winter Months

by Kenneth Knabe
Many thanks to Lakewood’s Spin Bike Shop’s Sales & Social Media guru Tim Comerford for sharing his insight for this article.
Winter, winter, winter!

For cyclists who are counting the days till warmer weather and a fresh new cycling season, an option exists that will help keep you in the saddle, boost your mood and maintain and improve your fitness level, all without having to step outside the front door!

This option is the indoor bike trainer. These devices allow cyclists to recreate the feeling of a ride outdoors. Simulation of routes, headwinds, ascents, and descents are all possible. And once you add more technology, you can re-experience routes saved on your GPS bike computer, do structured workouts, even ride (and compete!) in virtual worlds using online programs such as Zwift (which offers fun with avatars – different bikes and jerseys are earned as your skills increase) and TrainerRoad.

With the wheel-off type of trainer, the back wheel of a bike is replaced with the trainer which gets connected to its drivetrain. Wahoo currently has two two-wheels-off types: the KICKR and the KICKR CORE.

The latest type of trainer is also available from Wahoo. According to Tim, the KICKR BIKE Smart Bike is

“pretty rad” – it was made for indoor riding exclusively and doesn’t include your bike at all but replicates it to match the settings on your road bike: the height and angle of the saddle, the handlebars, etc. Details such as the angle of sweat pouring off a cyclist’s forehead were considered during its design. What does this mean? On an outdoor bike, sweat tends to fly off one’s face due to wind but when riding indoors, a towel draped across the handlebars is typically needed to catch sweat falling straight down. No towel necessary on the KICKR BIKE Smart Bike. I have one and it’s also great for multiple users – switching settings for each rider in the household is a piece of cake. Ace bike mechanic Mitch Gable installed mine with easy-to-follow adjustments for two!

The original wheel-on type, such as those offered by ROCKBROS, is deceptively simple, with both wheels staying on the bike and a roller to provide the necessary resistance. I say “deceptively” because although they are the most basic, these trainers are the hardest to use and are best for more experienced cyclists. I won’t even try it but admire those who do. Roller trainers can be great for balance and core work, but for under \$50 more you can get a KICKR SNAP which is also wheel-on but has flywheel technology plus direct connect and Wi-Fi connec-

tivity, updated Zwift-friendly features, and more.

As with any cycling equipment there’s quite a price range, but a basic model can start as low as \$150. If you’re in the market for a trainer, GearJunkie published online The Best Bike Trainers of 2024 <https://gearjunkie.com/biking/best-bike-trainer> to help you determine your best option.

Enjoy your winter and start riding indoors now if you’re not a year-round rider – consider alternative ways to keep cycling!

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 www.KLFOhio.com

Coping With The Holidays

by Latoya Hunter Hayes
The Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County offers valuable resources to help Cuyahoga County residents navigate the stress and emotional challenges that can arise during the holiday season. It’s annual “Coping with the Holidays” guide provides practical tips for reducing holiday-related anxiety and managing difficult emotions such as grief or loss.

This year’s guide includes strategies for setting boundaries, prioritizing self-care and planning celebrations that align with personal needs and financial constraints. Specialized sections address topics such as managing seasonal affective disorder (SAD), supporting children and older adults

during the holidays, and creating recovery-friendly environments for those overcoming addiction.

Recognizing that the holidays can amplify stress and mental health struggles, this booklet highlights the importance of reaching out for support. An ADAMHS Board partner, FrontLine Service provides access to services like the 24-hour Warm Line (440-886-5950), where trained peer supporters offer a listening ear, and 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, where callers can get urgent support and immediate assistance with mental health or addiction-related emergencies.

“With the current holiday season, many of us may be excited to take part in our yearly traditions, which can be fun but also overwhelming. It is easy to feel overwhelmed and stressed while prepping for and participating in holiday activities,” said Scott S. Osiecki, Chief Executive Officer of the ADAMHS Board. “The “Coping with the Holidays” guide is filled with strategies to help individuals take care of themselves and lets people know that its ok to set limits, put support systems in place, and that self-care is important throughout the holiday season.”

By promoting awareness and providing resources, this yearly guide empowers people to take control of their well-being during this potentially overwhelming time. No matter if you are struggling with addiction or facing mental health challenges, recovery is possible with the right support and resources. To access the ADAMHS Board’s guide, visit adamhsc.org/coping.

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LAKEWOOD CARES

Looking For Forever Homes

by Stephanie Jarosz

Meet Gummy Bear aka “collar #3589” This 2-year-old girl has the softest fur and the sweetest demeanor! You might wonder why we named her Gummy Bear. Well, it’s because she’s toothless and often playfully sticks her little tongue out. It’s pretty cute! Gummy Bear loves humans, but other cats not so much so she would need to be in a one-cat household.

Meet Mila aka “collar #3605” This beautiful 3-year-old lady is a German Shepherd and husky mix. Mila loves going on long leisurely walks and cuddling afterward. She’s a little love bug. Mila has unique and stunning eyes that really make her standout! She has a very calm and gentle demeanor and would be the perfect companion!

Visit Gummy Bear, Mila, and the other animals at the Lakewood Animal Shelter located at 1299 Metropark Drive, just past the Dog Park. Contact



Gummy Bear aka “collar #3589”

the shelter at (216) 529-5020.

Lakewood Animal Shelter hours: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, closed on Sundays.

This message is shared by the Citizens Committee for Lakewood’s Animals and Shelter (CCLAS). CCLAS is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization committed to safeguarding and enhancing the lives of Lakewood’s companion animals. We provide financial assistance and other resources to the Lakewood Animal Shelter for the quality care of abandoned, orphaned, sick and injured animals. In addition, we promote adoptions and advocate for animal welfare through community outreach and education. We treat animals with empathy, kindness, and respect and recognize that they can experience pain, suffering, and other emotions. Learn more at cclas.org.



Mila aka “collar #3605”

Italian Christmas Cookies

by Debra O'Bryan

I grew up eating these, every year my Aunt Jo would welcome everyone that could possibly squeeze around her kitchen table to help her roll these cookies out. Some of us were better than others, and that just added to the fun of it. She could always tell which ones my mom rolled, telling her to not be so rough with the dough!

I really didn't care for the flavor that much when I was young. Anise is a acquired taste that you come to appreciate as you get older. Sambuca anyone? It tastes like black licorice, and people love it or hate it. You can always substitute lemon or almond extract if you're a licorice hater. It was more about the tradition, and the time spent with family and friends you adored. Telling stories and making jokes while cranking out hundreds and hundreds of cookies.

I haven't made these in too many years to mention, but I'm finding myself craving them to go with my morning coffee this season. They are especially good dunked.

I hope you enjoy them as well and add them to your holiday treats.

Here is my Aunt Josephine's recipe cut down to approximately 6 dozen instead of the 30 that she used to do every year.

For the cookie dough:

- 2 3/4 cups of all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 teaspoons of baking powder
- 1/4 tsp of salt
- 3/4 cup of granulated sugar
- 1 stick of melted butter (Do not use margarine or butter substitute)
- 2 large eggs (room temperature)
- 1/4 cup whole milk
- 1 tsp of anise extract (or lemon, almond, or even vanilla)

For the glaze:

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 5-8 teaspoons of milk
- 1 tsp of whichever extract you put in the dough

nonpareils / sprinkles for decorating



ing

Preheat oven to 325°

Use nonstick cookie trays or line with parchment paper

Cream the butter and sugar together in a large bowl with your mixer or by hand with a wooden spoon until the sugar has dissolved.

Add the eggs one at a time and beat until well blended, then add the milk and extract and beat for a minute until smooth.

In a separate bowl, mix the dry ingredients with a whisk or fork until combined.

SLOWLY add the flour mixture, a little at a time to the wet ingredients and mix until well blended.

The dough will be tacky but easy to work with. If it's too sticky, add a little more flour. You can just drop teaspoon size balls onto the cookie sheets, or get creative with shapes like wreaths, candy canes, or simple logs that I think are best for dunking.

Space them at least an inch or two apart, and bake for 8-10 minutes or until just lightly golden brown.

Prepare the glaze by whisking the powdered sugar, milk and extract together until smooth (Add the milk a spoon at a time to desired consistency). Dip the tops of the cooled cookies into the glaze and sprinkle with festive nonpareils while still wet. (Do this over cooling racks to help with the recycling of spilt sprinkles!)

Let sit out until glaze hardens. They then can be stacked in cookie tins or bagged.

Enjoy! Boun Natale!

COVE COMMUNITY CENTER



Lakewood Seniors Score Big On Unforgettable Adventures

by Nancy Feighan

With the generous support of the Healthy Lakewood Foundation's grant, Lakewood's 'Bucket Wish' series provided three unforgettable experiences to several seniors from the Division of Aging: attending a Cleveland Browns game, enjoying a relaxing spa

day at Mario's International Spa, and watching a Cirque du Soleil show at Playhouse Square. Each adventure created lasting memories and brought immense joy to the participants. This photo captures the camaraderie they shared while reminiscing about these special moments.

Bucket Wish: Part 3 Of A 3-Part Series

A Magical Day Out At Playhouse Square

by Nancy Feighan

Thanks to a generous grant from the Healthy Lakewood Foundation, four seniors from Lakewood's Division of Aging enjoyed a memorable afternoon at Playhouse Square. They were treated to a performance of "'Twas the Night Before..." by Cirque du Soleil, a

holiday show that blends acrobatics, magic, and festive cheer.

The group was mesmerized by the breathtaking stunts, stunning costumes, and the reimagined Christmas classic. The 90-minute show was filled with high-energy performances that had the audience fully engaged, and our group was no exception. The performers encouraged audience participation, making the experience even more exciting.

After the show, the group headed to Hofbräuhaus Cleveland for a festive meal. The lively atmosphere and delicious food provided the perfect ending to an unforgettable day. The group shared their favorite moments from the performance, enjoying good conversation and a fun, relaxed atmosphere.

This outing was a great reminder of the power of shared experiences. Thanks to the Healthy Lakewood Foundation, these seniors had the opportunity to enjoy live theater, connect with one another, and create lasting memories. It was a day filled with laughter, wonder, and community spirit—one that will not soon be forgotten.

Meet Me At Cove: Dan Taylor, LSW Social Worker, Division Of Aging

by Nancy Feighan

Dan Taylor is a social worker by day and a science enthusiast all other times. Lucky for us, twice a month, he shares his passion for science with seniors through "Science with Dan." He's worked for the Department of Human Services for 22 years, and he's a proud Lakewood native and Lakewood High School graduate.

"Science with Dan" started during the pandemic as a way to stay connected, originally held via Zoom. Dan's enthusiasm for science quickly made his program a big hit. What started with just a few people has now grown to over 20 attendees at each session.

The program started with basic science headlines but quickly expanded due to popular demand. Now, Dan covers everything from the latest science news about the Nazca Lines to fun pseudo-science topics like Mothman, Bigfoot, and other mysteries. Though he often debunks myths, he has a special place for Bigfoot—he wants to believe!

Dan's passion for space science started when he was a child. A glow-in-the-dark star chart from National Geographic inspired him to dream of becoming an astronomer. Although he pursued a career in social work with seniors, his love for science remains strong, and Science with Dan gives him a chance to share that passion with others



What Dan enjoys most about working at Cove is the variety each day brings. He loves the challenge of problem-solving with seniors, which ties in perfectly with his love for science. Dan keeps everyone updated with the latest science headlines and always makes sure people know about upcoming space launches. He even organizes launch viewing parties at Cove, giving live commentary that keeps everyone engaged and entertained.

For Dan, the best part of Science with Dan is seeing the excitement on the seniors' faces when they learn something new or have their minds blown by a fascinating topic. It serves as a reminder that curiosity and wonder never grow old

More information can be found by visiting Science w/Dan on Facebook.

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