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Volume 21, Issue 04, February 19, 2025

Rangers Win Cleveland West Conference Title

by Chuck Greanoff

History was made tonight in the East Gym. With a great team effort the Lakewood Ranger Boys earned the first ever Cleveland West Conference Title with a hard fought 61-52 win over Rocky River.

Senior guard Lucas Seguire, the clear choice for Conference Player of the Year, scored 15 points, dished out 6 assists, and added 4 steals and 5 rebounds in what has become a typical all-around, high level game for him. Sophomore

Riley Verderber led all scorers with 17 points, dominating inside against a very physical Pirate squad. There was no backing down in Riley and the Rangers.

Riley and Lucas were stellar, but it took much more to defeat the second place River team that was looking to avenge an earlier lopsided loss at their place. When the Rangers needed a rebound or a basket to break the Pirate momentum, it was senior Luke Bonvisutto (holding the trophy) who came through with 12 points and one of his best games in the Purple and Gold. Senior Luke Vannucci--the leading 3-point shooter in Lakewood history-- scored all

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Lakewood Fire Local 128 Events

Swim-A-Thon March 2



Organizer of Rotary's Swim-A-Thon, Harlon Radford cheers on Lakewood Fire during one of the many demonstrations they put on during the Swim-A-Thon. The event supports Gigi's Playhouse, Rocky River Assistance Program and Lakewood and Rocky River Fire Departments. Grab the kids and your suits and have some fun. More on page 6

March 8 -Lakewood Fire Local 128 Fire & Ice Fundraiser With Open Skate



One of the most entertaining events of the year sees Lakewood Fire taking on LHS Hockey and LHS Alumni to raise money. March 8 at Winterhurst. More on Page 7

Preserve Lakewood Schools Educates Residents Re: Proposed Elementary School Closings

by Monica Bruaw

More than 70 Lakewood residents recently had the opportunity to learn more about Lakewood City School District's consideration of whether to make changes to how it delivers elementary education in Lakewood, which may result in the repurposing or closure of one or even two of Lakewood's neighborhood elementary schools.

Preserve Lakewood Schools held a community information meeting on February 11, at Grant Elementary School, hosted by Grant Elementary PTA. Residents were able to learn more about the planning efforts being



undertaken this school year by the Lakewood superintendent's Elementary Planning Task Force, and understand how the repurposing or closure of any elementary school could affect not only families with young children, but also the entire

Lakewood community.

"We are here because we

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Embraces New Opportunities For Young Learners

Haynes Nursery School Rebrands As Haynes PreSchool

by Karen Lee

Haynes Nursery School is excited to announce its rebrand to Haynes Preschool, marking an important evolution in its mission to provide a nurturing, child-centered early education experience. This transformation underscores the school's commitment to continuing its role as a vital partner in the educational journey of young learners while embracing new oppor-

tunities for growth and development.

Haynes Nursery School, located in Lakewood Congregational Church at 1375 West Clifton Lakewood, OH 44107, was established in 1966 by Marjorie Haynes, LCC's Sunday School Superintendent. It has long been a trusted institution in the community, offering a secular, play-based preschool program that emphasizes the physical, social, intellectual,

and emotional growth of each child. With a refreshed name and an exciting new focus, the school remains dedicated to providing a positive introduction to each student's academic career.

"We've rebranded as Haynes Preschool to reflect our strong commitment to early childhood education, while continuing to offer a nurturing environment that

continued on page 5

Lakewoodites Celebrate Protest



Lakewood residents celebrating democracy by taking part in America's "National Day of Protest," at City Hall

LAKEWOOD CITY HALL

Bunts Road Rehab Project

by Jim O'Bryan

Last week I received a call from a couple residents about the Bunts Road Rehab Project. Their main concern seemed to be that because of the frequency of driveway crossings on Bunts--which is a densely populated residential street--a bike lane would be dangerous to bikers, walkers and residents. I then had a chance to speak with Mayor Meghan George, and Ward 1 Councilman, and Council VP Kyle Baker. Both described aspects of the project. Both told me to go read what is on the website to better understand it. So I did, here it is:

From the city's website:

In 2026, a rehabilitation of Bunts Road (CR-232) is planned to begin, stretching from Lakewood Heights Boulevard to Clifton Boulevard (US-6). This project will be funded by NOACA (Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds), the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the City of Lakewood.

Project Description

The City of Lakewood is working to make travel easier and safer on Bunts Road for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Improvements would address the deteriorated pavement/curbs/sidewalks, long pedestrian crossing distances, Clean Water Lakewood, and Consent Decree sewer improvement requirements, aging watermain infrastructure, surface drainage, street lighting, bicycle lanes, aging signage, and other appurte-

nances.

It is planned to construct the project in two (2) one-year phases by maintaining one southbound traffic lane and detouring northbound traffic to Warren Road. In 2026, Phase One would entail work from Lakewood Heights to Franklin. In 2027, Phase Two would entail work from Franklin to Clifton.

A Public Meeting

A public meeting to discuss the project was held on May 7, 2024 at 6:00 PM at Lakewood High School. During this meeting, the proposed improvements were shared with the community. There was also an opportunity for the community to ask questions about the project as we gather community input before making decisions.

Project Changes and Updates

Following the Public Comment period, several updates were made to the project plans:

Parking Lanes

The parallel parking lane was changed to the east (northbound Bunts Road) side of the pavement between Lakewood Heights Boulevard and Madison Avenue, and from Franklin Boulevard to Clifton Boulevard. This places the parking lane on the opposite side of the Shared Use Path within those limits.

Between Madison Avenue and Franklin Boulevard (adjacent to Lakewood High School), the parking lane will remain on the west



From the City's presentation.

(southbound Bunts Road) side of the pavement. Since there are limited driveways on the west side in the block, this will provide the maximum amount of parallel parking spaces. In the area adjacent to the driveways to the High School, the parking will be prohibited as necessary to provide the required sight distance to bicycles and pedestrians on the Shared Use Path

from drivers during into these drives.
Leading Pedestrian Intervals

Several comments were received to consider including Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPI) in the signal timing for pedestrians and bicycles on Bunts Road. The LPI gives pedestrians the opportunity to enter the crosswalk

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Lakewood Observer

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THE MAYOR’S CORNER

Keeping Lakewood’s Population Strong with Strategic Housing Infill

by **Meghan George**
Mayor/Safety Director, City of Lakewood

One of the things that makes Lakewood special is the vitality of our city. Even in the middle of February, you can find residents out and about patronizing local Lakewood shops and restaurants and staying active on city streets and parks. The dynamic nature of our city is no surprise given Lakewood’s large population and our rare level of density in Ohio. Maintaining Lakewood’s population is an important goal for our city, and one important way to do so is through strategic housing development.

Lakewood remains one of the densest cities between New York and Chicago, with over 50,000 residents in less than 7 square miles, and we are also one of Ohio’s 20 most populous municipalities. That 50,000 number is important for Lakewood’s bottom line because key federal dollars become more readily available at this threshold – community development block grants (CDBG). That federal funding is used for essential services, like keeping our streets in shape. In 2020, Lakewood had a major win by keeping our census population above that key 50,000 threshold which ensured our greater access to CDBG funds. Beyond CDBG, our city departments consistently seek outside dollars from other federal, state and local grants and Lakewood’s total population and density are key factors that make us competitive.

There are many factors that go into maintaining our population, but one important one has always been housing. As a built-out city, Lakewood must be strategic in positioning and partnering on sites to add and diversify housing. This effort has been ongoing for at least 70 years, dating back to the development of the Gold Coast, which introduced multiple high-rises with



Aerial from Lakewood Park looking east. photo credit Craig Lovejoy

thousands of units in place of what were previously large lakefront estates. A few examples of more recent infill housing (over the past 10+ years) have taken the place at a former gas station (XYZ Townhomes), a former car dealership (Rockport Development), and former school site (McKinley Place Townhomes). What some may not know is that new single-family homes are also still being built in Lakewood – over the past 5 years alone, we have seen over 20 new homes built – mostly single family, but also attached cluster, and even a new two-family. All of these infill opportunities are more challenging than in greenfield suburban development – Lakewood must take advantage of adaptive changes in land use or on lots where homes have been lost to fire, condemnation, or other mishaps.

Currently, there are several addi-

tional housing developments planned and in the pipeline. The biggest of these is the downtown development on the

former Lakewood Hospital site, which will bring 300 new units to the heart of Lakewood. But other projects are moving ahead as well – for example, you may have seen recent demolition work happening at the former Steve Barry Buick site on Detroit, where over 150 new units are planned to rise soon. And opportunistic single family home infill will always continue outside of these larger developments.

Maintaining Lakewood’s population numbers with strategic housing infill is always on our mind in City Hall. Multiple City of Lakewood departments – from Building and Housing to Law, Planning, and Finance – are all involved in working creatively with builders and developers to bring their projects to market. By continuing the tradition of strategically introducing new housing for Lakewood, we can maintain our population and provide diverse housing in ways that keep our city’s vitality, density, and quality of life strong.

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LAKEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY EVENTS

Upcoming Events

by Lisa Calfee

Presentation- Cleveland Civil Rights Trail

Presented by Margaret Lann from the Cleveland Restoration Society
Wednesday, February 19, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. Main Library Auditorium
Join Margaret Lann as she explores the local sites where history was made along the Cleveland Civil Rights Trail, a project of the Cleveland Restoration Society where she serves as the Director of Preservation Services.

Besa Film- “A Shelter Among the Clouds” (2018)

Presented by Dr. Christopher Kinley
Saturday, February 22, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.
Main Library Auditorium
Join Dr. Kinley after the Albanian film and explore Albania- a small, beautiful and mountainous country in Europe- and celebrate its multi-religious people.

Besa Film- “A Shelter Among the Clouds” (2018) Encore (screening only)

Wednesday, March 5, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.
Main Library Auditorium

Film- “Ruby Gentry” (1952)

Sunday, March 2, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. (82 minutes)
Main Library Auditorium
Ruby (Jennifer Jones) is a poor Southern girl in a love triangle with Boake (Charlon Heston) and Jim (Karl Malden) that leads to disastrous revenge.

Knit & Lit Book Club- “The Girl with the Louding Voice” by Abi Dare

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Main Library Auditorium

Book For Murder Book Club- “The Way it is Now” by Garry Disher

Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Main Multipurpose Room

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.

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. and 6:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m.
Thursdays - 1 0:00 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

For You and Your 2 to 5-Year-Old Pre-schooler.
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.
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
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.
Mondays: 6:00-6:30 p.m.
Tuesdays: 6:00-6:30 p.m.

Learn About Albania Scavenger Hunt For Youth of All Ages

February 1, 2025-March 31, 2025
Discover many different aspects of everyday life in Albania by hunting for signs throughout the children’s area of the Library. Enter your scavenger hunt sheet into a drawing to win a prize. The scavenger hunt will be ready for hunting at the Main Lakewood Public Library and the Madison branch of the Lakewood Public Library. No registration required.

Growing Red Poppies

Tuesday, February 25, 2025
Main Library Activity Room
4:00-4:30pm
Madison Branch Youth Room.
For Students in Second through Eighth Grade.The red poppy is the unofficial national flower of Albania. (Papaver rhoeas). Red poppies symbolize resilience, remembrance, and the beauty of the natural landscape. Students will learn how to create red poppies and other beautiful flowers from various materials. No registration required.

Make Your Own Qeleshe

For Students Second Grade through Eighth Grade. The Qeleshe, also known as the plis or qylaf, is a traditional white brimless felt cap that holds a special place in Albanian culture. This distinctive headwear is a symbol of national identity, heritage, and pride. Students will learn the history of the Qeleshe while constructing their own. No registration required.
Main Library Activity Room
Tuesday, March 4, 2025 - 4:00-4:30pm in the Wednesday,
March 5, 2024 - 4:00-4:30pm
Madison Branch Youth Program Room
To sign up for any program, register online at lakewoodpubliclibrary.org/youth or call (216) 226-8275, ext. 140.

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LAKEWOOD EDUCATION

Embraces New Opportunities For Young Learners Haynes Nursery School Rebrands As Haynes PreSchool

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prioritizes the individual child’s needs,” said Shannon Lubas, Director of Haynes Preschool. “We view our role as both caregivers and educators, guiding children to explore, learn, and grow in a setting that fosters curiosity and creativity.”

Play-Based Learning and Parent Partnership: At Haynes Preschool, the curriculum is grounded in early childhood literacy, designed to engage children in meaningful and dynamic activities that promote cognitive and emotional development. Through a play-based approach, children learn foundational academic skills while also developing critical social abilities, preparing them for future educational success.

“Our goal is to partner with parents to ensure every child has a positive and enriching experience as they begin their academic careers,” Lubas added. “We believe that the best learning occurs when parents and teachers work together to support the child’s growth.”

Exciting Renovations: In addition

tion to the rebranding, Haynes Preschool is benefitting from the church’s recent renovation of their social hall, which the school uses for gym classes. The updated space now offers an even more engaging and versatile environment for physical education activities, providing students with ample room to explore movement, coordination, and teamwork.

Registration for 2025-2026 Now Open: As part of the exciting changes at Haynes Preschool, registration for the 2025-2026 school year just opened! Families interested in learning more about the school or scheduling a tour are encouraged to reach out to Director Shannon Lubas at (216) 260-5938 or email haynes@lcc-church.org for more information.



First Federal Shares Financial Literacy Skills At LHS

by Christine Gordillo

This past Tuesday, students in Mr. Lewis' Financial Literacy class at LHS enjoyed a visit from First Federal Lakewood Assistant Vice President Eliseo Cruz-Garcia, who talked to the students about the basics of banking, budgeting and credit.

As part of his work as a community development officer for the bank, Mr. Cruz Garcia travels around sharing financial literacy skills for adults and students. Valuable skills for our students to learn before heading out into the world!

Rangers Win Cleveland West Conference Title

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7 of his points in the second half, helping the Rangers extend what had been a mere 2 point halftime lead. Brady Long scored five, but his hustle plays led to many opportunities for teammates. Nathan Bruwer scored three and was a bothersome defense presence. Though they did not score, Aidan Smith and Mo Abuzahriyeh rebounded and played with energy.

The Rangers are 11-1 in the CWC and 14-4 overall. It was fitting that they defeated the rival Pirates, always a tough opponent, at home in front of our enthusiastic student section, the Pep Band, Cheer Squad and other Ranger loyalists. Congratulations to Coach Cammock, his staff, and the entire team--they are now enshrined in Lakewood Basketball History--a richly earned status. The Lakewood Ranger are, and have always been, one team, from one town, that plays hard from tip to final buzzer. Long Live Lakewood.



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LO SCHOOL FORUM

Preserve Lakewood School Members Address School Board

by Monica Bruaw

Members of the Preserve Lakewood Schools group attended the Lakewood City School Board meeting on February 3rd. Four individuals spoke during the public comment period, presenting a unified request for the board to halt the Elementary Task Force Planning and shift focus to the 2026 Operating Levy issue. Each speaker had 3 minutes to address the board and shared their concerns.

Caity Solomon raised concerns about how the timing of the planning process has damaged trust in its outcome. She pointed out that the task force was formed after an outside consultant proposed seven scenarios, community surveys followed community conversations, and the decision to rule out the four corner schools as potential closures or repurposed schools led to disengagement from parents at those schools. Solomon also asked for information on when the traffic study would be available, when data on walkers vs. drivers would be collected, and where input from urban planning experts was. She ended by urging the board to pause the planning and focus on the upcoming levy.

Kelly Moyer also asked for a halt to the process until more data is gathered, emphasizing the need to harness the creativity of Lakewood residents to collaborate. Moyer explained that families move to Lakewood for its walkable schools, but the proposed scenarios would place the majority of students outside the ideal 0.87-mile walking range, which could increase traffic congestion as more parents would need to drive. Moyer pointed out the potential long-term negative effects on students,

including social and emotional issues, lower test scores, higher absenteeism, and reduced graduation rates. She suggested using the available time wisely to implement changes that would have the least impact on students.

Dan Kirk expressed concern that the district's recent survey included biased questions, which could lead to inaccurate results that do not truly reflect parents' views. Agreeing with the Superintendent's comment that "nothing is on fire," Kirk asked for the process to be paused, arguing that the district had the luxury of time and should prioritize passing the operating levy. He suggested a partnership between the city, school district, and community to work together to maintain and promote the schools that make Lakewood the country's most walkable district.

Katie Rustad questioned the necessity of a centralized PK program, suggesting that the district's focus on it may be misguided. She proposed alternative ways to grow the PK program without closing a school. Rustad noted that the cost savings from closing or repurposing a school would not outweigh the disruptions caused, especially given her own long history as a Lakewood alumna. Closing a school, she argued, would undermine the core of what makes Lakewood such a great place to live, and instead, the community should celebrate its neighborhood schools.

Interestingly, the fifth public speaker admitted to not being affiliated with Preserve Lakewood Schools, yet asked the school board, **"Would you be willing to engage formal representatives of the Save Our Schools group to be involved in the remaining**

task force assessment process?

Preserve Lakewood. Save our Neighborhood Schools is a dedicated community project in Lakewood, Ohio, committed to preventing the closure/repurposing of elementary schools by the Lakewood City School District. <https://www.preservelakewoodschools.org>

Preserve Lakewood Schools Educates Residents Re: Proposed Elementary School Closings

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love Lakewood's schools, because we value our neighborhood schools, and because we want all of Lakewood's residents to know that the school district may make major changes to how it delivers elementary school education, including closing one or even two of our neighborhood elementary schools," said Preserve Lakewood Schools member and parent Jennifer Schlosser.

"We want to share information about this process, and encourage all Lakewood residents to get involved in the process, whether that's sharing their perspective at a school board meeting, talking to their friends and neighbors about it, or contacting their school board members and superintendent with how these changes would impact their family," Schlosser added.

Attendees represented nearly all seven elementary schools in the district, bringing with them a combined 576 years of connection to Lakewood, and 72 children who would be directly impacted by these potential changes.

The meeting started with asking attendees to share three words or phrases that come to mind when thinking of Lakewood City Schools. Attendees' responses were overwhelmingly centered around walkability, community, diversity, connection, kindness, inclusivity, and bikeability. When asked about the benefits of walking to school, top answers included community, independence, exercise, neighborhood, and environmental impact. These values are at the heart of Preserve Lakewood Schools' mission, as the group aims to protect Lakewood's

neighborhood schools from being closed.

Approximately one-quarter of the attendees had not participated in the superintendent's Community Conversations held in the fall, so the meeting included a summary of the school district's planning process. Several task force members provided crucial insight into the planning efforts so far and answered questions. Concerns raised by attendees included enrollment projections, questions about the potential desire for a centralized pre-kindergarten school building, changes in personnel due to fluctuating enrollment, efforts to attract families to Lakewood, housing issues, and the value of maintaining walkable, neighborhood schools.

With the Task Force planning to present recommendations to the superintendent in May 2025, Preserve Lakewood Schools encouraged attendees to make their voices heard. They suggested several actions to support the cause, including signing and sharing the online petition to halt the closure of elementary schools, sending personal comments to the school board and superintendent, speaking at upcoming school board meetings, canvassing door-to-door, making donations to the organization, and staying engaged on the group's Facebook page (Preserve Lakewood Schools) and website.

Preserve Lakewood's Schools is a dedicated community initiative in Lakewood, Ohio, focused on preventing the closure or repurposing of elementary schools within the Lakewood City School District. Sign the petition at <https://change.org/preservelakewoodschools> For more information, visit <https://www.preservelakewoodschools.org>.

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LAKEWOOD CARES



City Of Lakewood H2O “Help To Others”
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Program

by Emmie Hutchison

Parents face many decisions (so many decisions!) about the care and safety of their children, from before they were born until adulthood. Those decisions become more complicated as the child moves toward independence; parents need to set guidelines and boundaries and trust that their child has the judgment to face any challenges that may arise. It’s been suggested that parenting should come with a manual. There’s nothing quite so definitive, but there is information and support available to aid in decision-making. One great way to think through the decisions around emerging independence is to attend H2O HOME ALONE.

HOME ALONE is a safety and independence workshop available to Lakewood youth ages 9—12 and their adult caregiver. High school leaders design engaging presentations that are informative and memorable. The younger children rotate through Cove

Community Center to learn about topics including First Aid, Routines and Decision Making, Emergencies (including calling 911), Internet Safety, and Street Smarts/Tricky People. The goal is to teach facts about safety and to build sound decision-making skills. As the young attendees rotate through topics, the parents/caregivers hear from safety professionals who share updated research on topics such as home fire safety, internet use, home security, and first aid. The first responders who present are from our community; it’s a great opportunity to connect with them.

HOME ALONE is offered twice this year: Tuesday, February 25th and Monday, March 10th. The workshops are hosted at Cove Community Center from 6:00 PM – 8:40 PM. Additional information and registration are available on the City of Lakewood website: lakewoodoh.gov/h2o. Enrollment is limited for effective small-group learning, so claim your spot soon!

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LAKEWOODALIVE

LakewoodAlive To Honor Community Leaders With Awards At Upcoming Loving Lakewood: Tuned In For Community

by Ava Olic

LakewoodAlive is excited to announce Jim “JP” Ptacek as the 2025 Founders Award recipient, and fellow community members Michael Daso, Christina McCallum, Ami Rizek, and Maureen Koopman, as the 2025 Community Leader Award honorees to be recognized during Loving Lakewood: Tuned In For Community, sponsored by Cleveland Property Management, on Saturday, February 22.

Each member of this honoree group has made a long-lasting impact on Lakewood as a community and/or LakewoodAlive. The Founders Award--recognizing one special honoree annually--celebrates an individual who exemplifies the vision of LakewoodAlive’s founding members to foster and sustain vibrant and welcoming neighborhoods. Represented by dedicated Lakewoodites, Community Leader Awardees are members of our community who are avid volunteers and champions of progress who



Left to right: Christina McCallum, Jim “JP” Ptacek, Ami Rizek, Maureen Koopman, Michael Daso

deserve to be recognized. **Jim “JP” Ptacek** is the principal/owner of Larsen Architects in Lakewood, Ohio. He’s worked in Lakewood since starting as an intern over 30 years ago and has been a proud Lakewoodite for nearly 20 years. “JP” (as most people know him) has been committed to local projects that help create community. He is a respected member of the architectural community and a valued contributor to the

fabric of Lakewood. Having previously served on our Board of Directors, his is still a frequent LakewoodAlive volunteer. **Michael Daso** is a financial planner who works primarily with professionals, small business owners and retirees. He lives in Lakewood and enjoys giving back to his community through volunteering. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Beck Center for the Arts in Lakewood, previously served on the Board of LakewoodAlive and was Chair of the Board at both the Lakewood Historical Society and the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce. He is also currently chair of the Endowment Committee at his church (Lakewood Congregational Church), and last year raised money for LakewoodAlive while walking every street in Lakewood from A to Z.

charming anime store that reflects her passions, offering a welcoming and inclusive space where fans can connect, share, and celebrate their love for Japanese pop culture. Doki Doki is part of the Bunts to Birdtown Business District, one of Lakewood’s small business associations that promotes a thriving small business culture, and Ami is a key player as a Bunts to Birdtown member.

Maureen Koopman is an interior designer who turned serial entrepreneur and proud Lakewood resident. In 2016, she founded Home for the Holidays, a seasonal pop-up that brings together Cleveland’s artists, makers & small batch foodies. Its success led her to open The Parlour in 2020, The Lounge in 2023, and Biographie in 2024—all boutique event venues designed to bring people together through meaningful gatherings. She is passionate about creating spaces that inspire connection, celebrate creativity, and support local businesses. She is currently serving on our Board of Directors and is active on multiple LakewoodAlive committees.

Join us at Loving Lakewood: Tuned In For Community, sponsored by Cleveland Property Management, to celebrate these amazing members of our vibrant community! Loving Lakewood is LakewoodAlive’s annual fundraising gala, and takes place Saturday, February 22 at Lakewood Masonic Temple from 7:30 to 11 p.m. Visit our website LakewoodAlive.org/LovingLakewood to purchase your tickets today!



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bunts Road Rehab Project

continued from page 2

at an intersection 3 to 7 seconds before vehicles are given the green light. This helps the pedestrians better establish their presence in the crosswalk before vehicles can proceed. During project design, the timing at all signalized intersections on Bunts Road (with the exception of Lakewood Heights Boulevard) will be reviewed to determine if an LPI can be included without affecting the overall operations of the intersection.

Left Turn Lanes

Left turn lanes in both north and south bound directions will be added to Bunts Road at Franklin Boulevard. Sidewalk and Crossing Improvements Near Giant Eagle Parking Lot

Communication has been started with representatives of Giant Eagle to address the driveways off Bunts Road.

Improvements to these driveways will be made after these discussions.

Comments were received regarding the numerous pedestrians crossing Bunts south of the railroad tracks to access Giant Eagle and the safety concerns. After further evaluation, a mid-block crossing with push button activated Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) has been added to the plans south of the railroad tracks (in addition to the planned RRFB crossing at Merl Avenue).

Permeable Pavers

The pavement for the parking lanes has been changed to permeable pavers. This change allows for: 1) a distinction between the traveling lane and parking lane; and, 2) a reduction in stormwater runoff.

A new separate storm sewer system will collect all the impervious surface runoff from the entire project

site. The existing storm mains will only service the private properties. This improvement greatly reduces the potential for private property flooding.

Curb Bump-Outs

Detroit Ave. curb bump-outs have been added at the northwest and southeast corners of Detroit and Bunts to reduce the crosswalk lengths.

Project Plans and Schedule

Stage 1 Plans were submitted to ODOT for review and comment. Stage 1 plans generally detail the line,

grade and typical cross sections of the proposed improvements. ODOT comments have been received and are being addressed.

Stage 2 Plans are being prepared for an April 2025 submittal. These plans generally include:

Questions or Comments?

Please contact: Mark Papke, PE, CPESC – Lakewood City Engineer
Phone: 216.529.6807

Email: mark.papke@lake-woodoh.gov

Cognitive Dissonance And Bunts Road Multi-Use Path

by Daniel Zielinski

On February 3rd, a group of Bunts Road residents attended the Lakewood City Council meeting to provide coordinated public comment in opposition to the multi-use path

feature of the Bunts Road Rehabilitation Project. The Bunts Road project is one of the largest public works projects the city will undertake in the near future. The plan includes replacing all storm and sanitary piping under the road. As a result, they will also replace curbs, road surface, and sidewalks. The underground utility work is expected to disturb tree roots near the road resulting in removal of many mature trees. There is no plan to alter property lines.

The new road design features narrowed traffic-calmed lanes with brick-paved parking on the east side of the road north of Franklin and south of Madison. Next to Lakewood Stadium, parking will switch to the west side of Bunts causing a chicane effect to calm motor traffic in this busy corridor. The brick-paved parking will reduce impermeable surfaces and storm water runoff. A two-way multi-use path is planned for the west side of the road extending from Lakewood Heights Boulevard to Clifton Boulevard, satisfying a 2015 Lakewood Active Living Task Force recommendation for a safe north-south bike route connector. The city will maintain the path, not residents. An alternate proposal features a sidewalk with a painted bike lane in the road that would have more imperme-

Residents Launch Petition Drive Stop Build Of Shared-Use Path On Bunts!

by David Mortland

Residents on Bunts Road have launched a petition drive to stop the creation of a shared-used path on Bunts. The path is currently included in the Bunts Road Rehabilitation plan that will begin in 2026.

A shared-use path, also known as multi-modal or multi-use, is intended to be used by all people. Those on bicycles, skateboards, motorized bicycles, scooters, etc. will need to share this path with people of all ages walking pets, pushing strollers, running, or using mobility assistance devices such as walkers, canes and wheelchairs.

Why You Should Care

- The path will create a dangerous situation for all who use Bunts. Bicyclists tend to travel very fast when using them and studies show there is a high rate of collisions between vehicles and bicycles where these paths are located.
- This path is an unnecessary use of taxpayer funds. The city’s traffic studies revealed that bicycle traffic on Bunts currently only accounts for between 0.2% and 0.3% of all traffic on



Sign and share the petition to stop a shared-use path from being built on Bunts.

Bunts, depending on the intersection surveyed. Why attract more?

- The Ohio Department of Transportation’s guidelines on multi-modal paths notes; “Paths can function along highways for short sections, or for longer sections where there are few street and/or driveway crossings.”
- The west side of Bunts has 116 driveways, entrances to businesses or streets to cross, so bicycles pass in front of traffic every few seconds. This puts all involved at risk.

- Further, a January 2025 report by the Ohio Department of Transportation notes: “Path widths less than 11 ft. in width do not provide space for people to travel side-by-side and be passed by other users approaching from the opposite direction without increasing the potential for conflicts.”

How You Can Help

Sign the petition to stop the creation of a shared-use/multi-use/ multi-modal path on Bunts.

Speak at City Council and Planning Commission or submit your written comments for the public record.

Share the petition. All are welcome to sign – homeowners, renters, business owners, children.

The rest of the plan to enhance the street and street parking, and improve crosswalks and lighting are well done, and the city must replace aging sewer lines.

City officials have told concerned Bunts residents that they are including the path simply because they’re rebuilding Bunts. Let them know that’s not a good enough reason to create a dangerous and crowded situation.

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LAKEWOOD IS ART

Don't You Go Changin':
Reviews Of Recent Releases
By Local Bands, Pt. 140

by Buzz Kompier

The Frans - The Frans - self-released - 12 songs - LP, CD, digital

When I reviewed The Frans' first single a while back, I expressed some doubts that they could possibly have much more material left to work with as a public transit-themed band. Well, I guess they proved me wrong. That song, "Ride The Bus," is on here (in what I believe is a rerecorded version), accompanied by eleven other songs that do at least have some kind of mention of public transit. "Ride The Bus," it must be said, for all its ridiculousness, does rock—it is a good punk tune. There are several other good garage tunes about buses and the people who ride them—"Eight Bus Bry" and "3 Man" are about some rather unpleasant sounding characters, "Subway Sally" has the great line "you got my brain criss-crossed, looks like an MTA map," and the country-tinged blues song "Smoking On A BRT" has some very funny moments, like the abrupt declaration that "all the women and children hate jazz" or when someone says

the seemingly innocuous phrase "smoke 'em if you got 'em" and this really sets the singer off. Two of my favorites were only tangentially related to transit—the pop-garage of "Bird Passing Through" and the total punk rocker "Rail City Gun," which decries bureaucracy, gentrification, and cities getting further to the right. It rules, it must be said. "West 5th 108th" has some dissonant alt-rock guitar work, T. Rex definitely influenced "Bus Of Elysium," and "The Ballad Of Jane Jacobs" did get me to read Jane Jacobs' Wikipedia page which I guess makes it a success. Musically speaking, there's nothing super revelatory here, but they're pretty good at the I-IV-V garage sound as well as both the softer moments and more punk tracks. And hey, maybe most importantly, it's a lot of fun to listen to. 3.5/5

(thefrans.bandcamp.com)

Are you a local-ish band? Do you have a record out? Email vaguelythreatening@gmail.com or send it directly to the Observer: PO Box 770203, Lakewood, OH 44107.



Sammy

Senior Cat Seeking Forever Home!

by Stephanie Jarosz

Meet Sammy! Unfortunately, this senior cat's owner recently passed away and he's now looking for a new forever home.

Sammy is a lovable 12-year-old Domestic Shorthair. He thrives on affection and loves a good back scratch. Sammy's the perfect little lap cat and enjoys a good cuddle. This little guy does require a specific diet of gastrointestinal cat food due to some previous health concerns, so CCLAS will provide a case of Hill's Prescription Diet food to his future adopter. Sammy is such a joy and would bring so much happiness to a home!

Cognitive Dissonance And
Bunts Road Multi-Use Path

continued from page 9

able surfaces, result in the removal of a similar number of trees, and have the same estimated total cost as the current plan. Final drawings are due in October 2025.

When the Bunts Road Rehabilitation Project was introduced in May 2024, it received the largest number of public comments of any Lakewood public works project in recent years;

nearly all were positive. However, a group of Bunts Road residents have recently expressed opposition to the multi-use path. Their coordination and determination demonstrates a strong connection among neighbors, and I support their right to express their thoughts to City Council.

Read the rest of this letter
and more online at:
lakewoodobserver.com

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COVE COMMUNITY CENTER

Meet Us At Cove:

Chuck And Terri Postel, Volunteers Extraordinaire

by Nancy Feighan

Chuck and Terri Postel, longtime Lakewood residents, have been dedicated volunteers for many years, quietly changing lives in their community. Their journey with Cove began in 2021 after they saw a post from the Division of Aging seeking help to deliver meals to seniors during the pandemic. What started as a simple act of kindness has grown into a meaningful commitment, deepening their connection to the community and further solidifying their role as pillars of support at Cove.

A Small World, Full of Big Stories

Chuck and Terri's work goes beyond delivering meals; it's about building connections. Many of the seniors they serve have fascinating stories to share, some having spent their entire lives in Lakewood, raising families and witnessing events that shaped the community. For Chuck, it was especially meaningful to reconnect with a man who had been his boss during high school, decades ago. Their reunion wasn't just about delivering food; it was about rekindling a friendship and reminiscing about old times, especially sports. Chuck made sure this gentleman was the last stop on his route so they could spend more time catching up.

More Than Meals: A Community Bond

Chuck and Terri's involvement with Cove Community Center goes beyond meal delivery. They've embraced its programs, including



Chuck and Terri Postel, long-time Lakewood residents, have been dedicated volunteers.

the À La Cart cooking demos, and Terri even worked as a sous chef at a Senior Chefs event. For them, Cove is a hub for growth and connection. They encourage others to explore the center's offerings, from programs for little ones to activities for seniors.

Last year, they joined Cove's daytime bocce league and had so much fun they can't wait to sign up again. They'd join the Wednesday night league too if they weren't already busy with rowing. Their enthusiasm is contagious, and it doesn't stop with them. A friend who

relocated from Georgia to Lakewood last year jumped right into the bocce scene at Cove, becoming a key player on their team and even stepping in as a substitute for others.

Volunteering: A Family Tradition and Its Benefits

The Postel family has a strong tradition of giving back. They volunteer with groups like LakewoodAlive, Bishop Cosgrove Center, the Cleveland Rowing Foundation, and Western Reserve Rowing Association. For Chuck and Terri, volunteering is more than a duty; it's a way of life. When you help deliver meals at Cove, you're not just delivering food; you're making connections, forming friendships, and supporting your neighbors. It also helps you understand the struggles some people face. Volunteering isn't just about giving, it's about what you gain, too.

In addition to their work at Cove, Chuck and Terri also dedicate their time to other volunteer efforts. Terri has been a proud, active member of 100 Women Who Care Cleveland since its inception fourteen years ago. Recently, Chuck and a former co-worker hosted the inaugural meeting of 100+ Men Who Care - Cleveland Metro, after months

of planning and recruiting members. These are just a few examples of the many ways Chuck and Terri continue to make a difference in their community.

A Humbling Experience

Chuck sums it up best: "You don't need to look far to find people who need help. They might be right next door or down the street." These experiences have deepened their commitment to serving others.

A Call to Action: Why Don't You?

Chuck and Terri live by one simple motto: "If you can, why don't you?" They encourage others to volunteer—not only for the good it does others but for the personal rewards it brings.

Volunteering at Cove: The Benefits

Volunteering at Cove isn't just about delivering meals; it's about connecting with your community and understanding the challenges others face. If you're thinking about volunteering, Chuck and Terri would ask, "Why don't ya?" Don't wait to make a difference—get in touch today to see how you can help at Cove. The community needs you, and you might find that giving back brings more than you expect.

If you're interested in volunteering with the Division of Aging at Cove, please contact Barry Wemyss at 216-529-5005.



(L to R) David Holmberg, Terrell Moss, Mason Juka, Eric Fairfax, Fred Clark

Valentine's Day Jazz Concert At Cove!

by Nancy Feighan

Wow, what an unforgettable morning! The talented instructors of Lakewood Music Academy came together to form the LMA Jazz Ensemble, and we were all in for a treat! From the moment they kicked off with "Mister Magic" by Grover Washington, Jr., to the smooth sounds of "Misty" and "The Way You Look Tonight," toes were tapping, and hearts were full.

A special shoutout to the incredible musicians: Eric Fairfax (bandleader, saxophone & flute), David Holmberg (piano), Terrell Moss (drums), Mason Juka (bass), Fred Clark (guitar)

It wasn't just the music that made this morning special. Rachelle Farren (GM, Lakewood Music Academy) and Salane Schultz (accordion & piano instructor) spread the love with flowers tied in musical notes for every audience member.

And when they played "Take

the A-Train," everyone jumped up to dance! What a vibe!

K Callentine loved every minute of it. "I couldn't wait to get here this morning! The music took me way back—years ago, bringing up memories, memories, memories. As a young girl, my older brothers played jazz in the living room while my sisters and I either danced in the kitchen or gathered around the dining room table putting together a puzzle. The music brought tears to my eyes and joy to my heart. Duke Ellington was their favorite!"

We were all treated to a Valentine's Day concert full of love, passion, and incredible talent. Some of us are even thinking about taking lessons or booking these amazing musicians for our own events!

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

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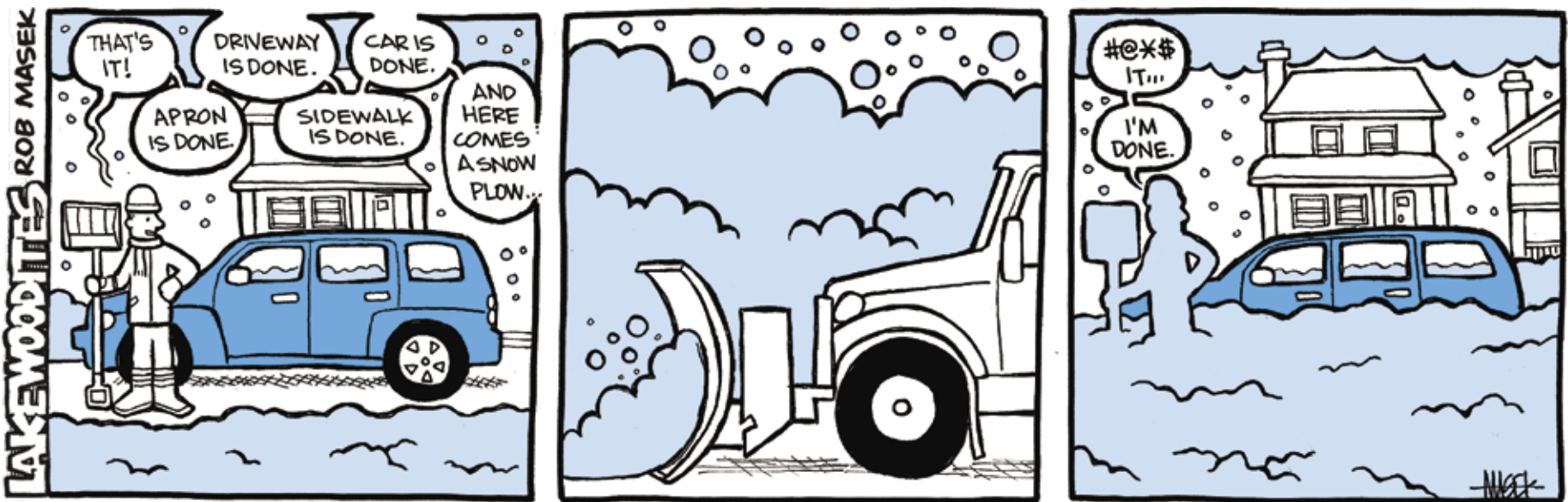
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