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THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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Volume 21, Issue 09, May 7, 2025

"Take a quiet walk with Mother Nature, it will nurture your mind, body and soul." - Adam Daniel Williams

Earns 21 Media Awards LHS' Lakewood Times Honored

by Christine Gordillo

We are excited to announce the impressive achievements of the student journalists of The Lakewood Times, who have earned 21 honors overall in the 2024-25 Ohio Scholastic Media Association's Awards. Consistently demonstrating exceptional dedication and talent, this year's staff earned honors for their compelling stories, striking photographs, thought-provoking cartoons and graphics, and meticulously planned yearbook spreads and stories. These awards celebrate not only individual accomplishments but also the collaborative spirit and commitment to journalistic integrity that have



come to define The Lakewood Times. We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our editor-in-chief, Delano Yeung, for his dedication to refining our articles for publication and ensuring that our stories shine and resonate with the Lakewood community. Congratulations to all of our honorees for their remarkable

continued on page 6

Senior Earns National Scholastic Art Awards

by Christine Gordillo

Lakewood High senior Olive Rodemann has earned the highest honor of being named a national Gold Medal winner in the prestigious Scholastic Art & Writing Awards! Olive was honored for her photograph of a worker at the West Side Market titled "Meat Man."

This competition is the nation's longest-running and most prestigious recognition program for students in grades 7-12. More than 310,000 pieces



of art were submitted for the contest and earning a national award puts Olive in the top 1% of participants.

Olive's "Meat Man" image was one of six Gold Keys she earned at the regional level judging of the competition.

Lakewood Project Concert Set For May 10

by Christine Gordillo

The Lakewood Project will give its last performance of the school year on Saturday, May 10 at 7 pm in the Civic Auditorium. This year's spring concert is themed "Lakewood Project on Shuffle" and will feature from a mix of genres such as classical, jazz, funk, hard rock, metal, pop, classic rock and country. Visit www.payschoolsevents.com to buy your tickets in advance.

Ticket pricing: Presale Student-\$5

Pre Sale Adult- \$8

Pre Sale Elementary/Middle School Student with Adult- \$8

Pre Sale Family Ticket (2 Adults and 2 students/seniors)- \$26

Presale Couple's Ticket (2 Adults) - \$16

Day of Student- \$8

Day of Adult- \$10

Day of Family ticket ((2 Adults and 2 students/seniors)- \$35

Day of Couple's Tickets (2 adults)- \$20



Spring in Lakewood, a shelf cloud rolls in over the Emerald Canyon this past week.

Superintendent Update: The Elementary Planning Task Force

by Maggie Niedzwiecki
Superintendent, Lakewood City Schools

At the Lakewood City Schools, our strong sense of community has always been our foundation. We've overcome challenges and celebrated countless milestones. We are once again coming together to shape the future of our schools.

Since 2015, our district has seen a decline of over 1,000 students. While our values of close-knit neighborhoods and walkable schools remain strong, this shift has created challenges for our elementary facilities. Some schools are underutilized, with capacity as low as 62%, while others exceed 80%.

May 10th Families And Kids To Bike In Support Of Elementary Schools

by Jennifer Schlosser

Kids and families, join us for a fun Family Bike Rally and playdate at Madison Park on Saturday, May 10, 12:30-2:30pm, to show our support for keeping Lakewood's seven neighborhood elementary schools.

This event is hosted by Preserve Lakewood Schools, and all are welcome, whether you bring a bike or not. Meet us at the pavilion near the playground, and:

- Decorate bikes, scooters, strollers, wagons, and anything else that moves in Purple and Gold!

- Join the bike ride at 1:30pm! Ride, scoot, and move any way you like on the path around the park, to show our support for our schools!

- Create homemade signs,

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To address these challenges, we formed the Elementary Planning Task Force in August 2024. This dedicated group of educators, parents, and community members has reviewed enrollment trends, analyzed space utilization, and explored scenarios to optimize our schools. Along the way, we've sought input through community conversations at each elementary school and a community-wide survey.

The Task Force identified key priorities that reflect our community's values. These include minimizing walking times, creating equitable class sizes, avoiding students crossing major thoroughfares, and expanding preschool opportunities.

The last Task Force meeting was held on Wednesday, April 30. After months of collaboration and detailed data review, the Task Force is finalizing its

conclusions and key considerations, which will be presented to the Board of Education at the June 16, 2025, Board meeting. My final recommendation to the Board will follow in September 2025. In the meantime, we will continue to monitor trends and state legislation that could impact these decisions.

I want to thank our Task Force members and everyone in the community who has shared their feedback, questions, and insights along the way. This partnership is what makes Lakewood truly special.

You can continue to stay informed by visiting our website at www.lakewoodcityschools.org for updates, meeting recaps, and, in June, the Task Force Report. Navigate to the "Find it Fast" menu at the top right of the home page and select Elementary Planning Task Force. Thank you for being a vital part of our Lakewood community.

May 15th Through 18th Lakewood Historical Society's 37th Annual Sale On The Grounds

by Robert Shimp

Is it an antiques and collectibles shop? A vintage clothing and jewelry store? An estate sale? An art gallery? A place for architectural salvage? The Lakewood Historical Society's 37th annual Sale on the Grounds is all of these!

Where else can you find kitchen & barware, everyday dishes, utensils and cookware, and probably the largest accumulation of Pyrex and Corningware in Lakewood alongside vintage toys, games, decorative items, fine linens, crystal, silver, China, depression glass, collectibles, Hummels & Royal Doulton figures, lawn & garden, plus



small furniture and architectural items fitting historic homes all at bargain prices? And even a huge selection of unique artisan-crafted jewelry by Marion McMuldren? Only

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THE PRESIDENT’S PAGE

Senior Savings Expansion

Hi Neighbors!

On Monday, Lakewood City Council passed Ordinance 15-2025 to expand the number of seniors and people with disabilities eligible for the City of Lakewood’s Homestead Exemption discounts on water and sewer rates.

What is the City’s Homestead Exemption for Water/Sewer?

The Homestead exemption is a discount program through which eligible participants pay 75% of the standard water/sewer rate. This program is separate from the Cuyahoga County program of the same name and requires a separate application.

Who is eligible for the Homestead Exemption?

Residents who meet all of the following qualifications are eligible:

- at least 65 years of age or disabled
- who own and reside in their home
- who have an adjusted gross income of \$40,000 or below

What has changed?

Prior to the passage of Ordinance 15-2025, the income threshold was \$35,000 and used gross income. With the passage of the new ordinance, the non-taxable portion of social security benefits will no longer be considered as part of income and this adjusted gross income maximum has been expanded

by Sarah Kepple
President of City Council/Council Person-At-Large



to \$40,000. Currently about 325 households participate, and it is estimated that this change will make an additional 100 households eligible, saving our seniors and home owners who most need it an estimated \$480 per year.

How do residents apply?

Applicants may submit a copy of their Federal Tax Return (1040 or 1040-SR) or, for non-filers, official income statements and an application form. Typically new applications and renewals are due by April 30th of each year in conjunction with the tax filing. Due

to the passage of Ordinance 15-2025 expanding eligibility, the deadline has been expanded to June. For more information or to request a paper copy of the application, please call 216.529.6820 and choose Option 2 or visit:

<https://www.lakewoodoh.gov/accordions/homestead-exemption-2/>

I was proud to co-sponsor this ordinance with Mayor George and Vice President Baker, and I appreciate the unanimous support of my council colleagues to adopt this common sense legislation as one piece of our continuing efforts to address housing affordability. It is worth noting that this change was sparked by a resident question. If you have an idea, question, or concern, please share it! You never know who else you might help.

Please join us for our upcoming Lakewood City Council meetings:

Mon, May 12
6:00pm Housing, Planning and Development Committee

Mon, May 19
6:30pm Public Safety Committee
7:30pm Regular Meeting of Council

Sign up for our email list to receive agendas for upcoming meetings, livestream meetings or watch past meetings, and learn more about Council on our webpage: <https://www.lakewoodoh.gov/lakewood-city-council/>



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THE LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

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Lakewood Observer

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Friday, May 16, 2025			Wednesday, May 21, 2025
Friday, May 30, 2025			Wednesday, June 4, 2025

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

THE MAYOR’S CORNER

The Blue Envelope Program

by Meghan George
Mayor/Safety Director, City of Lakewood

Safety always remains a top priority at City Hall, and Lakewood continues to benefit from our highly skilled, well-trained, and dedicated Lakewood Police Department (LPD). I’ve written in the past about how our police, led by Chief Kevin Fischer, continue LPD’s tradition of exploring and adopting innovative policing policies with a holistic view of safety. Some examples of this approach include LPD’s early adoption of crisis intervention training; our Citizens’ Police Academy; and the Safe Place Initiative. As both Mayor and Safety Director, I’m excited share information about the Blue Envelope Program, LPD’s newest initiative.

The Blue Envelope Program is designed to help those with special needs communicate with officers during motor vehicle operator interactions. Individuals on the autism spectrum or with other disabilities can use the blue envelopes provided to share documents and details on any communication issues they may have during encounters with officers. The

program is seen as especially helpful during stressful situations.

Blue Envelope participants keep a photocopy of their driver’s license/state ID, vehicle registration, and current insurance card in the envelope, which always stays in the car so it is handy during discussions with LPD officers. The envelopes also have info and instructions for LPD officers printed on them along with the participant’s name, emergency contact, and details about their specific needs.

LPD heard about the program from two peer agencies outside Cuyahoga County and adapted the program to best serve Lakewood and our region. The overarching goal is to avoid and limit communications challenges and confusion that may occur and de-escalate situations. LPD and the City of Lakewood continue to look for ways to keep Lakewood safe and also friendly and welcoming to all.

I want to commend Chief Fischer and LPD Officer Melissa Mazor, one of Lakewood’s Neighborhood Officers, for leading the way in developing this program for LPD and our city. It demonstrates Lakewood’s continued focus on law enforcement innovation and caring for members of the community who face challenges or may have added

stress when speaking with officers.

For those interested in the program, materials can be picked up at the Lakewood Police Department (12650 Detroit Ave.), the Lakewood Public Library branches (15425 Detroit Ave. and 13229 Madison Ave.), and at Lakewood Fire Station #1 (14601 Madison Ave.). For more information on the program, please contact the Lakewood Police Department nonemergency line at: 216.521.6773.

Entry Level Firefighter And Paramedics Exam May 31

from City Hall

The Lakewood Civil Service Commission is conducting an exam for Entry Level Firefighter/Paramedics on Saturday, May 31, 2025. The application period opens today. Visit <https://www.lakewoodoh.gov/city-conducting-exam-for.../> for more details on how to apply.



May 10th Families And Kids To Bike In Support Of Elementary Schools

continued from page 1

decorations, create drawings, and write messages in support of our schools, to be shared with our school board!

Kids (and adults) who participate in the bike ride around the park will receive a fun prize! Popsicles and snacks to be provided.

Kick off Hike & Bike to School Week (May 12-16) with purple and gold decorated bikes to show your school spirit!

Preserve Lakewood Schools is a

coalition of parents, residents, and leaders in Lakewood, committed to preventing the closure and repurposing of elementary schools by Lakewood City Schools, and supporting the long-term vitality of Lakewood’s public schools.

Learn more at PreserveLakewoodSchools.org.

Jennifer Schlosser is a Lakewood resident, business owner, and parent of two.

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LAKEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY EVENTS

Upcoming Events

by Lisa Calfee

Presentation- Our Butterfly Heritage and How to Preserve it with Dave Tomashefski

Wednesday, May 7, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.Main Library Auditorium
Discover how Ohio came to be at the intersection of diverse butterfly habitats, about Ohio’s recent history of butterfly declines and discover practical tips for supporting these species in your garden.

Terry Meehan Film Series- The Narrow Margin (1952)

Saturday, May 10, 2025 at6:00 p.m. (71 minutes)Main Library Auditorium
Hardboiled detective Walter Brown (Charles McGraw) is assigned to protect a tough-as-nails gangster’s moll (Marie Windsor) from mobsters who want her silenced.

Barbara Steffek-Hill Five-Star Matinee- Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day (2008)

Sunday, May 11, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. (91 minutes) Main Library Auditorium
In pre-World War II London, a desperate middle-aged English governess becomes entangled in the personal love life of a glamorous American entertainer.

Meet The Author- My Demon Wears A Crown by Cierra Young

Wednesday, May 14, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.Main Library Auditorium
My Demon Wears A Crown, soon to be a movie available on Lifetime, BET and Amazon Prime, depicts the real-life journey of the author.

Presentation - The History of Indian Classical Music by Sugata Chatterjee

Sunday, May 18, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. Main Library Auditorium
With words and song, Sugata Chatterjee will teach about the three historical eras of Indian classical music: the Vedic age (when the Hindu scriptures, the Vedas, were written in 500 B.C.), Medieval times and the present day.

Book Club- All We Can Save: Truth, Courage and Solutions for the Climate Crisis Facilitated by Dr. Mike Skladany C.S.U
Mondays: May 12, May 19, June 2, June 9, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Main Library Auditorium

For the sake of our current and future generations, and especially Mother Earth, please join us and our notable guest speakers as we embark on an inclusive march forward in addressing the most pressing issue of the twenty-first century. Lakewood Public Library will be giving out free copies of All We Can Save while supplies last.

Children’s And Youth Programs

by Jeffrey Siebert

Color Our World Summer Reading Club

Friday, May 9, 2025 through Monday, August 11, 2025
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 in online or in person. Come to the library and check in halfway through and receive a reward. All finishers select a new book to keep.

Family Weekend Wonders

Main Library- Fridays and Saturdays at 10:30 a.m.
Madison Branch- Fridays at 10:30 a.m.
Drop in to the Library’s special weekend story time. Family Weekend Wonders is offered every weekend throughout the year and features a different theme each week followed by a craft. No registration is required.

Tail Waggin’ Tutors

Saturday, May 10,2025 11:00 am- 12:30 pm, Main Library Multipurpose Room For School-Age Children.
Your child can bone up on their reading skills during a one-on-one session in a dog-friendly atmosphere. Students can practice reading with one of the dogs and owners that have been certified through Therapy Dogs International, an organization dedicated to regulating, testing and registering therapy dogs and their volunteer handlers. Reading to a therapy dog can provide comfort, support and happiness for self-conscious readers. No registration is required.



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LAKEWOOD SCHOOLS



Mayor George Inspires Garfield's ROX Girls' Group

by Christine Gordillo

Mayor George came to visit Garfield's ROX Girls' Group last week, where she shared some of the challenges and obstacles she faced growing up and how she overcame them.

She also talked about her schooling, career choices, and the challenges she faces in her leadership role as a woman mayor.

She answered the girls' questions and encouraged them to work hard in all they do and strive to be anything they choose in life

Her empowering message: Nothing should stand in their way! The girls and the mayor wrapped up the inspiring visit with some special ROX cookies.

Thank you, Mayor George!

District Makes Strides In Its Attendance Efforts

by Christine Gordillo

The Lakewood City Schools is winding down its first year as a member of the Cleveland Browns "Stay in the Game Attendance Network" (SITG) and its second year of convening a District Level Attendance Team, as the District continues its shift from a reactive to proactive approach to student attendance.

The attendance teams met regularly (each building has a team) to

dig into up-to-date data and develop strategies on how to address chronic absenteeism (absent 10% or more of school time) and support families facing attendance issues. Some successes from the District Level Attendance Team include more robust direct communication with families; identifying the foundations of what encourages

continued online at:
lakewoodobserver.com

Earns 21 Media Awards

LHS' Lakewood Times Honored

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contributions!

Abigail Kovach & Abriana Heinz: Honorable Mention: "Congresswoman Shontel Brown Headlines Women in Politics Forum at Lakewood High School"

Elaina Purcell & Teddie Bruening: Honorable Mention: "Unconditional Love From Furry Friends"

Fallon Austin: Honorable Mention: "Building a Greener Future: All About Keep Lakewood Beautiful"

Fallon Austin: Excellent: "Spooky to Sustainable: The Lakewood Pumpkin Compost"

Mia Dugan: Excellent: "First Annual Fall Festival"

Alice Paynter: Excellent: "Lakewood's Solstice Steps: A Staircase to Community and Progress"

Olive Rodemann & Vincent Shell: Excellent: "Trend Upcycling and the Secret World of Antiques"

Lyla Parkison: Superior: "Your Vote Matters"

Ava Schmoldt: Superior: "What Sets the Cleveland Museum of Art Apart"

Madi Twining: Superior: The Accessory

Bailey Dussault: Honorable Mention: The Eclectic

Sophia Schelgunov & Kylee Zingale:



Honorable Mention: "Humble and Hungry for Competition: The Rangers Boys' Basketball Team Defeats the Rockets and Stay Undefeated in the CWC"

Teddie Bruening & Elaina Purcell: "Revive Your One and Only Body"

Vincent Shell: Excellent: "Luigi Mangione's Walk of Shame Turned Walk of Fame"

Vincent Shell: Honorable Mention: Feature Graphic

Olive Rodemann: Honorable Mention: Feature Photo

Zoe Payton: Honorable Mention: Sports Photo

Abriana Heinz: Honorable Mention: Girls Tennis feature story 2024-25 Yearbook

Madison Comer: Honorable Mention: Girls Soccer Spread 2024-25 Yearbook

Sebastian Shafer: Honorable Mention: Feature Photo 2024-25 Yearbook

Sebastian Shafer: Superior: Sports Photo 2024-25 Yearbook

Rotary Honors Career Tech Students

by Lynn Donaldson

On April 7, the Rotary Club of Lakewood and Rocky River hosted the 27th annual West Shore Career-Technical District Outstanding Student Awards at its weekly luncheon. The 16 recipients were honored for their dedication, leadership, and accomplishments in their career-technical programs

Each award recipient is automatically nominated for the "Career-Technical Student of the Year" award, which will be announced later in the school year at the annual Career Passport Assembly.

The 2024-25 Outstanding Student Award recipients are: Mihai

Bogdan-Chindea, business management; Charieon Doxley, T.E.A.C.H. / ECE; Naya Fayad, medical professions; James Gollon, Project Lead the Way - engineering; Titus McAlvey, auto technology; Zayna Muntaser, nursing foundations; Gary Pandos, construction trades;

Elaina Purcell, sports and exercise science; Olive Rodemann, media art and design; Andi Sadiku, community based - O'Neill; Bryce Sandoval, theatre arts; Harper Washio, community based - Gordon Food Service; Ameera Westbrook, electronic engineering; Brynn Wolfgram, culinary arts; and Danari Woods, networking with cybersecurity.



West Shore Career-Technical District Outstanding Student Award recipients honored by the Rotary Club of Lakewood and Rocky River on April 7 were joined by school administrators from Lakewood, Bay Village, and Westlake at the awards ceremony.

Madison Park's Becks Pool Opens June 3rd Lakewood Park's Foster Pool Opens June 10th



Dive in to Lakewood's public pools this summer. Both Foster and Madison Pools are managed by the Recreation Department and owned by the City of Lakewood. Both pools, and parks offer unique fun experiences for all members of the family! *This summer don't miss out on all the cool fun!*

DAILY ADMISSION

Age	Resident	Non-Resident
2 & under**	free with paid adult	free with paid adult
3 - 5	\$2	\$5
6 - 17	\$5	\$10
18 - 59	\$7	\$11
60 +	\$2	\$6

Pool passes go on sale May 6th

SEASON PASSES

Age	Resident	Non-Resident
2 & under	free with paid adult	free with paid adult
3 - 5	\$10	\$90
60+	\$10	\$90
1 person	\$70	\$130
2 people	\$110	\$200
3 people	\$150	\$270
Family of 4+	\$190	\$340



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LAKEWOOD OBSERVER FORUM

To The Lakewood City School District: What Is Our Long Range Plan?

by Alaina McCourt

Historically, Lakewood City Schools has prioritized students, teachers, and families. In fact, the district spent \$100 million dollars to rebuild three elementary schools just 12 years ago. As is true for many Lakewood families, **the primary deciding factor** for us when we decided to purchase a home in Lakewood was the walkable, new elementary schools. We live within walking distance to Lincoln Elementary School, which opened only 9 years ago in 2016. Now, only a few years after purchasing our home, we are being told that this brand new beautiful school building which is supposed to last another 40 years may be closed or repurposed next year. My family has been to the meetings, watched the presentations, and we are still left with a lack of understanding as to what the true direction of the Lakewood Public School System is.

We've read the most recent strategic plan as of 2022, and closing and repurposing school buildings is not mentioned anywhere. In fact, closing or repurposing schools seems to be entirely counter to many of the objectives stated in the strategic plan. So I ask you, Lakewood City School District and community members, are we truly striving to be a great school district? Do we want the very best educational outcomes for our students above all else? Do we want to improve teacher morale in order to retain the most highly qualified and effective teachers? Do we want to continue growing our student population and attracting families to join our school district to increase enrollment? Because the short-sighted actions being proposed by the district administration will have direct and serious consequences on those goals and will do irreparable harm to our school district.

Closing or repurposing school buildings is a short term solution that doesn't come close to covering the financial deficit we find ourselves in. The projected savings stated by the Superintendent and Treasurer is approximately \$500,000 per year. However, the Treasurer's own presentation indicates a

projected net loss of \$6 million for 2026 and \$13 million for 2028. Per the treasurer, even if we close or repurpose one or two schools, we will absolutely still require a substantial levy in 2026 to balance the budget. And closing or repurposing schools will have additional serious consequences including...

- An annihilation of trust between community members and the district, which sought voter support for a \$50 million bond just 12 years ago to rebuild the very elementary buildings now being considered for closure.
- The complete destruction of our school district's walkability, a trait that is one of our greatest strengths and one that attracts new families and boosts enrollment.
- The loss of additional students who will choose to take vouchers and enroll in private schools.
- Increased absenteeism among our most at-risk students, who lack access to a family-owned vehicle or other transportation.
- Negative financial impact on community members as property values decline with the loss of walkable school buildings.
- And perhaps, most importantly, the social-emotional harm that will be inflicted on hundreds of children who will lose their elementary schools and the connections they have established with their school, teachers, and peers.

The sentiment shared by myself and thousands of other Lakewood residents who have signed the petition on Change.org is that these costs to the overall quality of our school district are not worth the savings presented. The decision to close or repurpose new schools that the district invested \$100 million in constructing merely 9 years ago will completely erode trust and support with the very community members needed to pass the new levy in 2026. And this decision is being proposed at a moment when the enrollment in the elementary schools has increased 3% over the last few years, which we would expect to continue over the next several years eventually leading to increased enrollment in our middle schools and

high school. Choosing to close or repurpose elementary buildings now will inflict irreparable damage to our school district's reputation, discouraging new families from continuing to move to Lakewood to attend our schools.
If we truly want the Lakewood City School District to be a great school dis-

trict for many years to come, we need to invest in our elementary program to encourage continued growth that will, over time, make its way to our middle and high schools. We need to maintain
**continued online at:
lakewoodobserver.com**

Neighborhoods Have Sidewalks, Not Multi-Use Paths

by John Rustad

Like the residents of all neighborhood streets in Lakewood, Bunts Rd. residents enjoy their neighborhood. People walk to each other's homes to visit. We push infants in strollers, take toddlers for walks so they can learn about their neighborhood. Those toddlers learn to ride tricycles, then bikes with training wheels, and finally 2 wheel bikes. Kids run to a friend's house to play. Residents walk their dogs. Residents go for daily walks. While walking we often stop to talk to neighbors working in their yards. As 47-year residents of Bunts we have watched a couple of generations experience these activities.

The city is currently finalizing plans for a major street renovation. The existing storm sewers and watermain are being replaced. In addition to these necessary upgrades, the city has decided to add a 10 foot wide multi-use path on the west side of the street. That path will replace the existing sidewalk and take up an additional 5 feet of the existing tree lawn. Removing that 5 feet of tree lawn will result in the removal of nearly every single tree on the west side. Lakewood's tree canopy will be adversely affected.

Our neighborhood will have an unnecessary 10 foot wide heat inducing nuisance rather than our friendly residential feel. That "multi-use" path will negatively impact all the activities outlined above.

Safely entering and exiting our driveways will become more difficult. Not only will residents continue to look for 2- way traffic on the street, they will need to be concerned with 2-way traffic on the path.

Common sense and reason indicate that the proposed path should not be built.
John and Debbie Rustad are 47 year Lakewood residents.

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LAKEWOOD CARES

Cats Seeking Forever Homes!



Denali
by Stephanie Jarosz
Meet Denali! This sweet 4-year-old domestic shorthair boy has blossomed from a timid shelter arrival into an affectionate companion who greets visitors with eager meows! Now a playful and loving guy, Denali is ready to find his forever home where he can finally be the free spirit he was always meant to be.
Visit Denali, and the other animals at the Lakewood Animal Shelter located at 1299 Metropark Drive, just past the Dog Park. Contact 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), an all-volunteer nonprofit dedicated to protecting and improving the lives of Lakewood's companion animals. CCLAS provides financial aid and resources to the Lakewood Animal Shelter, ensuring quality care for abandoned, orphaned, sick, and injured animals. We also promote pet adoptions and advocate for animal welfare through community outreach and education. CCLAS is committed to treating animals with empathy, kindness, and respect, recognizing their capacity to experience pain, suffering, and a range of emotions. Learn more at cclas.org.

Cardiologist Ashoka Nautiyal, M.D., Announces His Retirement

by Michael Skindell
In a recent letter to his patients, area Cardiologist and Lakewood community member Ashoka Nautiyal, M.D. announced that he is retiring on May 1st after nearly 60 years of medical practice.
Over the years, Ashoka Nautiyal was the cardiologist to many Lakewood residents.
In his letter, Dr. Nautiyal noted: "It is difficult to bid farewell to a profession that I have dedicated my life to." He added, "It has been a honor and great privilege to have served as your cardiologist, and I am grateful for the relationship we have built."



Ashoka Nautiyal, cardiologist to many Lakewood residents.

Dr. Ashoka Nautiyal, M.D., is a cardiologist in Westlake, Ohio, and has nearly 60 years of experience in the medical field. Dr. Nautiyal has specialized in the areas of Cardiovascular Disease & Internal Medicine and has extensive experience in Interventional Cardiac Procedures. Dr. Ashoka Nautiyal received his undergraduate education at the prestigious La Martiniere College, Lucknow, India, and his medical education from the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune, India. He completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at Cook County Hospital, Chicago, Illinois, and graduated from the Cleveland Clinic Foundation Cardiovascular Medicine Fellowship in 1980. He is a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology and a Fellow of the Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions. Dr. Nautiyal has been affiliated with medical facilities such as Cleveland Clinic, Fairview Hospital, University Hospital Saint John Medical Center and Firelands Regional Medical Center.
Ashoka Nautiyal and his wife Melissa have been a part of the Lakewood community for more than 20 years, where they raised their two children. In his announcement, Dr. Nautiyal stated: "I look forward to committing to family life and new opportunities that may lie ahead."

HOUSING DISCRIMINATION AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS

Fair housing laws protect persons who have emotional support animals which help to ameliorate the impact of their emotional disabilities. This means that persons who have emotional support animals cannot be subjected to discrimination and that a housing provider must make reasonable accommodations in their pet policies to allow disabled persons who have emotional support animals (ESAs) to live in their housing.

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION TOWARD PERSONS WITH ESAS?

- Charging fees or deposits that apply to emotional support animals.
- Applying pet rules, such as breed, weight, or size restrictions to emotional support animals.
- Restricting to certain building entrances, walks, or floors.
- Conditioning allowing an ESA on whether a person agrees that the housing provider can rescind the approval of the ESA at anytime at the discretion of the housing provider.

WHAT KIND OF ANIMALS ARE PROTECTED?

Service animals and emotional support animals are protected under fair housing laws. There are animals that help with disabilities to fully use and enjoy their homes. A letter from a doctor, counselor, etc. is all that is needed to classify an animal as an emotional support animal. For example, a doctor may explain that a dog helps calm a person who suffers from an emotional impairment.

ARE ESAS THE SAME AS SERVICE ANIMALS?

No. Service animals are trained to perform a specific task for a disabled person (e.g. guide dog), while ESAs do not have to be trained to perform any specific task. Fair housing law requires that housing providers allow both ESAs and service animals.

WHAT RESTRICTIONS CAN HOUSING PROVIDERS PLACE ON ESAS?

Housing providers are permitted to request medical documentation from a disabled person to show the need for an emotional support animal. In addition, they can require that animals such as dogs have a valid license and required shots.

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LAKEWOOD OBSERVER

Letter To The Editor Executive Order 9066

by Michael Lauer

Did we not learn that due process is absolute once an immigrant sets foot on American soil? Executive Order 9066, which President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed in February 1942, authorized the mass removal and internment of Japanese Americans from their homes and businesses located on the West Coast during World War II. This action, motivated by apprehensions regarding potential espionage following the attack on Pearl Harbor, resulted in the incarceration of over 120,000 Japanese Americans in internment camps, notwithstanding the absence of any evidence supporting claims of espionage or treason. The significance of the order resides in its infringement upon civil rights, the discriminatory targeting of a specific ethnic group, and its enduring ramifications for the Japanese American community.

The internment resulted in a substantial loss of property, businesses, and residences for Japanese Americans. This experience also precipitated enduring



Japanese families were tagged in the United States during World War II.

trauma and exerted a profound impact on the Japanese American community. In my opinion, Executive Order 9066 should serve as a stark reminder of the dangers of racial prejudice and the importance of upholding civil liberties.

Michael Lauer is married and has two wonderful adult children.

A Convenient Democracy

by Jean Brinich

A Convenient Democracy

Is not a democracy

It's an incongruity

Like a faithless marriage

It needs work and nurturing and watching

Otherwise

While one is surfing streaming downloading

Working partying shopping

Living

Pretending all this is not happening

We just might find out

The divorce has already happened

While we were too busy to notice..

Jean Brinich is a retired family nurse practitioner who returned to Lakewood in 2015 after a 46 year absence.

May 15th Through 18th Lakewood Historical Society's 37th Annual Sale On The Grounds

continued from page 1

at the historic Nicholson House, 13335 Detroit Avenue, May 15-18!

The sale is 9 a.m. – 3p.m. on Thursday, May 15 through Saturday, May 17th. Sunday May 18 is noon to 3 p.m., when everything except the Top Shelf Room is half-price. Even gamblers don't wait till Sunday, though—they know the full price is such a deal they're not willing to risk losing their treasures. Set aside plenty of time to shop, as not only is the Nicholson House filled, so are the grounds via a 20' x 60' tent, several smaller tents, and the Haber Center at 13314 Detroit Avenue for architectural salvage. This is the perfect place to outfit a new house or apartment or to find a special vintage piece to add to your collection--whatever that might be.

Make sure you visit the Haber Center at 13314 Detroit to peruse antique light fixtures, chandeliers, doorknobs,

hardware, ceramic tiles, and all sorts of items that might be reused in older homes at the Preservation Committee's Architectural Salvage Sale.

If you've shopped this sale before, no doubt it's already on your calendar. If you've never been, make it a point to come. This is one event you don't want to miss!



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LAKEWOOD IS ART.®

LASKA LAKEWOOD
Community Market

by Colin Cox

My name is Colin Cox and I am a local Lakewood artist and founder of Funkwork Studio, a creative space where I will release art, home decor and clothing, with an emphasis on mental health. Moving back to Lakewood in October, I felt right at home and could feel the warm hug of the community I grew up in. Hoping to add to the community and establish my place, I came up with the idea for the community to come together. LASKA LAKEWOOD Community Market was created, a free to vend and free to attend, event

for the community. LASKA LAKEWOOD will feature things like local art, handmade goods, small businesses and even small "yard sales"!

The goal is to bring the community together for some free fun and to bring awareness to local artists and businesses! The market will take place every other Sunday starting May 18th from 11am-7pm, on the corner of Madison Ave. and Cordova Ave. in the west end of Lakewood! (Mike's barbershop/ RTA turnaround).

I look forward to seeing everyone come together and all the fun to be had!

Correction/Update:
Church Of The Ascension
Flea Market

by Debra O'Bryan

In the last issue we published an article from The Church of the Ascension describing the Flea Market and Bike Rodeo. Unfortunately, there isn't sufficient time for the Bike Rodeo to be held this year. The church will be holding a fun filled day from 11 am to 4 pm on May 17th for the Flea Market and Craft Show.

On the beautiful grounds at 13216 Detroit Ave., the playground will be open for children with art activities and an inexpensive grilled

lunch will be offered. Market Tables are still available. A free will offering (\$20) is appreciated but not required. Please join the community and stop by. The Lakewood Garden Center next door will be having a heirloom plant sale as well. For more info call 216-521-8727



ARIES: The Ram has the Sun shining on finances, and Jupiter in the house of community & neighborhood. Take Mom out in the community & treat her like royalty.

TAURUS: The Sun's shining on the Bull this birthday month, open up that lock you have on your Bullpen of cash, Jupiter's in your house of money, treat Mom to chocolates & flowers.

GEMINI: The Sun is shining behind the scenes for the Twins, but Jupiter is up close & personal in your house of Self, do it doubly special for Mom, you'll have great conversations.

CANCER: The Crab has some good luck secrets stashed away, you are the "Mom" of the Zodiac, let your friends & children treat YOU for a change, relax & enjoy the attention.

LEO: The Sun Is shining on the Lion's/Lioness' career; however, you still need to take care of Mom, invite all your friends in the Jungle over, for the Sun is shining on them.

VIRGO: Virgo still has some foreign influences & higher learning going on, & the Sun is shining on Career, schedule a trip with Mom, after all, without her, there'd be no you.

LIBRA: Lucky Libra, Jupiter is in the house of other people's resources, use some of that moolah to treat Mom to brunch, try visiting a restaurant with a foreign flavor, "Godere."

SCORPIO: The Scorpion ought to put away that stinger this Mother's Day, the Sun is shining on relationships, & others' resources, be open & full of Joy for Mom & everyone.

SAGITTARIUS: The Centaur has been living the good life these days, relationships are booming, health is good, share the harvest, remember to thank loved ones & Mom.

CAPRICORN: The Goat is getting a little Sunshine in the romance department this Mother's Day, & Jupiter blesses your health, remember moderation is key.

AQUARIUS: The Sun is definitely visiting the Aquarians' home this Mother's Day, & Lady Luck is knocking on the romance door, visit Mom, then go light that fire of desire.

PISCES: The Fish loves nothing more than to share its bounty of Joy with the whole gang at its lake/pond. You'll have a crowd, that's for sure, put Mom front & center.

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

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COVE COMMUNITY CENTER

Meet Me At Cove: Pastor Paula Maeder Connor (Retired), A Lifelong Advocate For Community And Connection

by Nancy Feighan

Lakewood has always been a town where creativity meets community, and no one knows this better than Pastor Paula Maeder Connor. A trailblazer in every sense of the word, Pastor Paula moved to Lakewood in 1990 with her husband, Pastor Dave, and their two young daughters. She took on the position of pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, a role she would embrace for the next 25 years. While Lakewood became home, it also became the perfect backdrop for her passion for community-building, spiritual leadership, and fostering meaningful connections.

A Vibrant Move to Lakewood
Pastor Paula’s decision to move from Columbus was not just about changing locations but about immersing her family in a community that thrived on creativity, diversity, and vibrancy. She and her family settled into a charming house across from Lakewood Hospital, a spot where they could walk to local events and enjoy beautiful green spaces.

A Rich Legacy at Trinity Lutheran Church
For 25 years, Pastor Paula’s impact at Trinity Lutheran Church was felt in many ways. From the rich outreach programs to creative meal planning, she worked hard to build relationships and strengthen connections. One of the most memorable projects was the church’s Peace Camp, which Pastor Paula helped to shape. The camp, with its original curriculum designed to teach children



Pastor Paula

about peace in the heart, neighborhood, school, and community, was a highlight of her tenure.
When the church entered a new chapter, Pastor Paula was proud to see the building transformed. Scalish Construction repurposed the old structure, and she couldn’t be happier with the results. . Though she hasn’t yet stepped inside, she looks forward to seeing the repurposed space one day, knowing it continues to serve the community in new and exciting ways.
New Beginnings at Cove
While Pastor Paula’s days as a pastor may have ended, her dedication to community-building continues through her work at Cove. For the past two years, she has spent time there, initially drawn in by the chance to play Mahjong. However,

she quickly discovered something more profound — a community of people who weren’t just there to compete, but to share laughter, friendship, and brain exercise.
Pastor Paula also enjoys participating in Cove’s daytime bocce league, a fun and friendly competition that has strengthened her connection to the Lakewood community.
Cove’s Kinship Group: A Safe Space for Connection
In addition to sports and games, Cove’s Kinship Group provides vital support for people who care for family members. Pastor Paula is particularly inspired by how the group creates a safe space for individuals to share their struggles and receive support. It fosters meaningful connections among caregivers, providing a network to share experiences and find mutual support.
A Journey of Service and Connection
What’s most striking about Pastor Paula’s story is her ability to connect people — from her work in the Peace Corps to her leadership at Trinity Lutheran Church, and now her involvement at Cove. Her journey took a unique turn when she joined the Peace Corps during the Vietnam War, landing her in Thailand, where she taught English to eighth-grade boys. That spirit of service and connection is what she brings to her involvement in the Lakewood community today.
The Family Room: A Lifesaver and New Friendships

The Family Room, a space designed for young families, was a lifesaver for Pastor Paula as a grandmother. One of the most important connections she made there was with Brenda, who has since become one of her very good friends — a testament to the power of community and the lasting relationships it fosters.
Breaking Barriers as the First Woman Pastor
When Pastor Paula first arrived in Lakewood in the 1990s, she blazed a trail as the first woman pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church. She was also among the first 30 women nationwide to go through the Evangelical Lutheran Church’s ordination program.
Finding Community and Friendships at Cove
At Cove, Pastor Paula has found a new sense of belonging. Whether she’s enjoying Mahjong, bocce, or walks through the green space, she’s made lasting friendships with people she might never have met otherwise. For her, Cove isn’t just a place to pass the time — it’s a sanctuary.
Giving Back to the Community
Pastor Paula’s connection to the community, both at Cove and beyond, is a testament to the power of relationships and service. So, if you see her around Lakewood and Cove — whether playing Mahjong, tossing a bocce ball, or simply enjoying a walk — take a moment to say hello. It’s just one of the many ways she continues to connect with and support the community she loves.

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