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Kids write about seasonal family traditions on pages 8-9

WESTLAKE | BAY VILLAGE **Observer**

2.25 • 14 DEC 2010

Community News & Views Written by the Citizens of Westlake & Bay Village • Join in at www.wbvobserver.com

Come and taste the Village Food Project

by Barb Harrell

The Village Food Project is an opportunity for our community to respond to our neighbor's cancer crisis with the gift of nourishing meals. We have all been touched by cancer in some way; whether through a friend, a family member, or a neighbor who has fought or is fighting the disease.

The Village Food Project sees this health challenge as an occasion to make a positive difference in the lives of those experiencing cancer. By cultivating community support and working together we can provide delicious and nourishing meals to our neighbors in Bay Village.

The program is a multi-generational project where adults mentor teens from our community, training them in the kitchen to become the VFP chefs.

As VFP chefs, teens take responsibility for a major portion of meal preparation and the packaging of meals for our clients. Through this experience our local teens learn about nutrition, meal planning, cooking, and serving their community.

VFP clients and their families, will receive the gift of three meals a week for three months. Meals that are prepared and delivered by VFP volunteers.

At The Village Food Project

the village
FOOD PROJECT

we believe we are at our best when we're working together—people of all ages—sharing life and loving one another.

The Village Food Project will be holding an informational program for the community to learn about this innovative way to nourish our neighbors, in Bay Village, experiencing a cancer crisis.

We invite you to come and find out how you can be a part of the Village Food Project and sample our unique food. Admission is free and open to all!

If you would like more information, visit our website: www.villagefoodproject.com.

The Village Food Project Committee is: Barb Harrell, Michelle Slatton, Tim and Jean Pell, Mark and Jill Mutch, Robin Hawkins, Linda Neville, Jim and Linda Potter, Ron Salim, Gretchen Chriszt, Debbie Bock and Sarah Goldsberry. ♦

SAVE THE DATE

**Village Food Project
Sunday, Jan. 9, 2011
7:00-8:30 p.m.
Bay Presbyterian Church
25415 Lake Road**

Faces of Westlake honored



The city of Westlake held a special ceremony Dec. 13 celebrating Westlake Magazine's "Faces of Westlake" for 2011. This year's honorees included (left-to-right): dedicated volunteers Dudley and Blanche Katz, student volunteer Ryan Thaxton, Sophronia Clague portrayer Lysa Stanton, and champion speed skater Katie Marquard. Not pictured is Leonard Porter portrayer Mel Maurer.

Mayor gives tour of Clague House Museum



Westlake residents George and Lollie Cooley talk with Mayor Dennis Clough during "Night at the Museum" at the Clague House on Dec. 1. The Cooleys' ancestors were the original property owners of the land in Dover Township that now is occupied by Westlake High School, City Hall and the Board of Education building.

BVEF's annual fundraising benefit a tribute to Randy Stang

by Bev Walborn

The Bay Village Education Foundation (BVEF), which has provided grant money, scholarships and awards for the past 25 years to benefit the students in the Bay Village Public Schools, extends an invitation to join them at their annual fundraising benefit: "Creating Opportunities: A Tribute to Randy Stang" being held on Sunday, Jan. 30, 2011, from 5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. at Arrabiata's Italian Restaurant in Bay Village.

This event raises money to support creative and innovative projects that enhance learning opportunities for Bay students. The event is

also a tribute to the late Randy Stang who was a leader, BVEF trustee, and strong supporter of the Bay Village community for many years.

The event will include fabulous Arrabiata's food, drinks, door prizes and one-of-a-kind silent auction items. Tickets are \$50 each and can be purchased by going to the website at www.bayedfoundation.org or by contacting Rhonda Schneider at 440-892-1829 (rdschneider56@gmail.com) or Jeff Kalata at 440-892-3925 (jrk0527@aol.com).

Space is limited at this event which sells out each year so don't miss out on your chance to help us with "Creating Opportunities" for the students of Bay Village! ♦

*Happy Holidays
from the citizen writers,
photographers, editors & staff of the
Westlake|Bay Village Observer!
Thanks for making your community
paper a success we can all be proud of!
We'll see you in 2011!*

Bay couple creates unique homemade toys

by Jenn Hoyt

Since 1999, parents Kenn and Marnie Louis have been hard at work in the basement of their Bay Village home. It is there (as well as in the attic), that the couple design and produce a doll that combines technology with nature, called a GrowBot.

GrowBots are made from fleece, felt and fabric – using locally-sourced and sustainable products whenever possible. Since each doll is made by hand, no two are alike. This connection entices many parents, especially given the mass-produced toy recalls of the last decade. According to Kenn, they “find that people really respond well to the fact that our stuff is not just made in America but made in Bay Village, Ohio.”

Kenn works full-time for a local software development company, and Marnie is a stay-at-home mom. Despite their busy lifestyle, they still manage their GrowBot business. Kenn, with a background in illustration, character design and printmaking, handles much of the initial character design and illustration. He then screen prints them onto fabric. From there, Marnie designs and develops the product and oversees its production.



The Katt and Bunny series of GrowBots are designed and produced in the Bay Village home of Kenn and Marnie Louis. The dolls are made from fleece, felt and fabric, and each has a unique silkscreened face.

She stays abreast of design, fashion and home decor trends to ensure they're on the right track.

GrowBots is truly a family business. They even have a professional product tester in their four-year-old son, Kai. “If we give it to him, and he doesn't want to give it back, we have a winner!” Marnie said.

When asked if the recession has hurt their business, Kenn said, “Amazingly, it hasn't. We credit that to the handmade revival taking place now. People want to know where the things they buy come from.”

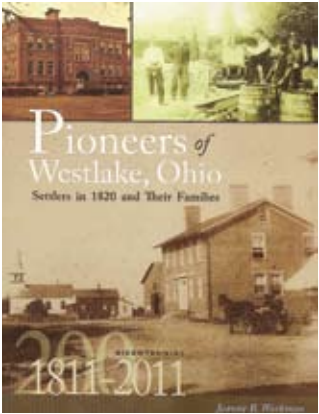
The Louis' business continues to grow, as they're expanding to include home décor items and accessories. GrowBots will appear in BAYarts and other area craft shows for the holidays, and are available online at <http://growbots.etsy.com>. ●

WESTLAKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

'Pioneers of Westlake, Ohio' book now available

The new book, “Pioneers of Westlake, Ohio” by Jeanne Workman, is now available from Cuyahoga West Chapter of The Ohio Genealogical Society. The much-anticipated book celebrates the Bicentennial of Westlake and the early pioneers of Dover. The book contains the stories of the original families who settled in Dover Township around 1820.

Each book sells for \$25.00, plus \$4.00 shipping and handling. (Ohio residents pay \$1.95 sales tax). Orders can be sent to Cuyahoga West Chapter O.G.S., P.O. Box 45607, Westlake, Ohio 44145. ●



Add some history to your holiday!

by Lysa Stanton & Dave Pfister

As 2010 draws to a close, the Westlake Historical Society would like to thank everyone in the community for your support. Next year we will be proud to help celebrate the 200th birthday of our city and invite you to check our website for further details. Donations to the Society and Bicentennial 2011 memberships can be purchased on-line at www.westlakeohiohistory.org.

Also available is a limited-edition Christmas ornament with a drawing of the historic Clague House Museum originally penned by the late Lu Walter. Each ornament is gift boxed and is available online or at the Museum for only \$14.95.

Proceeds benefit the Society's ongoing efforts to preserve Dover/Westlake history. For more information, please call us at 440-721-1201 or email us at westlakehistory@yahoo.com.

Happy holidays and a joyous 2011 to all from your Westlake Historical Society. ●



Observer Guidelines

Want to submit an article to the Observer? We'd love to hear from you! Here are some guidelines to keep in mind when writing for the Observer:

- Anyone who lives, works or has a vested interest in Westlake or Bay Village is encouraged to contribute.
- Aim for 300-500 words.
- Check your facts. Take the extra time to ensure accuracy.
- Submit original stories and photos. Don't copy others' work and remember to credit your sources.
- Be respectful of others.
- Write for the community. Your stories will be read by people throughout Westlake and Bay Village (and beyond) so keep the audience in mind when choosing topics.
- Know you'll be edited. All stories pass through

editors who review stories for spelling and grammar. We try to keep the news as “unfiltered” as possible, but may edit length and content if necessary.

- Disclose your affiliation. If you have a personal or business relationship with the subject of your story, let your readers know.
- Don't write stories solely to promote your business—that's what ads are for.

Ask questions! We're here to help you at every step along the way. Don't hesitate to come to us for advice or help with topics, content or the submission process.

To join in, sign-up through the Member Center at www.wbvobserver.com and submit your stories & photos. Photos should be jpegs & a minimum of 2 megabytes. Contact us at staff@wbvobserver.com.

WESTLAKE | BAY VILLAGE Observer

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The views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Westlake | Bay Village Observer staff.

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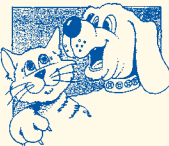
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Proud to be part of the Bay Village Community

Holiday fun at the Westlake Recreation Center

by Jim Dispirito

Tuesday, Dec. 21 (1-4 p.m.) **SANTA SLEEP IN (AGES 4-9)** – Kids will watch Christmas movies, have a snack, play games and do a craft in their pajamas.

Dec. 20-23 and Dec. 27-30 (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) **NOSCHOOLDAYCAMP (GRADES K-6)** – Camp is designed to keep the kids entertained with games, swimming, art project and other fun stuff in a supervised setting. Bring a brown bag lunch, towel and swimsuit. An afternoon snack will be provided.

Tuesday, Dec. 28 (10 a.m.) **SANTA'S ELVES SHOOT OUT (GRADES 1& 2)** – A basketball shooting contest. Beat the clock with each participant shooting 12 basketballs in 45 seconds. Double elimination format.

Tuesday, Dec. 28 (1 p.m.) **SANTA'S SHOOT OUT (GRADES 3-6)** – Teams of two will shoot for one minute from different locations on the court. The object is to see which team can score the most point. Double elimination contest.

Friday, Jan. 7 (6-8:30 p.m.) **FUN FLOAT FRIDAY** – Bring your favorite

fun pool float. Regular admission prices apply. Friday, Jan. 7 (6-8:30 p.m.) **BEARY FUNALMOST SLEEPOVER (AGES 3-8)** – Children get to build their own teddy bear, then have pizza, watch a movie and hang out with their new friends. Come dressed in your pj's with a pillow and sleeping bag.

Tuesdays and Thursdays, starting Jan. 4 (9-11:45 a.m.) **LITTLE SNEAKERS (UPTOAGE 5)** – Run, jump, crawl or play at the Recreation Center. Equipment provided. Parents must remain with their children. Great play date opportunity.

If you are looking for a certain program or are wondering if we have it available, check our website, Rec Gazette, or give us a call. There are a handful of programs that are not listed in this article. Information regarding all of these programs and more can be found at our website at <http://www.cityofwestlake.org/recreation/> or by stopping by the Recreation Center at 28955 Hilliard Blvd., calling us at 440-808-5700 or by picking up our new Rec Gazette. ●

Jim Dispirito is the athletic coordinator at the Westlake Recreation Center.

'Fancy Nancy' hosts tea party



Fancily-dressed ladies – and one gentleman! – attend a Fancy Nancy tea party at the Bay Library on Dec. 1.

by Joyce Sandy

On December 1, the Bay Village Branch Library and our own Fancy Nancy, Mrs. Joyce Sandy, hosted a Fancy Nancy Tea Party with the guests arriving in their fanciest attire, of course! Students ages 4-8, all fans of the character and books written by Jane O'Connor, began by decorating their placemats before gathering to hear a story.

We shared a Fancy Nancy book and talked about the fancy clothes everyone was wearing, which prompted many stories from the enthusiastic audience. Everyone learned

a few French words and all were proclaimed “tres magnifique”! After decorating crowns with beads and glitter glue – lots of glitter glue! – everyone returned to their placemats at the snack table.

A snack and apple juice “tea” was enjoyed with pinkies raised! As they left, all were given a goodie bag with even more accessories for them to wear since Fancy Nancy declares that one can never have too many. Parent observers and children alike enjoyed the party and want another in the future. Ooh-la-la! ●

2011 board leadership named for Lake Erie Nature & Science Center

by Shawn Salamone

The Board of Directors at Lake Erie Nature & Science Center has elected officers to provide leadership and support for the Bay Village nonprofit organization in 2011. Charles V. Aquino, Director at Western Reserve Partners LLC, will serve a second term as President. Mr. Aquino, a Northeast Ohio native and Fairview Park resident, has served on the board for six years and brings an investment banking background to his leadership role.

“I am honored to serve a second term as President of the Board,” said Mr. Aquino. “I work with exemplary professionals, both my colleagues on the Board and in Center management. It’s a privilege to coordinate the many talents of our Board to benefit a great nonprofit organization. Collectively, we share a passion for the Center’s mission and a responsibility to see that this Northeast Ohio treasure thrives now and in the future.”

Also re-elected are Vice President Colleen Lowmiller, Senior Actuarial Consultant at Findley Davies Inc., and Secretary Corryn Firis, Staff Attorney at the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court and a Bay Village resi-



Lake Erie Nature & Science Center Board President Charles V. Aquino

dent. Jerry Rudowsky, Senior Manager, Assurance Services at Ernst & Young LLP, will take over as Treasurer. In addition to officer elections, Steve Koliha, Client Executive at IBM Corporation, was elected to a first term on the Board.

“Giving people opportunities to discover and value our natural world has never been more important than it is today. This talented group of individuals will provide vital leadership and support for our nonprofit organization,” said Center Executive Director Catherine Timko. “The officers serve as key advisors and ambassadors to the community. Each Board member’s gift of time, talent and treasures is invaluable to our mission.”

Lake Erie Nature & Science Center is a regional center of excellence that features a planetarium, wildlife rehabilitation, more than 100 live animals on exhibit and a wide variety of educational offerings. The \$1.2 million nonprofit organization annually serves more than 180,000 children and adults. The Center is located at 28728 Wolf Road in Bay Village. For more information, visit www.lensc.org or call 440-871-2900. ●

Shawn Salamone is Community Relations Manager at Lake Erie Nature & Science Center.

New class on world culture starting at Bay Library

by Shirley Dodge

A number of Observer readers have joined us recently for classes held at the Bay Village library. These classes are sponsored by Case Western Reserve University’s ACE – Adult Continuing Education – program. We have loved meeting these new people and glad they joined us for a lively discussion period.

Our next session is titled “West of Kabul, East of New York” based on the book of the same title by T. Ansary. The events of Sept. 11 have changed the world forever. A growing body of work offers the unique and thought-provoking perspective of others who were also affected by this global event.

In one, a young American Arab teenager embraces the radical views of his Imam in New Jersey. In another, the narrator is a brilliant Princeton-educated Pakistani man who faces a powerful internal conflict once the attacks occur. The third is the non-fiction book, “West of Kabul, East of New York”, that

evolved from an e-mail written by an Afghan-American who responded to the thoughts of a few friends on Sept. 12, 2001. This class promises to be a very interesting and timely look at our world today.

Our leader/teacher will be Barbara Parr, who also resides in Bay Village.

We meet at the Bay Village Branch Library. The eight-week session will be held Mondays from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. beginning Jan. 10, 2011.

The fee for the course is \$60. Advance registration is recommended; walk-ins may sign up as space allows. Class size is limited to 25.

Courses are offered across the Greater Cleveland area, and I have attended every one in Bay Village for several years. We are a fun group and hope you will join us. We often go to lunch after class which makes for a nice morning and early afternoon.

For more information or to sign up, call Shirley at 440-835-4218 or Marianne at 440-808-0076. ●

Shirley Dodge lives in Bay Village.

WESTLAKE PORTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Westlake Porter Public Library's December calendar

by Elaine Willis

Friday, Dec. 17 (10 a.m.-12 p.m.) PORTER'S FIBER FANATICS – Socialize, share, and solve problems with fellow needle artists while you work on your current project.

Friday, Dec. 17 (10 a.m.-12 p.m.) PORTER'S FIBER FANATICS – Socialize, share, and solve problems with fellow needle artists while you work on your current project.

Saturday, Dec. 18 (2-3 p.m.) LEGO CLUB – Bring your ideas and imagination! Ages 6-13. Please register one week in advance.

Sunday, Dec. 19 (2-3 p.m.) HOLIDAY STAMPS & STATIONERY – Make some fun and festive gift tags, bookmarks and cards with us! Ages 8-12. Registration begins Dec. 12.

Monday, Dec. 20 (2:30-2:45 p.m.) LAST MINUTE CRAFTS – Join us for a fun, easy holiday-themed craft and a film! Grades 1-2. Please register starting November 17.

Tuesday, Dec. 21 (2-3:30 p.m.)

HOLIDAY MOVIE SPECIAL – Join those adorable retriever puppies as they search for Santa Paws in this sweet holiday movie. Rated G. All ages welcome. Registration begins Dec. 14.

Tuesday, Dec. 21 (7-8:30 p.m.) MAD4MANGA – M4M is everything manga! We talk about manga, create manga art, discuss & watch anime films, and more! For teens in grades 6-12.

Wednesday, Dec. 22 (2 p.m.) AFTERNOON BOOK DISCUSSION – In December we will share miscellaneous Christmas books.

Wednesday, Dec. 22 (2-3:30 p.m.) MOVIE WITH A VENGEANCE – Join us for a special movie about a greedy property developer and the furry friends who seek revenge on him for trying to destroy their forest home. Rated PG. Some material may not be suitable for young children. Registration begins December 15.

Wednesday, Dec. 22 (7-7:45 p.m.) NOT A CREATURE WAS STIRRING... – Except the librarians! Join us for a special evening program with holi-

day stories, rhymes and a simple craft. Ages 3-7. Registration begins Dec. 15.

Friday, Dec. 24 – Sunday, Dec. 26: Christmas Holiday – Library Closed

Monday, Dec. 27 (10 a.m.-7 p.m.) WINTER BREAK BOOK SWAP – Need something new to read? Trade your gently-used books for some new-to-you titles! Swaps must be children's books in good condition. Damaged, soiled, stained or excessively worn books will not be accepted. Please, no copyright dates prior to 1990.

Monday, Dec. 27 (10-10:45 a.m.) SILLY STORIES TO TICKLE YOUR FUNNY BONE! – Join us for some seriously silly stories, and bring your favorite riddle or joke to share. Grades K-2. Registration begins Dec. 20.

Monday, Dec. 27 (1-7 p.m.) American Red Cross Bloodmobile

Tuesday, Dec. 28 (2-2:45 p.m. for grades 4-6; 3:30-4:15 p.m. for grades 7-12) MINUTE TO WIN IT – Looking for something to do on your break from school? Then bring your

friends and join our “A Minute to Win It” program where you’ll have 60 seconds to complete various tasks – just like on the game show! Have some fun and maybe win a prize too! Registration begins Dec. 21.

Wednesday, Dec. 29 (2-3 p.m.) LEGO CLUB – Bring your ideas and imagination! Ages 6-13. Please register one week in advance.

Thursday, Dec. 30 (2-3:30 p.m.) WINTER BREAK MOVIE – Join us for an afternoon of fun and adventure with Beezus and her pesky kid sister, Ramona! Rated G. All ages welcome. Registration begins Dec. 23.

Thursday, Dec. 30 (3-4 p.m.) GO GAME CLUB – Do you love the Japanese game “Go”? Are you interested in starting a Go Game Club? Then join us at the library and let's play Go!

To register for any of the programs, please call 440-871-2600 or visit <http://signup.westlakelibrary.org/8080>.

To register for any of the programs, please call (440) 871-2600 or visit <http://signup.westlakelibrary.org/8080>.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BAY VILLAGE BRANCH

Looking ahead to the new year at the Bay Library

by Joyce Sandy

The holiday rush is upon us and the New Year is right around the corner. Take time to share books together and find that perfect book for yourself. Make “Read More” one of your resolutions and join us at the library where you’ll find books and more. There’s something for everyone so join us, meet new friends, and discover that “browsing is just the beginning” at the library!

ADULT DEPARTMENT

Wednesday, Jan. 5 (1:30 p.m.) WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON BOOK DISCUSSION – Join us for a lively discussion of a book of current interest.

Thursday, Jan. 6 (7:30 p.m.) THURSDAY EVENING BOOK DISCUSSION – Join us for a discussion of “Burnt Shadows” by Kamila Shamise, winner of the 2010 Anisfield-Wolf Award for Fiction.

Wednesday, Jan. 12 (7 p.m.) THE WHITE FAMILY: ENTREPRENEURS AND FOUNDERS OF THE WHITE MOTOR COMPANY – Local historian Dan Ruminski will highlight historic information surrounding the White Family of White Motors. Sponsored by the Friends of the Bay Village Branch Library.

TEEN DEPARTMENT

Wednesday, Dec. 29 (10 a.m.-noon) DIGITAL ANIMATION FOR WINTER BREAK – For ages 14-18 years. If you're interested in learning how to create and produce digital animation, this is the program for you! We'll create characters, storylines, streaming cartoons, and talk about the latest in online animation. Join us for a fun time during Winter Break!

Monday, Jan. 10 (7-8 p.m.) GIRLS IN BAY BOOK CLUB – For girls in grade 6. Girls are invited to bring an

adult female friend for some fun. We'll discuss a good book, share a snack, and do a related project. Copies of the book are available one month before the discussion.

Tuesdays, Jan. 11 and Feb. 22 (3:30-4:30 p.m.) ANIME CLUB – For ages 11 and up. Watch anime, discuss your favorite manga books, and make a creative project or two.

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

Dec. 18-Dec. 30 (During library hours) WINTER BREAK AMUSEMENT PARK – Stop in the story room when school is out and have fun with crafts, games, and other activities.

Wednesday, Jan. 12 (4:15-5 p.m.) BOOK SWEEP – For grades 3-5. We'll share a book together and then play the fast paced WordSweep Game.

Thursday, Jan. 13 (7-8 p.m.) GIRL TIME – For grades 2-3. Girls are invited to bring a favorite female friend to discuss a book, share a snack, and do a related project.

Also remember that weekly storytimes for ages birth-6 years begin on Jan. 3 and for the first time will continue without interruption until May. Please call the library at 871-6392 for days and time and to register for the programs or go online to cuyahogalibrary.org.

POETRY

Playing Solitaire

Joe Psarto, Westlake

It's like tending a garden
and watching the stems
rise tall and shrink small,
blacks juxtaposing reds
– an interracial affair –
then dissipating into four piles
at the top of the garden,
then picked up,
ripped, stripped,
strewn, mixed,
fixed anew into brand new ranks
piling higher and higher to the right.

And a new garden starts to grow
with proper flips and flops,
slips and slops,
grunts and groans,
with kings and queens and jacks
and numbers all in a row,
carefully integrated,
on my kitchen table.

Huntington Playhouse announces 2011 season

by Tom Meyrose

Huntington Playhouse released their 2011 Season on opening night of “A Christmas Carol,” which continues its run through Dec. 19.

The Huntington season will open on May 12 with a production of the musical “The Drowsy Chaperone,” followed by the comedy “Perfect Marriage” (June 16-July 3), “A Funny Thing

Happened On The Way To The Forum” (July 14-Aug. 7), “Man of LaMancha” (Aug. 18-Sept. 11), “The Foreigner” (Sept. 22-Oct. 9), “Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure” (Oct. 20-Nov. 6) and “Miracle on 34th Street” (Nov. 25-Dec. 18).

The theatre is selling 2011 Flex Passes, good for seven admissions, and gift certificates for that hard-to-shop-for person on your holiday shopping list. These may be pur-

chased at any performance of “A Christmas Carol,” or during box office hours which are Tuesdays through Sundays starting at 1 p.m. Purchases can also be made by calling the box office at 440-871-8333.

Huntington Playhouse is located at 28601 Lake Rd. in Bay Village and is an affiliate of the Cleveland Metroparks. ●

Tom Meyrose is Managing Director of Huntington Playhouse.

Bay High student marches in Thanksgiving Day Parade

by Karen Derby

Michael Sorge, a Bay High senior, always watched the Thanksgiving Day parades on TV while growing up, but he never thought he might one day march in one himself. This past Thanksgiving, though, Mike found himself marching down New York City's 7th Avenue into Times Square as part of the Macy's Great American Marching Band.

"I didn't even know it was possible," he said.

One person who saw the possibility was his Bay High band director, Darren Allen. "Mike is one of our best trumpet players and really into the band," said Mr. Allen. "I heard about this opportunity, thought he'd be perfect for it and nominated him."

Mike landed in NYC on the Monday before the parade for a whirlwind week of sightseeing and six-to-eight hours per day devoted to marching band practice.

"Our hotel was in New Jersey," said Mike. "They had us practice in a nearby, indoor soccer stadium. They had lines drawn on the field to help us."

Macy's band members also attended music education workshops and heard an inspirational speaker talk

about leadership. There were also fittings for the uniforms, checking of instruments and band photo shoots. But there was somehow time for fun.

"We went to the top of Rockefeller Center and the Empire State Building," Mike said. The group also saw the Radio City Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall.

Among the 2.5 million spectators lining the parade route were Mike's parents, Sandy and Rick Sorge, cheering on their 17-year-old son.

"It was just a thrill for Mike and for us," said Rick about Mike's parade participation. "We are so proud of him."

Sandy Sorge noted that many friends and family who could not make the trip called her during the parade to cheer Mike on and send their best wishes for the holidays.

"Oh, I wanted to cry!" said Sandy. "We've been talking about this parade for a long time, and to have the chance to be there in Times Square listening to the crowd cheer Mike and the band was just incredible. It



Bay High's Mike Sorge in the Macy's Great American Marching Band on Thanksgiving Day.

was a trip of a lifetime we will never forget. We are all so grateful to have had this opportunity."

Band members were under the direction of Dr. Jon Woods of The Ohio State University and Dr. Richard Good of Auburn University. In addition to the spectators along the parade route that day, more than 50 million TV viewers watched the broadcast live.

And while parade participants didn't get to sit back and enjoy the gigantic helium balloons, impressive floats and other top marching bands from throughout the nation like the rest of us did, they caught occasional glimpses of interest.

"I saw Jessica Simpson roll by on a float," said Mike with a smile.

Mike said he will add the "amazing experience" of being part of the 84th Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade to his many accomplishments on

future resumes and other types of applications. He has already been accepted to attend The Ohio State University next year, where he intends to go through the rigorous tryout process for The Ohio State University Marching Band. ♦

Keller Brothers kick off holiday season




The Keller Brothers presented a varied program at their Bay Village Branch Library engagement on Dec. 5. With their mother joining the three young men on select songs, and dad offering suggestions from the back of the room, it was a true family affair.

Bay runner wins state title

Mayor Debbie Sutherland congratulates Bay High senior Michael Brajdic for his second straight Division II Individual Title at the state cross country meet in Columbus on Nov. 6. Michael set a course record of 15:01.9 at the event.






Lakewood Hospital Orthopaedic Services

Orthopaedic surgeons Michael Kolczun, II, M.D. and Joseph George, M.D. welcome Frank Sabo, M.D. to their practice.


Lakewood Hospital is home to a renovated orthopaedic unit, and to the area's leading orthopaedic care experts. With the addition of Dr. Sabo to the practice of renowned Cleveland Clinic Lorain Institute physicians, Dr. Kolczun and Dr. George, patients can take comfort in knowing they'll receive the most advanced treatment options and individualized care in a private and healing setting.



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To schedule an appointment, call 216.312.5330.



Lakewood Hospital
a Cleveland Clinic hospital

BAYarts Holiday Shop and Huntington Playhouse: an antidote for hectic holidays

by Karen Petkovic

For something out of the ordinary, shoppers have been flocking to BAYarts for their holiday shopping this year. Local artists restock their wares weekly so you never know what to expect. Some shoppers stop in before going into Huntington Playhouse to see “A Christmas Carol,” having a bite to eat at Vento and making a day of it.

Before it was BAYarts, for decades Baycrafters was a holiday destination for unique works of art, holiday decorations or last-minute gifts. According to Marie Bastik, BAYarts Office Manager, this is the busiest year so far.

“As the word gets out, we have a lot of people stop in after they’ve spent a day at the malls, trying to find parking



and waiting in lines” said Marie. “They literally breathe a sign of relief when they walk in! We do our best to keep it light and friendly and I think our shoppers appreciate that. They can relax, have a glass of wine or coffee and take their time. No pressure.”

Besides plenty of parking and no lines, BAYarts provides free gift wrap. Volunteers are available to assist. BAYarts is open seven days a week until 5 p.m. for the holidays, with extended hours Thursday evenings. ●

Facing the holidays with cancer

by Jessica Moses

The holidays can be a difficult time for those facing serious illness. Once welcomed gatherings may seem overwhelming, loved ones might not know how to help and children might not understand why this holiday is different than those of years past.

“Every year, The Gathering Place talks to many local residents facing cancer about how to cope with their illness, eliminate stress and set expectations during the holidays,” says Kristina Austin, director of community outreach at The Gathering Place, a local cancer support center. “We recognize the season can bring new emotions and pressures, and we invite those facing cancer and their loved ones to stop into either of our facilities and talk with our clinical program staff about how to manage holiday stresses.”

Here are tips The Gathering Place often shares during the holiday season:

* Recognize your limits – Whether you’re enduring a cancer diagnosis or taking care of a loved one, your energy level may be far reduced from that of years past. Don’t be afraid to make changes in traditions. Hold

the family dinner at someone else’s home. Enlist help in wrapping presents or baking cookies.

* Speak up regarding your needs – In the wake of illness, certain foods may not appeal to you, and you may feel more tired than usual. Feel comfortable about speaking up about your needs. Tell friends and family if you cannot enjoy food at this time and let them know when you need extra rest.

* During the holidays, it is important to help children understand that some of the usual activities may have to change. Set reasonable expectations, for yourself and your children. Let the children know that the outside lights will be scaled back this year, only the most favorite cookies will be made, and only one special holiday event will be attended.

* Don’t be afraid to express your feelings.

* If there was ever a time to take friends up on offers of assistance. Getting out the decorations, helping with shopping, can all be done by a family member or friend.

For more information on The Gathering Place programs, call 216-595-9546 or visit www.touchedbycancer.org for a full listing of free programs and services. The Gathering Place West is located at 800 Sharon Dr. in Westlake. ●

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Christmas Day, 10:30 am

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BAY VILLAGE GREEN TEAM

Composting 101

by Brenda O'Reilly

WHY COMPOST? Composting creates rich organic soil amendment that you can use to "green" your yard

- Yard trimmings and food scraps make up approximately 25 - 30% of the U.S. municipal solid waste stream. Composting reduces your ecological footprint by reducing garbage being landfilled.
- Composting reduces water pollution by reducing the need for fertilizers, which prevent algae blooms and fish kills in lakes and streams.

This is the time of year for winterizing your flower beds and raking leaves. What a great opportunity to start COMPOSTING your organic yard waste.

It's easy to get started:

- You'll need a sunny, level spot outdoors for your compost bin or pile.
- Choose a discreet compost location-- in the back yard and off the property line.
- You can make a bin from old wood pallets or an old garbage can. Remember—the bin MUST have holes to allow air in, so if you use an old garbage bin, you must drill holes all around it.

- You can also purchase a bin at a discounted price of \$50 from the Cuyahoga Solid Waste District. (Contact information is on the website at www.cuyahogaswd.org)
- Once you have your compost bin:
- Start with 4-6 inches of base material — Chopped brush, twigs or wood chips on the ground
- Then add:
- 2-4 inches of GREEN (organic) material—Plant clippings, vegetable scraps, fruit scraps, flowers, grass clippings, coffee grounds, tea bags
- 4-6 inches of BROWN (organic) material-- Dead leaves, straw, sawdust, wood chips, shredded newspaper, dryer/vacuum lint, nut shells

After that, continue to add material at the rate of 1-2 part green to 2-3 part brown.

Turn your compost pile regularly and keep moist.

A properly maintained compost pile will have an "earthy" smell and will provide you with a free source of valuable organic soil amendments to use in place of fertilizers. ●

Brenda O'Reilly is a member of the Bay Village Green Team.

BAY VILLAGE COMMUNITY SERVICES

ZUMBA AWAY THOSE HOLIDAY POUNDS!

by Shirley Hostetler

Zumba – not your mother's or daughter's style – is helping many local ladies keep those holiday pounds off. During the holiday season, keeping your exercise routine consistent is more important than ever.

Working out will help combat additional calories, preventing additional inches from creeping into your mid-section and will boost your

energy while helping reduce stress.

Instructor Sheri Lugo has designed this Latin-music exercise/dance class for the working adult. Sheri invites you to "dump the workout and join the party."

Make exercise a priority at Bay Village's Dwyer Center, Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. Call 835-6565 for information - the first class is free! ● Shirley Hostetler is Assistant to the Director of the Bay Village Community Services Office.



A Zumba class burns calories at the Dwyer Center. Classes are held every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.

Going Green

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What are your family's seasonal traditions?

Some of the best things about the month of December are the family traditions. Whether it's celebrating a holiday, playing in the snow, or simply gathering together with loved ones, everyone has at least one thing they look forward to this time of year. The Observer staff thought it would be fun to hear from those who enjoy this magical season the most – kids. Laurie Thompson and Diane Burney of Dover Elementary School in Westlake and Martha Fisher of Westerly Elementary School in Bay Village gave their classes a special assignment: Write about your family traditions. These are some of their responses.

Christmas is About Giving Not Receiving

Every Christmas my family learns that Christmas is about giving not receiving. During the holiday season Bay Presbyterian Church has a giving tree. On this giving tree are names of children that are less fortunate. We pick a name and it lets us know what they want for Christmas. The neat part about this for me is I am making someone's Christmas very special.

Another tradition that involves my sister and me is planning and making a Christmas breakfast for our parents. We like doing it for them because we appreciate what they do for us all year long. As you can see by my family traditions, it is better to give than receive.

By: Meredith H., Westerly 3rd grade
Mrs. Fisher's class

Christmas Eve at Grandma's

My family tradition is going to my grandma's house with my family on Christmas Eve. Our cousins also go to my grandma's house. We always sit in her living room and watch TV first. Then we eat dinner. After that, we open the gifts. Usually we open the gifts in her basement. Her tree is really tiny. Most of the time, the youngest person in the family opens the first gift. Then we work our way up to the oldest person. The pattern goes on and on until all of the gifts are open.

Then we eat our dessert. For dessert we usually have some kind of pie. Then we sit down and relax for awhile. My little cousin gets A LOT of toys, so everybody usually plays with him. All of us always love our gifts. When we're ready to leave we get all of our presents, say thank you and goodbye. These are my family traditions that I like so much.

By: Jackie M., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Thompson's class

Advent Calendars and Candles

My family has two very special traditions we do every year! My grandma always mails Advent calendars with pictures of Christmas things on the front of it. On the inside there are chocolates shaped to tell a story about Christmas. Advent calendars have numbers on them that tell you how many days are left until Christmas.

Also, my family buys four candles that we put in a wreath that has candle holders in it. There are three purple ones and one pink candle. We light the candles every Sunday. First, we light a purple one, then another purple candle. On the third week we light a pink candle, and then finally the last Sunday before Christmas, we light another purple candle. December is one of my favorites months! I love the traditions we follow during this month. They are really fun!

By: Jennifer W., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Burney's class

Making Snowmen

One of my winter traditions is that we always go outside and make a snowman and when we make a snowman we make his eyes and mouth with chocolate chips. The nose is a baby carrot. The arms are made from branches that are as thick as candy canes! We use a scarf that grandma gave us for his neck. The scarf is red with white snowflakes on it. This year we are going to try to make a snowman family. Our snow family will have a mom, dad, sister, brother, and dog. Our snow mom will have chocolate chips for her mouth and she will have a rainbow scarf. The dad will have a hat and a black scarf. The girl will have a pink scarf and the boy will have a blue scarf. Making snowmen is my winter tradition.

By: Nikki B., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Thompson's class

Two Special Holiday Traditions

My family has a unique tradition with a red elf named Freddy. Freddy moves to different rooms in our house. He keeps an eye on everyone that enters our home to make sure that we are being good. He goes to the North Pole when I'm at school or sleeping. There is a book that came with Freddy the elf. My mom used to read it to me and now I can read it to myself.

Another family tradition is my brother and I go to the Christmas program at my church. This year I am a speaker in the program. My Sunday school class will sing O Come Little Children. My brother's class will sing Away in the Manger. It will be fun!!

I think Christmas traditions are fun because they let you look forward to next year!

By: Alex E., Westerly 3rd grade
Mrs. Fisher's class



Peace of Mind for Uncertain Times

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~ Deanna Gartman, daughter of Westlake Village residents
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New Year's Eve BALL DROP

BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
AT **CROCKER PARK**

WHEN: Friday, December 31
Festivities begin at 6:15pm
Ball drops at 7:00pm

WHERE: Crocker Park in West Park between GameStop & 87 West

WHAT: A family-friendly New Year's Eve celebration marking the City of Westlake's Bicentennial with a live simulcast of our sister city, Tralee, Ireland & a fireworks display. Hosted by Kenny Crumpton of Fox 8.



For more information contact the City of Westlake
440.871.330 or visit cityofwestlake.org



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Christmas Eve Church Service

I have a few family traditions, but here is the one I like most. Every year on Christmas Eve we go to church at 11:00 PM. We all meet at my grandma’s house around 5:00 PM for dinner and fun. Usually we have all our family including my cousins, aunts, uncles, and my grandparents on my dad’s side. We play games, eat dessert (the desert is so good), and talk. Then, we leave for church and mass is an hour long. I like this tradition because my aunt from Virginia comes, and I really like that. This ends my story about my favorite tradition.

By: Payton K., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Burney’s class

Hanukkah: A Jewish Tradition

My family celebrates a Jewish tradition called Hanukkah, Jewish holiday. It was made to honor the event that some of the Jews fought against their king. They hid in a temple and they lit a candle with only enough oil for one day. But when the Jews lit the candle it stayed lit for eight days! So now all of the Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah and my family is one of them!

Hanukkah is not just one day. It is eight days. On each day we light one more candle than the day before. This is the way to do it. On the 1st day we light 1 candle, 2nd day 2 candles, 3rd day 3 candles, 4th day 4 candles, 5th day 5 candles, 6th day 6 candles, 7th day 7 candles, and 8th day 8 candles.

We use the menorah, a special candle holder for Hanukkah. It has 9 spaces to hold the 8 candles and the Shamash candle. The Shamash candle is the candle you light the other 8 candles with. On the 8th day I go to my nana’s house and have a feast. The kind of food we enjoy is potato latkes, matzo balls and soup. Hanukkah is a very special time for my family.

By: Kaia A., Westerly 3rd grade
Mrs. Fisher’s class

Out-of-Town Relatives

One of my family traditions is that every other year we go to Minnesota to have Christmas with our grandparents and cousins. The years when we aren’t in Minnesota, our grandparents from San Antonio, Texas come. Last year, we went to Minnesota and spent a few days there. While we were there we went to the American Girl store with our cousin at the Mall of America. We also went to our cousin’s house for the afternoon on Christmas day.

This year our grandparents from Texas are coming. When they come we will have fun with them and go to places like the Natural History Museum and the Art Museum. We will also draw pictures and bake cookies with them. These are some of my family’s traditions.

By: Rachel W., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Thompson’s class

Christmas in Japan

My family celebrates Christmas on December 25th. We celebrate the season in many different ways. The most popular way we celebrate Christmas is by opening presents. I give my family gifts. I give my little sister treat bags, my mom massage tickets, and my dad lucky charms. I feel good when I do this.

Another way we celebrate is by going to Grandma’s and Grandpa’s house in Hiroshima and Kanagawa, Japan. We stay there until New Year’s Day. We have feasts, see our friends, and go to the Karaoke box and sing. It is very fun. We take time to relax on our vacation too. That is how we celebrate Christmas. I think Christmas is the most enjoyable tradition in the world.

By: Risa S., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Burney’s class

Mom’s Sticky Buns

My holiday family tradition started when I was one month old. My older siblings’ babysitter used to bring my mom sticky buns on Christmas Eve back when we lived in Medina. My mom called to get the recipe because we loved them so much. After she made her first batch, she decided to bring some holiday cheer to our neighbors so she made sticky buns for them also.

Then we had a party at my aunt and uncle’s house. My mom made the sticky buns. We took them there and everybody loved them. The next year my mom made them and let some other people try them. Now it is our tradition that every Christmas Eve our closest friends and family get sticky buns that we make for them. This is our family tradition.

By: Bridget W., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Thompson’s class

A Cozy Evening

A December tradition my family and I have is on Christmas morning we all wake up and have some hot chocolate or coffee. Then we open our presents and play with them. Later, during dinner time, we go to a fancy restaurant and have a big Christmas dinner.

When we come back from the restaurant, we turn our Christmas tree lights on while we’re watching a movie. We make a warm fire and have more hot chocolate, coffee, or tea. When the movie ends, and the fire goes out, we put on our pj’s and listen to Christmas songs. Finally, we call it a night and go to sleep dreaming about our wonderful December tradition.

By: Greg D., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Burney’s class

Leaving a Note for Santa

Everyone knows you should leave cookies and milk for Santa. I leave cookies, milk, and a note. The note will usually say what we want for Christmas, thanks for the presents, or something like that! My parents always say to me and my sister, “Don’t forget to write your note!” I usually only write what I want for Christmas and thank Santa for the presents. My sister usually writes a whole paragraph! When it’s time to go to bed, we turn off the fireplace, put the note by the cookies, and go to bed dreaming and hoping for presents.

This all started when my sister wanted to write Santa a note. I said, “Santa won’t bring you all of those presents!” (Remember my sister likes to write a long paragraph.) That year, Santa didn’t bring all the presents but she got a lot of them so I started trying it and we’ve done it ever since. That’s my tradition, what’s yours?

By: Connor R., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Thompson’s class

Family Christmas Fun

Our Christmas family tradition starts the weekend before Christmas, my family and I go to Buffalo to visit my cousins. That night we go to the Buffalo Sabres hockey game. It is really fun because my cousins and I get to have snacks like hot dogs, popcorn and soda.

Another fun tradition in our family is on Christmas Eve day, when we wake up in the morning, my mom hides \$20 bills in the house and we have to find them. After we find the money, we get to go out to lunch and then the best part of the day is we get to spend the money we found on toys.

When our family is done with our shopping tradition, we head home to start the decorating of our Christmas tree. We place ornaments and lights around the tree, the finishing touch is placing the star at the top. After the tree is decorated we make Christmas cookies. They are shaped like stars. We make a lot of cookies and we put some of the cookies out for Santa. Mom allows us to eat one cookie and the rest we save for Christmas. These are just a few of my Christmas traditions with my family.

By: Ben A., Westerly 3rd grade
Mrs. Fisher’s class

The Holiday Pickle

Every year my family has a tradition. My mom or grandma hides a pickle ornament on our Christmas tree. Sometimes it is in plain sight of sometimes it is hidden so that it is very hard to find. The contest starts on Christmas morning but everyone has to be up before we can try to find the pickle. When everybody is up, my mom says “Go!” Everybody runs downstairs and tries to find the pickle. Whoever finds it gets to open the first present. My family is crazy about trying to find the pickle. One time I ran right into the tree and once I tried to videotape my mom when she hid the pickle but that didn’t work out! The pickle is our holiday tradition.

By: Owen D., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Thompson’s class

Decking The Tree & Making Cookies

For a December tradition, my family will always deck the Christmas tree together. We always do the lights first. Then come the ornaments. We always pick the best trees so the ornaments don’t fall off. My family then puts the Santa ornaments on. They always make me feel good.

The best part of decking the tree is the star. This part always takes about 20 minutes for my family. We have to get a chair for my father to stand on. Then, we get my brother’s toy robot claw. Next, my dad grabs the star with the claw and struggles to get the star to stand right. Finally, the star is on the tree.

Another tradition is making cookies. When we are finished making them, my dad eats as many as possible so they are gone in about two minutes. Then my mom ends up baking more and asks my brother and I to protect them from Dad, but we end up wolfing them. When my dad sees the tray he says, “Where did the cookies go?” I’ve gotten use to that. Those are some December traditions of my family.

By: Cole S., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Burney’s class

All Together for Christmas

My family tradition is that we always go to our grandpa and grandma’s house to make Christmas cookies. We put up a nativity scene of baby Jesus being born. Our grandma, grandpa, aunts, and uncles come over for Christmas Eve. We eat dinner then dessert then open presents. When everyone leaves, we put cookies out on a plate for Santa and then we go to bed.

When we wake up the next morning, we have to wait for everyone to get up to open our presents. When everyone is up, we open gifts from our mom and dad first. Then we open gifts from Santa. After we open all of our presents, we turn on the TV and watch “The Christmas Story.” As the day goes on, we play with all of our new toys. If there’s snow, we go outside and play in the snow that dad plows into a huge pile. These are some of my family’s holiday traditions.

By: Leo S., Dover 4th grade
Mrs. Thompson’s class

The Spirit of Christmas

Those of low degree *Luke 1:46-55*

by **Michael Penn Moore**, Church of the Redeemer UCC, Westlake.

I was in the third or fourth grade when Bobby Roethliesberger moved into the house down the street. Right up until he dropped out of high school and went into the Navy, though, Bobby and I had hardly any contact. It wasn't him – he wasn't fat or ugly or particularly weird – and it wasn't me: none of the kids in the neighborhood paid him any attention. He was a nobody.

Nobodies were on my mind thirty years later, in the mid-1980s, when I was working on a sermon based on the passage from Luke's gospel where Mary sings about how God has turned the world upside down, how God “has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly... has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.”

That's the song of praise offered by Mary, a woman of no social standing, scandalously pregnant out of wedlock, member of a minority religion, living in an occupied land that was a backwater of the Roman Empire. Yet she saw God at work in her life and in the lives of nobodies like her. She didn't predict that it would happen; she said that God was already making it happen.

I had intended to suggest in my sermon that the challenge of faith is to learn how to look at the world through Mary's eyes. I wanted to encourage

the congregation to watch for the rare occasions when it does seem that God's values are breaking into this world, and that the rich and powerful don't always have things their way.

I was thinking about how to illustrate this when I noticed a photograph on the front page of the morning paper. It showed a long line of automobile transport trucks loaded with Rolls-Royces. The cars were being sold to pay the debts of the Baghwan Shree Rajneesh. Remember him? This guru had arrived in the U.S. a few years before, offering controversial teachings and attracting such a large following that they virtually took over a whole town in Oregon and named it after their spiritual leader. The Baghwan had been at the top of the heap.

And yet now here he was, being deported for violating immigration laws, many of his followers under arrest, refused admission by twenty countries, and forced to sell his fancy cars just to stay afloat. How the mighty are fallen, I thought when I saw it. Mary was right.

Then I looked closer at the caption under the picture. The guy who was buying the car collection (for six million in cash) was some big Texas dealer in luxury automobiles who had started with nothing after leaving military service and had built this huge chain of car dealerships in Dallas. He wasn't originally from Texas, though. He was, I learned, from my home town. It was Bobby Roethliesberger. ●

Spirituality comes from within

by **Terri Zajac**, Unity Spiritual Center, Westlake

“I'm not religious, but I am spiritual.”

This statement, heard so often not only at Unity, but at churches and spiritual centers all over the world captures the feeling that millions of people have about their interior lives in this era in which we live.

Despite hyper-consumerism, massive shifts in social structures, economic and political despair, and a world which often appears to have gone entirely negative with uncertainty and fear, spirituality is as important to people as ever. It just has to make sense to them.

The ways they communicate this need vary but the longing is the same:

“I'm yearning for connection.”

“I want to find my inner voice.”

“How do I link the spiritual path to everyday life?”

“I want to believe in something greater than myself that makes sense with the reality of science.”

Every day, science, archaeology, medicine and scores of other disciplines reveal discoveries that are unsettling to the network of our beliefs and the comfort of our facts, yet regardless of discoveries, people continue the search for authentic spirituality.

They want greater meaning, depth and connection in their everyday lives, and there is an ever-increasing sense that it comes through some sort of “spirituality.”

We hear it over and over at Unity Spiritual Center, week after week, as people meander in from an astonishing variety of religious and spiritual backgrounds.

The more inauthentic the outer world of non-stop advertising and marketing becomes, the more people want authenticity in their inner world and connection with others who feel as they do. In the past twenty years, the exploration of spirituality and how to integrate it into our lives has become the norm among people, corporations and groups of every type, and found abundantly in books, magazines and entertainment. However, people are more sensitive than ever about what's real and what's marketing, especially when it comes to their spiritual lives.

One of the paradigm shifts in the pursuit of spirituality is that people tend to believe that authentic spiritual experience must come from within a person, a natural outgrowth of their own work in personal growth. Outside influences can inspire and motivate but a person changes from within. That concept can be found far and wide among spiritual and even religious sources from books to websites to media. Another shift, also reflected in the world at large, is that people find this deeper spirituality manifesting in their lives in a vast variety of ways.

While most people enjoy and celebrate holiday traditions at this time of year, finding solace and joy in the old and ancient, there is no doubt that as a new year unfolds, they will continue their search to enhance their spirituality. ●

Monodrama tells Christmas story from Mary's perspective

by **Rev. Bill Buckeye**, Bay United Methodist Church

Bay United Methodist Church will feature “The Birth of a Child,” a monodrama for soprano and organ by Frederick Koch, during the 10 a.m. worship service on Sunday, Dec. 26. This dramatic take on the Christmas story from Mary's perspective will be performed by soprano Eileen Marie Moore and organist William Zurkey.

An active Cleveland area recitalist and performer of New Music, including many other works by Frederick Koch, Ms. Moore has performed “The Birth of a Child” several times since its premiere in 1987. She is a graduate of Indiana University and member of the Voice faculty at Cleveland State University, the Director of Youth Orchestras at Bay United Methodist Church and Messiah Lutheran Church in Fairview Park, and a composer of children's operas for Opera Cleveland's Music! Words! Opera! program.

Frederick Koch composed “The Birth of a Child” to a libretto by Seymour Reiter, with whom he also collaborated on a Christmas opera called “The Shepherds.” A native and long-time resident of Rocky River, Koch was a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, Case Western Reserve University and the Eastman School of Music, and the founder of the Koch School of Music (Riverside Academy of Music). He won the Cleveland Arts Prize in 1977 and at the time of his death in 2005 had composed of over 300 works. ●

A Christmas rose

by **Dianne Borowski**, Bay Village

One Christmas morning stands out in my mind as so unusual and non-traditional that at times I think it must have been a dream. Three o'clock that morning found me outside enjoying the brisk, frigid air while making sure my one-hundred-plus customers woke up to find their Christmas newspaper neatly tucked inside the storm door or hanging from the door knob.

Several inches of day-old snow covered the lawns. Snowflakes dropped lazily from the sky. As I trudged down the sidewalk and up the drive, my boots made crunchy noises in the snow. Down the street, a dog barked. As I headed toward the door, something caught my eye. I looked down and there was a perfect pink rose in full bloom. I bent down to touch it, just to confirm it was real. The petals felt soft and velvety to my ungloved hand.

Quite honestly, I had been feeling rather unhappy about leaving my warm home at 1 a.m. to bundle and

deliver newspapers knowing I was having Christmas dinner for fifteen later that day. I had definitely lost any Christmas spirit I had, carrying my bag full of papers up and down frozen, silent streets, envying those inside who could sleep so soundly on this holiday morning.

But there, in that little space was something so beautiful, so unique I shivered, but not from the cold. In the silence of that Christmas morning, as I looked at the rose and then up at the star-filled sky I realized that I was in the perfect place. In that moment, so still, so white, so peaceful, I experienced a better understanding of the meaning of Christmas for me. The simplicity of a single rose blooming when it should have frozen and died from the cold lifted my spirits and gave me hope. I knew in my heart I would never forget that rose.

When times get tough I think of the rose, blooming against all odds on that snowy Christmas morning. Of all the Christmas gifts I've received over the years the rose is the one I most treasure, for I believe it was put there for me, a gift from God that still gives me hope so many years later. ●

Holiday Cheer!

by **Laura Gonzalez**

CHAMPAGNE PUNCH

- 2 Bottles Brut Champagne
- 2 Liters Canada Dry Ginger Ale
- 1-1/2 cups Triple Sec
- Dash – Angostura Bitters

Mix and pour the above ingredients into punch bowl. Keep it cold.

An ice ring (see note) may be made of ginger ale with sliced lemons and cranberries in it for decoration.

NON-ALCOHOLIC FRUIT PUNCH

(The kids will love this one!)

- Chilled Hawaiian Punch
- Chilled Ginger Ale
- Raspberry sherbet
- Ice ring (see note)

Pour equal amounts of chilled fruit punch and ginger ale into a punch bowl. Add scoops of raspberry sherbet to punch.

Add ice ring to keep it cold.

Note: To make an ice ring, arrange cranberries, lemon, lime and orange slices in a bunt pan or ice ring pan,

filling about a third of the pan. Pour in just enough punch or water to cover the fruit. (Don't fill past the fruit, since it will cause the fruit to float; you want it all to be settled in the bottom.) Place in freezer until frozen.

Once frozen, add an inch of punch or water at a time and freeze. Repeat until pan is full. Caution: If you add too much liquid at once it will cause the ring to float.

For a variation, you may use grapes, strawberries, cherries, edible flowers, mint leaves, etc. to fill the ring. ●

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COMMUNITY EVENTS

View more events and post your own on the Observer homepage at www.wbvobserver.com.

Dec. 17 & 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Journey to Bethlehem: A Live Nativity

You are invited to Church of the Redeemer's annual live nativity featuring King Herod, angels, shepherds, magi, Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus. Journey to Bethlehem is an indoor/outdoor experience complete with live animals and music. 15-minute journeys depart continuously. Dress for the weather and enjoy refreshments after your journey. Admission is free. For more information please call 440-331-0834. Church of the Redeemer United Church of Christ, 23500 Center Ridge Rd., Westlake

Dec. 19, 3-4:30 p.m.

Vivaldi's 'Gloria'

The Chancel Choir of Church of the Redeemer United Church of Christ will present Vivaldi's "Gloria." Also on the program will be several of the choruses from Handel's "Messiah." Instrumentalists from the church as well as students from the Baldwin-Wallace Conservatory of Music will accompany the choir. Admission is free. For more information, please call 440-331-0834.

Church of the Redeemer United Church of Christ, 23500 Center Ridge Rd., Westlake

Dec. 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Winter Solstice Celebration

Join us on the shortest day of the year to celebrate both night and day! Come dressed to hike along our candlelit trail. Warm up by the fireplace and then visit with nighttime animals. Experience the beauty of the night sky in the planetarium. Make and take home a fun Winter Solstice craft! For families with children of all ages. Fee: \$7/person; \$35/family of 5 or more. Lake Erie Nature & Science Center, 28728 Wolf Rd., Bay Village

Dec. 21, 7-8:30 p.m.

Blue Christmas Service

Church of the Redeemer UCC and Prince of Peace Lutheran Church invite you to a Blue Christmas service. Not everyone's life is in step with the merry rejoicing of the Christmas season. Blue Christmas is a special holiday service of prayer and reflection that provides an occasion to honor the birth of Jesus for those who are finding it hard to rejoice. Light a candle to remember a loss, acknowledge pain and hardship, offer thanks for support received, and hear a word of hope. A jazz band will provide music for the service. Open to all who seek comfort in the hope of the season.

Church of the Redeemer United Church of Christ, 23500 Center Ridge Rd., Westlake

Dec. 25, 6-8 p.m.

Children's Christmas Cantata

Join us as the children of the Westlake Seventh-day Adventist Church tell the Christmas Story

of Jesus, the Light of the World, through song, narration, and drama. We will also be blessed by a special Christmas Message from our Pastor, Dr. Laszlo Hangyas. We hope you can join us for this very special worship service. Cookies and punch will be served following the program. Westlake Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2335 Columbia Rd.

Dec. 28, 10-11 a.m.

Kids Christmas Craft (ages 7 & up)

Keep your kids engaged over Christmas break while nurturing their creativity. They will design and decorate a treasure box with paints, stickers, and other fun craft materials. All materials are provided! Fee: One student, \$25; two people in the same family, \$35. Bay Way Cabin, 27400 Wolf Rd.

Dec. 31, 6:15 p.m.

Family Fun Evening and Bicentennial Ball Drop

Help kick off Westlake's 200th Birthday Celebration with your family and friends! The festivities include: live band and entertainment, face painting, balloons and noisemakers. Ball drop and fireworks are at 7 p.m. The evening will include a live simulcast with our sister city, Tralee, Ireland, where it will be midnight! Enjoy a family night, welcome in the New Year and help launch a year of events to commemorate Westlake's Bicentennial! Crocker Park, Westlake

Dec. 31, 8 p.m.-1 a.m.

New Year's Bicentennial Dinner Party

LaCentre is hosting a New Year's party to kick off Westlake's Bicentennial year. Tickets are \$65 per person or \$500 to reserve a table for 8 and include dinner and an open bar. Entertainment includes a DJ, dancing, casino games with prizes and live video feeds of the NYC coverage on network TV. For information and reservations, call 440-250-2000.

LaCentre, 25777 Detroit Rd., Westlake

Jan. 9, 7-8:30 p.m.

The Village Food Project Open House

See the story on page 1 of this issue.

Bay Presbyterian Church, 25415 Lake Rd.

Jan. 11, 6:30-8 p.m.

Bay Village Green Team Monthly Meeting

January's meeting agenda will be to review the accomplishments for 2010 and set the goals for 2011. The Green Team promotes increased sustainability in the city (such as alternative transportation, recycling, and composting) and manages a community garden. Come to the meeting to find out how you can get involved! Bay Village City Hall, Second Floor Conference Room, 350 Dover Center Rd.

BAYarts gingerbread contest winners

BAYarts and the Observer challenged individuals, families or groups to create gingerbread houses that looked like buildings in the Cleveland Metroparks Huntington Reservation. Visitors to BAYarts cast votes for their favorites, and results were announced Dec. 12.



The "Red Caboose," created by Carla Farrington and the SEED classroom at the Glenview Center in Bay, took first place.



"Sugarplum Express," the creation of Bay sisters Maeve, age 5, and Ava Ransom, 9, tied for second place in the BAYarts Gingerbread House Contest.



Abbey Donahue, age 7, and her brother, Ted, 5, show off "Polar Espresso," their replica of Vento which was also awarded second place.

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