

Lakewood City News

Why I Am Voting Markling For School Board – Leadership

by Paula Reed

On November 6, 2007, I'll be voting Matthew John Markling for the Lakewood City Schools Board of Education. In other articles published by the Lakewood Observer, Richard A. Wair and Teresa Coyne Andreani shared with you that they are voting Markling for the Lakewood School Board in part because Markling is dedicated to improving academic excellence and school safety. I would like to share with you Markling's dedication to leadership.

I first met Matt Markling when the Lakewood Heritage Advisory Board gave a preservation award to Matt and his wife Katie for the exemplary work they did rebuilding the front porch of their Belle Avenue home. The house exhibits the charm and character that people come to Lakewood for, and is such a wonderful example of a meticulously maintained, appropriately updated early 20th century colonial that the Lakewood Historical Society featured it on the 2004 "Come Home to Lakewood" house tour.

Merely weeks after the house tour I was surprised to again encounter Markling — this time as a fellow member of both the Lakewood High School Student Conduct and School Climate Committee and the Heritage Committee. There I learned of Markling's commitment to the Lakewood City Schools even though he didn't yet have children attending school. Markling provided valuable insight to both committees.

Markling's professional background and expertise in school law gave the Lakewood High School Student Conduct and Climate Committee guidance in our quest to organize community and committee input into a realistic set of suggestions to present to the superintendent for implementation. The following year, Markling went on to share his knowledge when the same planning process was extended to the middle school level. The Heritage Committee was delighted when, after discussion about the origin and meaning of the "Madison names" (those that were cut into the stone frieze of Madison School and now grace the south side of Harding), Markling came to the next meeting with copies of the research he had done to solve the mystery.

Markling and I continued to meet periodically after our committee involvement ended to discuss our views of the schools and of Lakewood in general. I found that I always came away from those meetings with new ideas to think about. Our conversations demonstrated that Markling feels strongly

about open and honest communication among the School Board, administration, teachers, staff, parents, students and all the taxpayers who support the Lakewood City Schools. I also feel that open and honest communication is crucial in maintaining the trust of the stakeholders — and an essential characteristic Lakewood looks for in a leader.

I encouraged Markling to run for Lakewood School Board to share his ideas and leadership on a larger scale. Because of his commitment to open and honest communication, as a school board member Markling has pledged to:

- Assure that the mission and educational goals of the school district or school reflect the educational needs identified by a broad representation of stakeholders;

- Assure that board policies and the district's educational goals are available to stakeholders;

- Listen to and appropriately respond to stakeholder concerns about current and future school operations in a timely manner; and

- Model and promote ethical behavior among all stakeholders.

In preparing for his run for the Lakewood School Board, Markling made sure to surround himself with a team of diverse individuals dedicated to Lakewood and our school system. I am proud to be part of Team Markling. Markling is running on a platform of improving academic excellence, school safety and leadership, with leadership forming the foundation for academic excellence and school safety. As a

school board member, Markling has promised to help build public support and understanding of public education, and lead the public in demanding quality education for all our children.

The futures of the Lakewood City Schools and the City of Lakewood are inexorably entwined. Even residents without children are concerned about education, as they understand the effect school quality has on their property values. I'm voting Markling for the Lakewood School Board because I believe his leadership will help maintain the rich history of excellence the schools have long enjoyed. To learn more about Markling, please visit www.marklingforlakewood.com.

Vote Markling for School Board on November 6, 2007!

Geiger Sees Community... continued from page 1...

helped the city to defy the odds of disinvestment and secession from public education platforms. Having served as Board president in 1990, 1995, 1999 and 2004, Geiger commands a responsible and wise presence that generates continuing confidence in the leadership of the community's most critically essential public asset.

Should Geiger be elected to another four year term, the following initiatives and goals set forth by the board will be the primary focus of his work:

- Improving student achievement through effectively integrating the use of data and technology on a district wide basis. We must work to achieve an "Excellent" state designation.

- Providing quality educational opportunities for all students.

- Maintaining a fiscally responsible operation, staying off the ballot during the 2007-08 school year, thus, extending the operating levy cycle one more year, for a total of six years, doubling the three years promised.

- Completing the Phase II renovations of Emerson Elementary School, Horace Mann Elementary School and the west wing of Lakewood High School in a timely manner and on budget.

- Continuing the district's emphasis on implementation of the recommendations of The Student Conduct, School Climate and School Safety Committee.

"Communication is a significant part of the work," says Geiger. "With the building program and student conduct/school climate initiatives, schools have found great success in strong communication and community engagement."

"During my time on the Board of Education, we have accomplished many things. We have met the challenges of funding, of changes in education and of our facilities. Together, with our community, we have found solutions."

When asked why a person with financial means should send a child to Lakewood Public School rather than a private school, Geiger makes a case on the basis of the opportunities provided in the district for those with high IQs or special needs. From advance placement programs to special group instruction, Geiger believes Lakewood City Schools are superior to the private environments. He is firmly convinced of the value music and arts programming delivers to students and the total community. He believes the schools managed to get slightly ahead of the curve with the building and conduct initiatives.

"We do have an orderly school environment. But we can't do it alone. We work very well with the city and the police chief. Safety and security are always parts of that conversation," he contends. He is pleased with the significant security measures that include cameras galore with live feeds to the police station.

As president of Geiger's Clothing and Sports, the finest looking business on Lakewood's Main Street, Geiger is, to no one's surprise, always an impeccable gentleman in his appearance and manner. While Geiger is especially proud of his work on funding and building four brand new school buildings in Lakewood, on time and on budget, he remains especially attentive to the safety and discipline interests of the community expects to students to honor at all times.

"A safe, civil climate of teaching and learning - that's the choice people are making," says Geiger. "Our whole community has to wake up to a code of civility."

When Geiger states firmly in reference to student conduct in the schools and on the streets, "We never want to excuse uncivil behavior," he evokes moral gravity. When he declares, "We can never let up on the safety issue - bullying, lack of respect for life and property. We're going to be all over that," he speaks with a compelling determination and sincerity that can come only when the whole man knows and manifests the values of civility and good order in his very being.



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