



Prairie Gazette

Summer 2025

Official Publication, Lakewood Historical Society



Our New History Mural is Installed!

Story and Photos by Phil Raschke



The Lakewood History Museum is proud to announce our new History Mural is installed. The happy event occurred on 30 March when our mural artist **Mindy Barker** arrived with assistant installer **Keith Musig**. Mindy was born in Tacoma and is a graduate of Pacific Lutheran University. She is the owner of Mindy Barker Designs, a one woman



Mindy Barker

art business specializing in custom paintings, original artwork for homes and businesses and large-scale murals for public spaces.

The Lakewood History Museum Board of Directors interviewed Mindy, reviewed her work and awarded a contract for a 17 foot, interactive mural highlighting the rich history of the area we call Lakewood. Mural

was to be a colorful historical exhibit filling an existing open space along the main hallway. The parameters of this project was no easy task!

Mindy's vision started with a nod to nature. She looked to the Garry oak tree (*Quercus garryana*). The Garry oak existed in this area long before European settlement. The species, however, is named after **Nicholas Garry**, an 1835 deputy governor of the Hudson Bay Company which had large holdings in this area. Mindy decided to use the Garry oak as the unifying structure from which she created seven historically significant vignettes: Time before humans,



Mindy and Keith Musig preparing mural for installation

See MURAL, page 3



Lakewood Historical Society

contact@lakewoodhistorical.org

President

Phil Raschke

Vice President

Ed Voie

Secretary/Treasurer

Sue Scott

Directors

Earl Bogert

John Burton

Kris Kauffman

Danielle Sharp

Glen Spieth

Linda Work

Past Presidents

Becky Huber

Sue Scott

Ed Voie

Newsletter Editor

Chuck Mathias

AV Coordinator

Tink Kinney

PRAIRIE GAZETTE

Prairie Gazette is the official publication of the Lakewood Historical Society. The newsletter is published four times a year. Distribution is directly to members and available at the Lakewood History Museum, 6114 Motor Avenue SW, Lakewood, WA 98499 • 253-682-3480

The staff of Prairie Gazette actively encourages input from the Society's members as well as the general public regarding story ideas of any other aspects of this newsletter, and the Lakewood Historical Society.

Content of this publication is copyright protected by the Society and/or the and artists.

MEETINGS

The Lakewood Historical Society formed in 1998 to preserve and share Lakewood's rich history through programs, displays and publications. The Society offers frequent programs on topics of historical interest. Most programs are free and open to the public. Visit us on Facebook or our website for information on events and activities:

www.LakewoodHistorical.org



Phil Raschke

President's Message

Hello Everyone

Happy to report "A beautiful **17 foot historic mural** was born" on Sunday, 30 March. Complete story and photos on page one. Be sure to drop in soon and give it a look! Also, check out some of our new books on our repurposed book shelves. Paperbacks two for a \$1 donation and hardbacks \$1 each.

Special thanks to Board Member **Glen Spieth** for his full throttle work keeping the Museum's lighting, fire extinguishers, restrooms and security issues under control and in good working order. Thank you, Glen. Also thanks to **Kris Kauffman** for his excellent presentation on the "Lakes of Lakewood" that drew 45 attendees on a chilly, rainy night.

I mentioned in the last issue about Lakewood Boy Scout Troop 53 and their upcoming 100th Birthday Celebration. Well, the celebration took place on 15 March with Lakewood Mayor **Jason Whalen** along with other City Council members presenting Troop Community Chair **Carla Richards** with a special City Proclamation. I was honored to attend this wonderful event and had the good fortune to meet and get a photo opt with Liz Williams, granddaughter of the legendary **Norton Clapp** who built the Colonial Center and was a long time member of Troop 53. See photos on page 3.

Heads Up, this coming August 9th and 10th the Museum is planning to host a special "**Mini FAB**" featuring two days of films, author book signings and local art. Look for more details in early July. By the way, FAB stands for Film, Art and Book fest. See all our exciting events in the Upcoming Events section.

Lastly, gentle reminder that our 2025 Membership Renewal letters are going out and we would absolutely love to see your return envelope in our mailbox.

Have a great 4th of July when we celebrate our Nation's 249th Birthday!

Phil

"What the heart once held and had, it shall never lose."

—Henry Ward Beecher

MAILING LIST UPDATE – Issues of the *Prairie Gazette* are mailed postage paid direct to our membership. A recent review of our membership mailing lists revealed issues are currently being printed and mailed to individuals who have not maintained their annual membership for the last two or more years. Because costs are associated with printing and mailing each issue, your Board of Directors has voted to remove these non-current individuals from our mailing lists beginning with the Fall issue of the *Prairie Gazette*. We understand people move away and forget to update their addresses, etc. So if you're unsure of your membership status please give us a call at **253-682-3480** and leave us a message. We will be happy to call you back and update you on your membership status. Thank you for your understanding.

Boy Scout Troop 53 Turns 100 *(see President's Message)*



Lakewood Mayor **Jason Whalen** and City Council Members present City Proclamation to Troop 53 Community Chair **Carla Richards** in honor of their 100th Birthday, 15 Mar., Claudia Thomas Middle School.



Museum President Phil Raschke shares a photo with **Liz Williams**, granddaughter of **Norton Clapp**, at Troop 53 birthday celebration.

MURAL from page one



the Nisqually and Steilacoom Tribes, Fort Steilacoom, Western State Hospital, the Tacoma Speedway, Fort Lewis and the 1937 Lakewood Colonial Theater.

Dispersed within the acorns and Garry oak leaves are more than a dozen historical symbols which require a viewer to closely interact with the mural. You're invited to visit the mural and see how many of the unique symbols you can find as well as admire the beauty of the mural. Many thanks to Mindy for her creative talents and also a special "Thank You" to the Nisqually Tribe for their support of this historically unique and colorful endeavor.

Acclaimed Lincoln Author DL Fowler Visited Museum 1 May

On Thursday, 1 May, Lincoln historian and author **DL Fowler** gave a powerful and emotional presentation on the life of President **Abraham Lincoln**. Fowler's talk held attendees spellbound as he revealed little known facts that molded and shaped Lincoln's life and his thinking. Following his presentation Fowler autographed his books to a long line of excited attendees.



"Lincoln Raw" attendees share smiles following purchases of specially autographed books by author DL Fowler. L-R, Beverly Raschke, Bob Lawrence, Rose Munoz, Judy Lawrence and Cindy Nelson



**Lakewood
Historical
Society**
P.O. Box 98014
Lakewood, WA
98496

Non-Profit Org
US Postage Paid
Tacoma, WA
Permit #387

PRAIRIE GAZETTE visits Mazatlan, Mexico



On a sunny day in Mazatlan, Mexico, Parkland resident **Sam Keller** displays his copy of the latest *Prairie Gazette* plus his special award for being the winner of the local Cribbage tournament. Congratulations to Sam! *Prairie Gazette* makes a good reading companion no matter where you travel to!

Lakewood History Museum Schedule of Upcoming Events

30 May:

Dancing in the Streets, 4-7 pm, Motor Ave.
Museum open

26 June:

Russell Holter presentation, **The Fateful Fourth:
The Story of America's Worst Trolley Disaster**,
6 pm, Museum

15 July:

Alex Bennett presentation, **Growing Up in
Lakewood**, 6 pm, Museum

19 July:

SummerFest Booth, Fort Steilacoom Park,
10 am to 6 pm

9-10 August:

Mini FAB RETURNS (Film, Art, Book Fest),
2 – 7 pm, Museum

14 October:

Annual Membership Meeting
6 pm, Museum