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Do *you* know what's under Lakewood Colonial Theater?

Story, Part 1, by Phil Raschke

While many Lakewood residents still remember seeing movies at the now-closed **Lakewood Colonial Theatre**, almost no one remembers the history of what is located *underneath* the theatre.



On a recent maintenance/repair visit, Board Member **Glen Spieth** and I ventured down a dark, narrow, wood-paneled, carpeted staircase in search of a plumbing issue. The venture led us under the historic Colonial Theatre and into a hidden past.

Fortunately, our flashlights and cell phones allowed us to capture photos of what was once an area "Hot Spot" during the early years following the 1937 opening of the Colonial complex. Besides dining, this hidden past featured a nightclub, bandstand, entertainer dressing rooms, bar and wine racks—featuring wines like *Bouvet Brut* and *Fonseca Port*—plus a dumbwaiter for food transfers.

There's also an old indoor pistol range and a water well with two huge, 2,500 gallon, black steel storage tanks. These tanks supplied the entire Colonial Center with water. Why? In 1937 there was no Lakewood Water District. Wells were a common community feature.

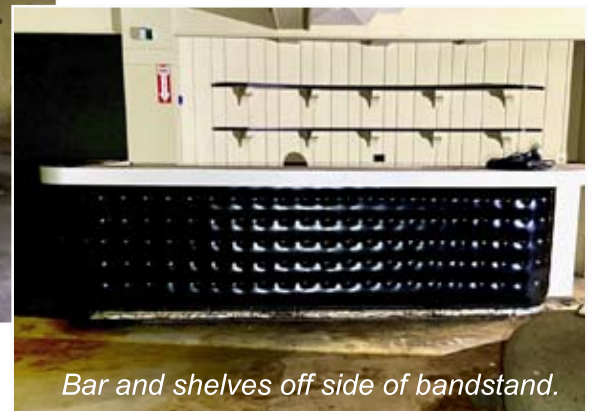
Continued next issue



View of main entertainment area
and bandstand.



Entertainer dressing
room with mirrors and
tables.



Bar and shelves off side of bandstand.

More pictures on page 3 and in next issue.



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PRAIRIE GAZETTE

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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



President's Message

Sincere wishes your 2026 is off to a pleasant start. As I begin the new year I am amazed at just how quickly 2025 flew by. Looking back I am delighted to report your Museum put on a number of special lecture and film events plus our first ever "Mini Film, Art, Book Fest". And in June we did the ribbon-cutting on our beautiful new Historical Mural designed by **Mindy Barker**.

Phil Raschke

Currently, we are working on producing an educational handout that compliments the new mural by elaborating on the key historical elements in the mural. We're also looking forward to a new exhibit co-sponsored by the West Pierce Fire Department. On a small note, after years living with broken paper towel dispensers in the restrooms, it is a real joy to report that we have just installed new, automated paper towel dispensers. Yes folks, there really is a Santa Claus. We are also working to revamp and update our website and continue are efforts to digitize and provide easy access to hundreds of past issues of the now defunct "Lakewood Log" newspaper.

I would like to note, however, that we have spent the last year without a Board Treasurer. Board Secretary **Sue Scott** has doubled up as Secretary-Treasurer, but this is a temporary band aid, not a fix. I can honestly tell you the title is more daunting than the task. **You Can Help** solve this situation! Check with your retired friends and neighbors and see if one of them would like to give it a try? Call me if you want more information, **253-861-1366**.

Lastly, my year as President is up and I am pleased to announce that your new President for 2026 is my dear friend and fellow Board member **Glen Spieth**. Glen is a founding member of the Lakewood Historical Society and a first rate historian. Be assured, with Glen, your museum will be in good hands.

Warm Wishes for all of 2026,

Phil

"A beautiful dream is simply the heart wishing it were so." — Unknown

REMEMBER MONOPOLY? By Phil Raschke

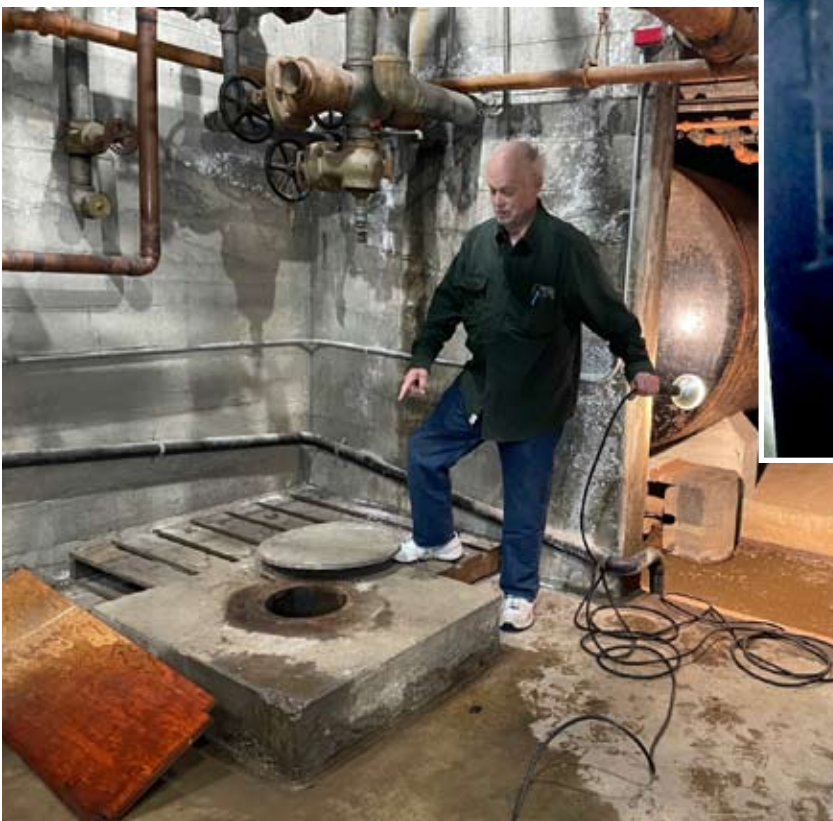


Meg Voelker of Lakewood recently visited the Museum and donated a unique version of the famous **Monopoly** board game. Based on "The Landlord's Game" (created in 1902 by **Lizzie Magie** as a financial teaching tool for young people), the original Monopoly came out in 1935 and has sold over 250 million sets worldwide.

Magie's game was based on the economic principles of "Georgism," warning of the danger of concentrating land in private monopolies such as apartment complexes, which enriches property owners, impoverishes the renters and limits their ability to ever own their own property.

However, the Monopoly game Meg Voelker has donated is a special 1996 edition celebrating **Lakewood's new cityhood status**. This special version replaces traditional properties like Park Place, Atlantic Ave., and St. Charles Place with Lakewood properties such as Burs, House of Donuts, Schooner's (now gone) and other businesses of the time. **Thank You Meg!**

More photos from under Lakewood Colonial Theater



Board member (new President) Glen Spieth points to old covered water well with large, black storage tanks in rear.



Upper right: Close-up of the two large, steel water storage tanks behind well.



Right: Wine rack storage with former labels.

Classy Chassis Draws Winners of Annual Membership Drive

Story by Phil Raschke

The Museum's 2025 Membership Drive offered a chance to win free car washes to those who renewed their membership and added a little extra donation. The car washes were donated to the Museum by the friendly folks at **Classy Chassis**.

Winning names were drawn December 2nd at the Classy Chassis location at 7701 Custer Rd. W. In the photo, **Matthew Fulcher**, Classy Chassis site manager draws the winning names from Museum Secretary **Sue Scott**. Joining in the fun are **Aubrey Glazier**, marketing specialist, and honored guest **Cap'n Clean**!

Grand Prize winner was **J. H. Harris** who will receive Three Free Classy Chassis car washes. Other winners were **Carol Else**, **L.T. Murray** and **Paul Webb** who will receive two free car washes each.

Congratulations to our winners for their added donations and a special "Thank You" to Classy Chassis car wash and the Cap'n Clean team.





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Former City Council Member Ann Kirk Davis Remembers Lakewood Colonial Theater

Ann Kirk Davis, an original member of the initial 1996 Lakewood City Council, visited the museum and reminisced about going to the movies in the iconic Colonial Plaza theater.

One of her favorite films was Alfred Hitchcock's "Vertigo" starring James Stewart and Vera Miles. The state of the art theater opened back in 1937 and included a balcony, smoking room, young baby "cry" room and 35 cent matinees.

Sadly, the single screen theater was forced to close its doors back in 1984 due to competition from the new multi-screen theaters.



Check www.lakewoodhistorical.org for notices about upcoming programs