

The

FRONT PORCH

WINTER 2025

Quarterly

VOL. 54, NO. 4

Connecting Lakewood-Balmoral residents with news, events, and stories.
(Formerly the Lakewood-Balmoral Residents Council Newsletter)



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Harvest Moon: Open for volunteers!

Message from the President

Jim Shunk - 5500 Block of Wayne

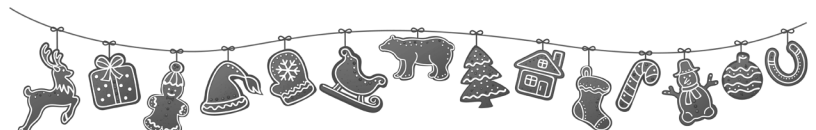
My church's pastor was manhandled and arrested by state police a few weeks ago while participating with other clergy members to pray for and to protest the conditions in which detainees were being held in the Broadview ICE facility. This peaceful group of pastors, priests and rabbis were treated unnecessarily roughly by those who are supposed to protect us. Her willingness to put her body on the line in this nonviolent protest against what many of us view as illegal and immoral actions by agents of our federal government, was very inspiring to me. We have all recently witnessed such acts of bravery in our city. For me, these acts have given me hope.

I know that these are tough, difficult times to be hopeful. But as we enter this season, let us be reminded that we must not only be kind and generous to one another, but we must also be hopeful. This is what will sustain us through these times. Let's be positive, optimistic and yes, hopeful. It will serve as an inspiration for those around us. It will certainly require courage.

My family and I wish for all of you a "Season of Joy and Hope!"

— Jim Shunk

Season's Greetings



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New Businesses & Coming Soon

Cafe Colombiano – 5940 N. Broadway

An Edgewater Colombian restaurant expanded with a cafe next door at 5940 N. Broadway. Offering classic drinks like drip coffee and cold brew as well as fun twists like a marshmallow latte and coconut cream matcha.

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Panda Express – 1123 W. Berwyn Ave. (coming soon)

Currently an empty storefront at the end of a strip mall on Berwyn Avenue and Broadway. No open date yet.

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Piacere Mio – 1303 W. Wilson Ave. (now open)

Serving authentic Italian cuisine inspired by the many regions of Italy with a focus on Sicilian dishes infused with chef Jose Marquez's creative vision.

Cocktail Tuesday – 50% off on cocktails

Dessert Wednesday – free dessert on us per table

Wine Monday – 50% off on any bottle of wine

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Krispy Krunchy Chicken – 4806 N. Broadway (now open)

A friendly fast food joint serving delish Krispy Krunchy cajun fried chicken.

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Hot Pot – 5351 N. Broadway (coming soon)

A Hot Pot restaurant is currently planned for the Asian market space. Stay tuned!

Diversions for the Winter Blues

Major Productions

Hamnet: The Royal Shakespeare Company's adaptation of Maggie O'Farrell's novel, a US premiere about Shakespeare's family, running February 10 - March 8, 2026, at Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

Eureka Day: A satire on modern parenting and public health, playing at TimeLine Theatre from February to March 2026.

Singin' in the Rain: A classic musical production at the Woodstock Opera House, February 20 - March 1, 2026.

Joffrey Ballet – American Icons: Featuring works by dance legends like Robert Joffrey, Glen Tetley, and Martha Graham at the Harris Theater.

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Dance & Opera

Hubbard Street Dance Winter Series: New works by contemporary choreographers at the Harris Theater (Feb 26 - Mar 1, 2026).

Lyric Opera of Chicago: Continues its 2025/2026 season with productions like Salome (January) and Madama Butterfly (March).

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Comedy & Immersive Experiences

Comedy Shows: Headliners like Jim Gaffigan and Chris Tucker, plus ongoing shows at The Second City and Teatro ZinZanni.

Harry Potter: Forbidden Forest Experience: A magical illuminated trail experience continuing into early 2026.

Teatro ZinZanni – Chicago's most unique theatrical and entertainment experience, presents their new show running through Spring 2026! This latest production blends heart, humor, and high-flying spectacle in a one-of-a-kind evening that only Teatro ZinZanni can deliver. Tickets on sale now at zinzanni.com/chicago/tickets. Use code DO312 at checkout for \$15 off!

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Deals, Events and More

Chicago Theatre Week (Feb 5-15, 2026): Find value-priced tickets (as low as \$15-\$30) for numerous shows across the city.

Edgewater Pottery 1207 West Berwyn Avenue

A studio, classroom and gallery where functional and sculptural ceramics are made and celebrated. Take a class by yourself or with a group.
www.edgewaterpottery.com

**Edgewater
Indoor
Market**
@ Broadway Armory

Select Saturdays This Winter!

1/10 1/31 2/14 2/28 3/14

10am - 2pm

5917 N. Broadway
1st Floor Gymnasium



Rendering of Steep's New Home at 1044 W. Berwyn, Civic Projects Architecture

Steep Theatre Celebrates Groudbreaking

We're thrilled that Steep Theatre has found their forever home in Edgewater.

In September, the City Council approved \$880,000 in community development funds towards the construction of Steep Theatre at 1044 W Berwyn. This funding was championed by Alderwoman Manaa-Hoppenworth and brings the city's total support for the project to \$3,868,535. The \$6.3 million project will feature a 70-seat theatre, a lobby-lounge, and support spaces for artists/staff. Construction is expected to begin later this year. Lakewood-Balmoral's own Peter Moore, is Steep Theatre's Artistic Director.

We look forward to opening night!

Lakewood Balmoral Neighborhood

Night of Luminaries

Light up your New Year's Eve! Come experience our Annual Luminary Night—bring the whole crew, some hot cider, and walk through glowing streets, sparkling homes, and thousands of shining lights. Pure holiday magic!

**New Years Eve Night
December 31st 5pm-8pm**

Wayne Ave | Lakewood Ave | Magnolia Ave
between Foster & Bryn Mawr
Contact your block rep for information on plans
for set up on your block.

Delivery Robots Take Over Chicago Sidewalks, Sparking Debate

As companies dispatch more of the app-based food delivery robots into neighborhoods, some are sounding the alarm, citing safety and accessibility concerns. Boxy food delivery robots are regularly zooming down side streets to deliver fast food. They're adorable to some, a safety hazard to others. The bots are causing a stir online finding fervent support and fierce opposition, while a passionate contingent of neighbors have banded together to oust them from the city altogether. A Lincoln Park resident has launched a petition calling for the city to hit pause on the robots, arguing, "Chicago sidewalks are for people, not delivery robots." Stay tuned!

Harvest Moon Fest 2025: A Day to Remember!

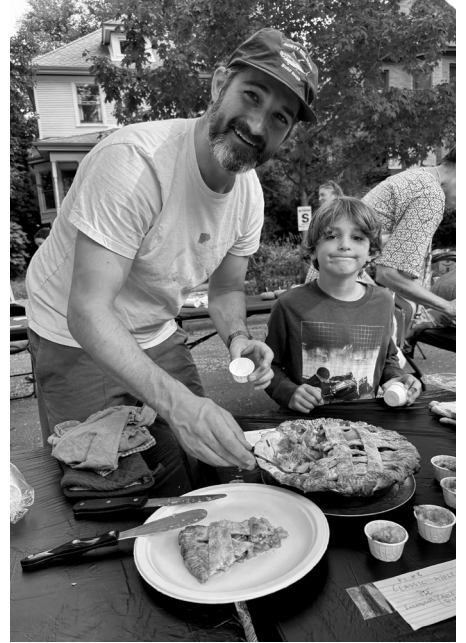
This year's Fest was an unforgettable celebration of everything that makes our neighborhood so special. From the crowd-pleasing pie contest to lively beer tastings, incredible music, and delicious food, every corner of the fest was filled with joy, laughter, and connection. Huge thanks to all the volunteers, organizers, neighbors, and local sponsors who gave their time, talent, and heart to make it such a success. Events like this remind us that community isn't just where we live—it's what we build together.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The current planning committee for Harvest Moon Fest are stepping down after 3 successful years.

We are currently searching for a few good folks to help plan next fall's festival. Please contact Jim Shunk jimshunko2@aol.com





Get to Know Our Local Artists

A Front Porch Quarterly exclusive interview

Our neighborhood is home to interdisciplinary artist, educator, and community organizer **jina valentine**, whose work blends visual art, archiving, data visualization, and social practice. jina creates research-driven drawings and installations and collaborative projects that explore memory, language, and collective histories—often working directly with local and national communities to ensure their stories are preserved and shared.



How did you get started in your art?

I really got started when I began to understand that my ideas, inquiries, motivations, and practice of making is part of a much larger conversation. Each of our art practices exist within a complex constellation of art practices, in conversation directly and indirectly with one another's work.

What's a piece or project you're most proud of—and why?

Rather than pointing to a single artwork, I'm most proud of my collaborative and educational work, especially co-founding the nonprofit Black Lunch Table (BLT) and her role as a teacher.

BLT is a national oral-history and archiving project that records community conversations about social, cultural, and political issues. These recorded discussions are transcribed and preserved in a public online archive, creating a people-powered cultural history. BLT also runs a Wikipedia Project and PhotoBooth initiative that trains participants to create and improve pages for Black artists—helping communities document their own histories.

Learning beyond academia has meant simultaneously presenting myself as a professional researcher-writer-artist-teacher-citizen-mother, and as a student in search of examples of how to perform these roles.

When you're not creating, what's a hobby that might surprise people?

I am an amateur homesteader [or prepper, or aspiring "Trad Wife"]. In the summers I grow tomatoes, pickling cucumbers, squash, beans,

and various other veggies and herbs. We also have a pear tree, a sour cherry tree, and we've recently planted elderberry bushes, raspberry bushes, and plum tree saplings. I do a lot of canning in August and have been making jams and spreads, pickled cucumbers and have experimented with pickling other veggies [with mixed results]. I imagine my 70 year old self will split my summer days between the studio, the garden, and reading on the front porch (come visit me!)

What's the most unexpected source of inspiration for your work?

My biggest inspiration is my son, Sylvan. His constant curiosity—especially his endless "why?"—has reshaped both the content and purpose of my work. Explaining complex social and political ideas to a child has pushed me to rethink language, meaning, and history in ways that now deeply inform my art practice.

What's the biggest challenge you've faced as a local artist?

After living in cities across the U.S. and Europe, I moved to Chicago in 2018 and spent several years truly learning the city and its history. A defining moment came in 2022, when I received a DCASE commission for a permanent large-scale installation at O'Hare Airport's Terminal 5.

The piece, titled "...a murmuration," is a data visualization of 250 years of immigration to Illinois, created with text contributions from more than 70 immigrant communities. Through hundreds of conversations with local organizations and residents, the project deepened my understanding of Chicago's cultural landscape—and my place within it.

Are you a local Lakewood-Balmoral artist? We would love to feature you in the Front Porch Quarterly Newsletter and hear more about you! Please email Vera.junge@gmail.com and share!

A House With a Story: 5447 Lakewood

Joanne DeSanctis Kirk – Licensed Real Estate Broker

Ever wondered about the lives of the people who lived in Lakewood Balmoral through the years? A few years ago I researched the history of 5447 Lakewood for a client of mine. I turned up some interesting information, along with some crazy personal coincidences

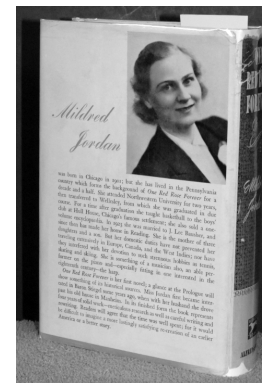
The home at 5447 Lakewood once belonged to Charles and Adeline Jordan, who lived there from at least 1910 through the late 1920s—back when the address was known as 2500–2502 Lakewood. Together with their three children—Viola, Mildred, and Charles Jr.—the Jordans filled the home with both family life and a surprising connection to American entertainment history.

Charles Jordan, described as quite a character, was born in Illinois to German immigrants around 1864. As a young man, he worked as an “advance man” for Buffalo Bill Cody’s Wild West Show, traveling ahead of the performers to promote the spectacle. He eventually became skilled enough to perform in the show himself, before later owning a successful printing company—with Ringling Brothers as his biggest client.

In 1922, daughter Mildred Jordan married J. Lee Bausher at the Lakewood home after meeting him while they both attended summer classes at Northwestern. Mildred later moved to Pennsylvania, where she became a novelist and gained early recognition—along with some sharp criticism from a young John Updike, who once wrote that her pen name concealed her life as the wealthy wife of an industrialist.

Adeline Jordan passed away in 1927, with her wake held inside the Lakewood home. She is buried at Rosehill Cemetery, as is Charles, who later remarried and spent his final years in a historic home in Sarasota, Florida. Mildred lived in Pennsylvania until her death in 1982.

The story came full circle when I connected with Mildred’s daughter, Noel Szundy, who later revealed a remarkable coincidence: at the end of her parents’ lives, their doctor was—unexpectedly—my own father. She then told me that her parents had been his patients at the end of their lives. Proof that in history, as in neighborhoods, the world is often much smaller than we think.



Dell Jordan with Charles William (son)

Do you have some interesting story or history on your LBRC home? We’d love to hear about it. Email the FPQ editors!

A Not so Brief History of LBRC

John Charmelo – 5200 Wayne

With all the turmoil that our area has been experiencing and how many feel we are unfairly being characterized as NIMBY's. I thought it would be nice to do a story on how LBRC came about.

Lakewood Balmoral Residence Council is one of the area's oldest and longest running neighborhood associations. In late February of 1969 a group of neighbors met at Hal and Marge Britton's home at 5414 N Magnolia to discuss organizing a block club. At that time Uptown and Edgewater were all Uptown. In 1977 Edgewater became Chicago's newest neighborhood. In mid April of 1969 LBRC filed paperwork to become a not for profit community organization. Shortly thereafter North Shore Baptist Church filed paperwork for a zoning variance to create a parking lot on the Northwest corner of Lakewood and Berwyn. The church already owned a couple of homes on the 5200 block of Wayne and they were looking to create parking. The neighbors organized and showed up to protest the zoning request and the activist roots of Lakewood Balmoral were born.

Lakewood Balmoral in 1969 was doing ok, it was a little rough around the edges. Some homes were boarding houses, some had been divided up, the greater area was having many urban issues. The leaders wanted to help establish other neighborhood organizations and by doing so, raise the entire area.

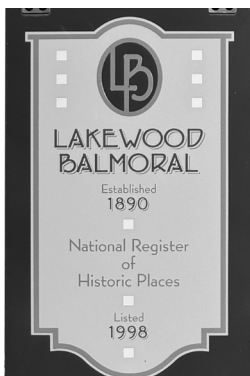
In the late 1960's the area was much different. First the whole area was redlined (meaning banks would not lend money to home buyers for a mortgage). Community leaders like Marge Britton, Mary Ann Violini, Frank Gusinde, Joe Donnelly, Martha Kraeger, Ron Rhyce and Pat Lawson took up this and other urban issues. They got a couple of area banks to start lending to people to buy homes in the area. At that time you could buy a home in Lakewood Balmoral for \$20,000.

Also, at that time there were large issues at hand. The Winthrop Kenmore corridor was experiencing a large influx of halfway houses for the mentally ill. People were moving out of the area

in droves. Andersonville was experiencing a decline as many Swedish residents also moved away. There were porn shops at the corner of Bryn Mawr and Broadway. Crime was rising and local politicians were not engaged in helping or working with residents. "The Real Housewives of Lakewood Balmoral" organized and became a force to be reckoned with. They organized. They fought to clean up the area. They tried to reduce crime and make the area safe for their families. The work of LBRC's founders was to return power to the community groups and not special interest groups that controlled local politics. We all owe our founders a debt of gratitude.

When an opportunity presented itself LBRC leaders Marge Britton and Mary Ann Volini had a discussion in Marge's kitchen to decide if one of them should run for alderman. The story goes a coin toss determined Mary Ann Volini should. She ran and lost. She ran again and won. At this time Edgewater was now its own community and LBRC had gained traction as a neighborhood organization who achieved the goals it set out to do. Numerous other neighborhood organizations were established. LBRC was able to shut down businesses that were causing crime in the area. They fought for community input on planning and development of commercial districts and for fair housing.

The Lakewood Balmoral we know today exists because of the passion, grit, and hard-fought work of our founders. What was once a struggling neighborhood became a place people are proud to call home thanks to the early LBRC council members and neighbors who rolled up their sleeves and fought for this community. Many of them are still with us, still caring, still contributing. We owe them our thanks and our continued appreciation for everything they've done.



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The Lakewood Balmoral Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on February 12, 1999. The district covers an area of about 63 acres. It included 490 buildings deemed to contribute to the historic character of the area.

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Svea Wins Historic Restaurant Award

Lynda Pomeranz – 5300 Magnolia

In September, American Express and the National Trust for Historic Preservation announced the 2025 winners of the “Backing Historic Small Restaurants” program. Svea, Andersonville’s beloved breakfast diner, was the sole winner in Illinois. Designed to support small, independent U.S. restaurants that serve as cultural and culinary landmarks, the competition seemed to say “you’ve made it all these years, surely you’re not going to let this pandemic pull you down.” Each of the 50 winning restaurants received a \$50,000 grant to help support its legacy and growth.

To qualify, the candidates had to “be small/independent, located in an historic building or neighborhood, contribute to the history and identity of the community, tell a story about cuisine and community in America, highlighting historic food traditions and culinary heritage. Wow! This just screams Svea to me.

I’ve been back to Svea many times since the award was announced, but it was the sponsor’s assessment that the program “connects communities across generations through a shared love of food” that started my trip down memory lane. When my husband and I moved to Andersonville 40 years ago, we knew that the neighborhood’s name derived from the settlement of Swedish immigrants. Clark Street, even at that time, was home to two Swedish delicatessens, a small Swedish museum, a Swedish furniture store, the destination Swedish Bakery, Svea and, overhead, a water tower painted like the Swedish flag to mark the spot.

Little by little, these standard bearers have disappeared. While the expanded Swedish museum lives on and serves the community and the city well, I can’t say it connects me to generations of culinary heritage. But when I eat Swedish



pancakes with lingonberries, I feel at one with my community. This is a place where neighbors can share their recognition of Andersonville’s origin story.

Svea has been a beloved part of our community for over 93 years. Scott Martin bought the restaurant in 1990. Martin owns the popular Simon’s Tavern also on Clark Street.

I took it personally when Svea added a patio in the back to welcome its hyper-vigilant, Covid- conscious customers. But since then, the patio has become more beautiful over the years, decked out in blue and yellow umbrellas and flower pots. While Martin and his accommodating manager Lewis make everyone feel at home, this is far from the only way Martin keeps Andersonville’s history on our minds. In 2017, three years after the iconic, but badly damaged water tower was removed, a replica replacement was hoisted to its home above the museum. Martin—dressed in Viking garb—was there to orchestrate dozens of spectators’ celebration of the occasion. I’d bet Martin—recognizable by his white mustache and scraggly beard—is sure to be at the annual St. Lucia celebration as well.



Svea Restaurant, 5236 N. Clark St., in Andersonville on June 4, 2025. Credit: Colin Boyle/Block Club Chicago

Svea is located at 5236 N. Clark Street. It is open 7 AM to 2 PM Wednesday through Sunday. The restaurant will be closed for a week in January to remove the nostalgic, but space consuming, counter. I’ll see you there!

Recycle Non-Working Holiday Lights at the 48th Ward Office

Drop off your non-working holiday lights at the 48th ward office (1129 W Bryn Mawr) whenever we're open. Reduce Waste Chicago will recycle them safely. Be sure to separate lights from other decorations before dropping them off. The last day to drop off lights is Jan. 31, 2026.



Why xmas tree recycling is good for the planet

Trees collected at the Holiday Tree Recycling events are turned into mulch. Mulching trees is far more earth-friendly than sending them to landfills. In landfills, rotting organic matter like plants, trees, and food releases methane, a greenhouse gas that fuels climate change. By foregoing the landfill, your tree will instead benefit plants and soil at local parks and forests.

How to participate

Chicago's Tree Recycling Program runs from **January 10th – 24th**. Trees can be dropped off anytime during normal park hours. Only live/natural trees without flocking are accepted. Garlands and wreaths are not accepted. Because the trees are turned into mulch, all tinsel, ornaments, lights, and stands must be removed. Plastic bags used for transport must also be removed before placing trees in the stalls. Mulch available beginning Monday, Jan. 12
Margate Park, 4921 N. Marine Dr.



No Parking
3am - 7am
Dec. 1 - Apr. 1
No Parking
When snow is
Over 2" deep
Tow Zone

**SNOW
ROUTE**

NO PARKING
WHEN SNOW IS
OVER 2 INCHES DEEP
TOW-AWAY ZONE

NO PARKING
3AM - 7 AM
DEC. 1 - APR. 1
TOW-AWAY ZONE
CITY OF CHICAGO



Contact the editors for questions, comments or stories: joe.koecher@gmail.com | vera.junge@gmail.com

JOHN LEWIS COCHRAN.



John Lewis Cochran is a Philadelphian who took up his residence in Chicago fifteen years ago. He soon became interested in real estate, and especially in the charming property along the lake shore, notably in the vicinity of Oak street. He gradually extended his operations northward, and in 1888 acquired a tract of 350 acres, now known as Edgewater. The growth of Chicago's suburbs has been one of the surprising developments of the city in the past two decades. One of the most notable instances of this is to be found in the picturesque village of Edgewater. Ten years ago there was little or no improvement there. Today there are 175 residences, fronting on broad macadamized avenues, with well-kept stone sidewalks, beautifully shaded by trees set at regular intervals. These advantages, with easy and rapid communication with the city, have given the suburb a steady and healthy impetus. From the inception of Edgewater until the present time it has been the ambition of Mr. Cochran to make the suburb a model and, indeed, ideal place of residence within the reach of families of moderate income. How courageously this has been accomplished the large additions each year of new residences amply shows.

In Memoriam



Dr. Anne Wyman of the 5300 block of Wayne passed away surrounded by her family on November 4th. Having previously lived in Edgewater Glen for nearly thirty years, followed by eight years in Park Ridge, she was thrilled to come back to Edgewater in 2012, moving into a two-flat with her son Alex and his wife Rebecca

and daughter Alba. After retiring from pediatrics in 2014, she cherished her many grandmotherly duties, as well as spending time in Door County, hiking in California, and of course dining out on Clark Street. She and her partner Rick Glau spent many wonderful moments with neighbors in Lakewood-Balmoral.

Sign up for our **weekly email newsletter** for details on all the great happenings in our area.

Email Randi Danforth to be added!
randanforth@gmail.com

2025-2026 Membership Roster
 (June 1, 2025 - May 31, 2026; current through Sept. 7, 2025)

5200 Magnolia	5200 Lakewood	5200 Wayne
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LAKWOOD BALMORAL RESIDENTS COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP FORM

WHAT DOES LBRC DO?

Today, working closely with the 48th ward Alderwoman and surrounding block clubs, LBRC is committed to staying informed, to having a voice in the evolution of our community, and to maintaining the character of our neighborhood.

These goals are achieved by a network of neighborhood volunteers who serve as LBRC board members and help foster connections, communications, and community cohesiveness. They address specific issues related to economic development, traffic flow, infrastructure, and public safety. All residents, both homeowners and renters, are invited to participate. Let us know if you want to be involved in the community!

In addition, LBRC seeks to create meaningful social events to encourage residents to get to know each other. Throughout the year, events big and small are planned for kids, families, and adults.

LBRC is a 501 (c) (3) organization, and donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

**The LBRC membership year runs from June 1 - May 31. Not sure of your membership status?
Contact Emily Jurgens at emilyjurgens@gmail.com**



Scanning the code with your phone camera to go directly to our membership page.
Or visit LakewoodBalmoral.org

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

EMAIL

Please select your level of support:

- Senior \$10
- Household \$20
- Sponsoring \$30 – \$59
- Supporting \$60 – \$99
- Patron \$100+