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It is Saturday, March 9th, one of the first truly sunny days in Pittsburgh after a long gray winter. My husband and I decided to spend the afternoon outside walking around Highland Park to take in the beautiful day. After a brisk lap around the reservoir, we decided to walk down One Wild Place to Heth’s Run Bridge and take a closer look at the current structure and surrounding area so I could educate myself. The subject of the bridge has been coming up in recent months and to be honest, I did not even realize it was an actual bridge until a few years ago.

Heth’s Run Bridge, also known as Haights Run Bridge, at the bottom of One Wild Place and the Zoo parking lot, is slated for replacement in 2013. It has been in the works for many, many years, but the funding is now in place and construction is scheduled to begin in late summer/early fall.

Replacing the bridge is not going to be without its challenges. It will require a detour through the lower Zoo parking lot, behind the gas station and back out to Butler Street, which is bound to cause some traffic issues. The details about the detour and overall construction plan will follow closer to the start of construction via a public meeting and emails to the ListServ so the neighborhood is duly prepared, but for now, I thought it would be interesting to share with you some details about the existing bridge I recently discovered.

Built in 1914 by the City of Pittsburgh as the northern entrance to Highland Park, the bridge was designed by architect Stanley L. Roush. Roush designed many public works projects in Pittsburgh, including the Armstrong Tunnel, the three Sister Bridges (6th, 7th and 9th Street), the 31st Street Bridge and the ornamental structural steel portals at the ends of the Smithfield Street Bridge, just to name a few.

As you can see in the photos, the bridge was an impressive structure that spanned the very large ravine via a simple concrete arch design. It originally included 360 balusters and 14 urns, all carved from white limestone. All of the carved pieces on the Zoo side were removed decades ago and replaced with a functional, but unremarkable aluminum railing.

A Letter from the President
Although the river side technically still remains, only 6 urns and a handful of balusters survived, the rest lost to decay and time. In lieu of replacing them in the past, they were simply boarded over with seemingly whatever material was available at the time.

After seeing the original photos of the bridge, the top side alone is enough to make a restoration advocate depressed. However, what you cannot see is what really amazed me.

As we hiked down, around the side of the bridge, I began to appreciate why I never knew it was a bridge. The once expansive ravine was backfilled decades ago by the City - nearly all the way up to the top of the concrete arch. Empty spray paint cans are everywhere, modern fossils left over from the many graffiti parties held under the bridge. As I looked upward, I noticed a couple of plastic lawn chairs positioned perfectly up on the arch top. I did not climb up to confirm it, but I believe they offered a perfect view of the river.

Once you see the underbelly of the bridge, you immediately realize why it is being replaced. It is simply time. The same decay that is visible on top has only been amplified in the moist environment below.

After seeing the bridge up close, I can now put the construction and all the inconveniences of a detour that come with it as not only necessary, but something we should embrace. That does not mean we won't be faced with general frustration and traffic issues, but knowing it is not optional somehow cushions the blow.

What will also cushion the blow is the planned phase 2 of the project – a new green entrance to Highland Park and the Zoo, including a park with ball fields that will inhabit the lower Zoo parking lot and a walking/biking trail from upper Heth’s Park, through the Zoo parking lot and under the new bridge down to the water. Heth’s Run will once again be a grand entrance to one of the City’s major parks.

The timing for phase 2 has not yet been determined. Funding, the key ingredient to making the project work, has not been appropriated yet. We will have to rely on our representatives – Senator Jim Ferlo and Representative Ed Gainey, US Senator Bob Casey, US Congressman Mike Doyle, the new Mayor, Councilman Patrick Dowd and many others – to lead the fight for funds. If you speak with them, please make sure to let them know that this is a priority for Highland Park.
Monica Watt opened the meeting at 7:10 pm with about 25 attendees. General business was discussed followed by a presentation from Andrew Dash of the Pittsburgh City Planning Department.

General Business Topics:

- Monica Watt spoke about the proposed off-leash dog area. Monica has heard from Mike Gable that progress is being made by the city.

- Monica and Vernon attended a meeting regarding Heth’s and Natoli fields. Sports teams and community leaders attended the meeting and have tried to make progress in developing plans for the fields.

- St Andrew’s will not be available for monthly meetings in June, August and possibly September. Monica is in touch with the Union Project about using their space. Having the meeting at the fountain was also discussed.

Decisions Made: None
Actions Agreed Upon: None

Presentation: Andrew Dash from the City of Pittsburgh Planning Department presented information on the planning process for parks and open spaces which is currently underway. He then answered questions. He will send the presentation to the HPCC which will post it on the website.
The Bucs are playing ball in Bradenton, and sooner or later this mild winter will loosen her gentle grip on us here in Highland Park, with spring right around the corner, and as we move on in the Church Calendar from the rich season of Lent to the good news of bright Easter.

Choral Evensong on the Fifth Sunday afternoon in Lent, March 17, at 4:30 p.m., will be sung by St. Andrew’s Schola Cantorum, and our preacher will be the Rev. Dr. Philip Wainwright, Priest Associate of St. Andrew’s and also Priest-in-Charge of Episcopal Ministry at the University of Pittsburgh.

The traditional Great Three Hours of Good Friday, March 29, will begin with Stations of the Cross at noon, the Liturgy for Good Friday at 1 p.m., and at 2 p.m. a Service of Music offered by St. Andrew’s Parish Choir. That service this year will feature the Stabat Mater of Giovanni Batista Pergolesi, with Chamber Orchestra and Parish Choir, under the direction of Thomas Octave, Assistant Professor and Chair of the Music Department at St. Vincent College. At 3 p.m. the Great Bell of St. Andrew’s Church will be tolled 33 times, to acknowledge the traditional number of years in our Lord’s earthly life.

On the morning of Holy Saturday, March 30, the children and families of the congregation and neighborhood are invited to gather in Brooks Hall at 10 a.m. for a fun time of coloring Easter Eggs.

Easter morning festival services on Sunday, March 31, are at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. All are most welcome and warmly invited. A champagne reception will follow each service, and a fun Easter Egg Hunt in the Churchyard will follow the later service, at about 12:15 p.m.

St. Andrew’s, in the 5800 block of Hampton Street, has been at the heart of this neighborhood of Highland Park for over a century now. If you have a pastoral concern we can help with - a baby to be baptized, a marriage to celebrate, a sick or shut-in family member or neighbor who would appreciate a visit and a blessing, a family to comfort at the time of the death of a loved one - or if you simply would like to borrow a table or find some space for a family gathering too large for your living room, please feel free to give our Church Office a call at 412 661-1245 - or check us on the web, www.standrewspgh.org.

We’re always glad to hear from you.
A Bite of Bryant Street
By Taste Guest Writer Laura Zorch

I was recently introduced to Laura by a coworker. Knowing her passion for food, I asked her if she would write an article about Bryant Street for the newsletter. She graciously agreed...

A stroll down Bryant Street reveals a myriad of options for a hungry wanderer. This unassuming stretch of real estate is home to some of the best and most interesting spots in Pittsburgh for a bite to eat. Want to visit a delightful European bistro? Hey there, Park Bruges! Have a hankering for some delicious noodles? Smiling Banana Leaf has you covered. Truly, there isn’t a restaurant in sight that would disappoint even the most discerning palate.

So follow me as I build my perfect Highland Park meal.

FIRST STOP, e2. This cozy restaurant offers homely Italian fare. The entrees rotate with the seasons, as the fresh ingredients are sourced locally. But, my Highland Park meal starts here for one reason: the Gorgonzola Mess. This cheesy sensation of gorgonzola and other ingredients (i.e.: magic) is the perfect beginning to any food adventure. It is served as a dip with a heaping helping of grilled focaccia, so try to keep the carb counting at bay.
NEXT UP, Teppanyaki Kyoto. The traditional Japanese comfort food dished out here is truly one-of-a-kind here in the Steel City, with the Okonomiyaki (Japanese pancake) as the star of the show. Saddle up to the counter and watch as the chefs create this filling and flavor-packed meal layer by layer. The “pancake” is a cabbage-based batter with your choice of meats and extras, always topped with a healthy dose of fish flakes.

After indulging in the comforting Gorgonzola Mess and the adventuresome Okonomiyaki, it would be easy to forget about the most important part of any meal - the dessert. But to forget about dessert in Highland Park is not wise.

ENTER: Food Glorious Food. Easily one of the best bakeries in the city, this gem cannot be missed. I was introduced to their outstanding confections by way of a friend’s wedding cake. After determining the source of said cake, I immediately found and fell in love with this Bryant Street wonder that produces pies, tarts, cakes, and more. I would cap off my meal with the Chocolate Tulip, a chocolate shell filled ith chocolate cake, mouse, and ganache. But, it would be hard to exit the bakery without box full of goodies, a full stomach, and a very full heart.

Happy eating, Highland Park!

Laura Zorch writes for eatpgh.com. She enjoys all of the sweet things in life, like cakes and cookies. She doesn’t live in Highland Park... not yet, at least.

For more great places to eat in and around your community, pick up the Food Lovers’ Guide to Pittsburgh - a resource of over 200 restaurants for the area. The book is available on Amazon.com and in local bookstores.
Highland Park’s Annual
Bryant Street Festival
Call for Artists

Save the Date - Sunday, June 2, Noon - 5:00 pm

The annual family street fair, sponsored by the Highland Park Community Council, takes place on Bryant Street between N. Highland and N. St Clair Streets. The event includes live musical performances, food vendors, artists selling their work, hands on activities such as ceramics, hula hooping, and a tennis clinic as well as other fun children’s activities.

We are looking for artists or crafters from the neighborhood who would like to participate by performing on stage, demonstrating or selling arts/crafts, fundraising via a bake sale or face painting. Be creative! We are open to ideas.

If you are interested in joining us or if you have any questions contact Kelly Vitti at vittik@verizon.net or festival@highlandparkpa.com
Mayoral Debate
Scheduled at the Obama Academy

A Pittsburgh Mayoral Debate hosted by the local Pittsburgh Youth and Government chapter in conjunction with The Barack Obama Academy of International Studies is slated for March 17th at 1:30 p.m. in the auditorium at Peabody High School. Council Member Bill Peduto and City Controller Michael Lamb will be in attendance.

Confirmations for Jack Wagner, Jim Ferlo, and Darlene Harris are pending their candidacy.

This is a free community event and the students would appreciate your support by attending. Doors open at 1:00 pm and the debate starts promptly at 1:30 pm.

Sunday,
March 17th
1:30 pm
HPCC Officers
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Vice President
Dave Atkinson
Treasurer
Paul Miller (412) 365-0675
Secretary
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Public Safety -
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public-safety@highlandparkpa.com
Reservoir of Jazz - Tania Grubbs
Super Playground -
Monica Watt (412) 361-7902 &
Vernon Simmons (412) 661-1366
Yard Sale - Paul Miller (412) 365-0675
Welcoming - Nancy Schultz
Zoning - Dell Ziegler (412) 363-0742
Happy Easter!

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