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Hello Neighbors!

For the last two years, it has been both a pleasure and a great privilege to serve as the President of the Highland Park Community Council.

In my first President’s Letter, I shared with you the things about our neighborhood that drew my wife Amber and I to make Highland Park our home: its diversity, easy access to public transit, beautiful architecture, great schools, world-class park, and growing business district. I also shared my commitment to working with you to preserve the features that make our neighborhood so special, and to build on them, making Highland Park an even more vibrant, inclusive and welcoming place to live. While that work will never be complete, I think we continue to make progress every day, and I’m proud of the community we have created and are continuing to create together.

Now, after serving two terms as HPCC President, I have decided not to seek another term in order to dedicate more time to other professional and personal obligations. This was not an easy decision for me to make, but it was made much easier because of the great optimism that I feel about our community and its future, and the great trust that I have in the fantastic neighborhood leaders serving on our Board. I’d like to thank all of the dedicated and selfless HPCC Board Members and other volunteers, both past and present, that I’ve had the great fortune to work with in my time with the HPCC. Of all of our neighborhood’s assets, the most valuable by far is its people, and it has been an honor to get to know and work alongside so many of you.

While my time as HPCC President will end on June 30th, my commitment to the neighborhood isn’t going away, and I look forward to continuing to play a role in ongoing community conversations around public transportation and land use, as well as in community events like the Highland Park Yard Sale. After all, I’m not giving up what I view as my most important role in our community: a neighbor to all of you.

And so, I’ll close my last President’s Letter the same way I closed my first: “I’m excited about what the future holds for Highland Park and the HPCC, and hope that you are too.”

Best,

Jake Pawlak
HPCC President
Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Jake Pawlak, HPCC President

Public safety update - Officer Jeffrey Crawford

Highland Park is yet again relatively quiet in terms of crime. Car break-ins and stolen vehicles continue to be the most frequently reported crime. One robbery and one non-fatal overdose were also reported.

A+ Schools 2017 Report to the Community - Amie Matson, Director of Family Youth Engagement

Amie provided an overview of A+ Schools’ 2017 Report to the Community, which covers academic performance at both public schools and charter schools throughout the city. The report is a resource for families choosing a school for their children, and for taxpayers to know where their School District taxes are going.

Overall, Pittsburgh schools has seen graduation rates increase over the past 4 years, an 8% increase in the number of 3rd graders reading at grade level, and a decrease in the suspension rate and the adoption of restorative practices as an alternative to suspension.

Challenges include a 10% decline in enrollment, persistent underperformance in math, high rates of absenteeism, and racial disparities in suspension rates linked to unequal disciplinary practices.

Overviews of the performance profiles for Fulton, Dilworth, Sunnyside, and Obama were provided. These profiles can be found in the report.

Amie also discussed how parents can engage in advocacy around education issues, including testifying at a school board meeting and contacting your school board member directly.

More information on A+ Schools can be found at aplusschools.org.

Community Announcements:

- The Highland Park House Tour was very successful again this year
- Presentation from the Environmental Charter School, which had been scheduled for May, has been postponed until June
- The Highland Park Yard Sale and Bryant Street Festival will be held on June 3rd. Yard Sale begins at 9 a.m., Festival begins at 12 p.m.

Capital Budget Brainstorming Session:
The HPCC will once again be conducting a survey to allow residents to weigh in on which projects should be prioritized in the HPCC’s advocacy concerning the City of Pittsburgh Capital Budget. Residents were provided with an opportunity to suggest projects to be included in the survey. Responses will be accepted in the first 2 weeks of June, after which they will be compiled, analyzed, and submitted to Councilwoman Gross.

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 21, 2018 at St. Andrews at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.
Introducing City Cuts, the City of Pittsburgh's lawn cutting program for our older neighbors, our veteran neighbors, and our neighbors with disabilities who do not have the means to cut their own grass. In 2018, this service will be provided approximately every two weeks, weather permitting, from July to September.

Applicants must reside within the City of Pittsburgh and be 62 years or older, or a veteran, or have a disability. Apply by calling 311 for an application, filling out the online form, or visiting your local Carnegie Library.

Applications will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. [http://pittsburghpa.gov/citycuts/](http://pittsburghpa.gov/citycuts/)
Cinema in the Park

Grab a blanket and head out for an unforgettable evening of free cinema under the stars. Citipark’s Cinema in the Park features family friendly movies on the last Monday of each month this summer.

Shows start at dusk and will include:

- **June 25th**
  - *Paddington 2*

- **July 30th**
  - *My Little Pony: The Movie*

- **August 27th**
  - *Sherlock Gnomes*

Films will be shown on the hill behind the reservoir at the north end of Reservoir Drive. Visit the Citiparks website for the complete schedule and more details. [www.pittsburghparks.org/blog/2018-cinema-in-the-park-schedule](http://www.pittsburghparks.org/blog/2018-cinema-in-the-park-schedule)
Thank you to everyone who donated yard sale items to Fulton this year. We doubled the amount we raised last year!

The money will be used toward Field Day, a very popular K-4 activity that happens while the 5th graders go on their big class field trip – the 5th Grade Promotion.

It also puts the PTO a lot closer to our big goal of funding next year’s math enrichment program, which the teachers and students all love. We were able to purchase the program for the school this year and hope to be able to keep the tradition going.

It was very exciting for us to see how many people in the community donated and stopped by to shop - we are so appreciative. We hope to make Fulton an even bigger part of the neighborhood as time goes on!
My initial ListServ post on Cedar Waxwings in my yard generated a lot of responses. Apparently, they are not all that rare around here, especially nearer the Park and when berries are available. A few people remarked on large gatherings feasting on berries near the reservoir. The “hot” bird right now is the Rose-Breasted Grosbeak. There were four sightings on this boldly colored bird in neighborhood yards. Pileated Woodpeckers, very large birds akin to the possibly extinct Ivory-Billed, have been seen in and near the Park. MR had one hanging onto her feeder recently. PG reported having one pass over her head near the tennis courts on Stanton Ave. (Could there be a nest nearby?) She also viewed a Great Blue Heron at Carnegie Lake, on the far side of the Park.
Other less common birds reported included Red-Bellied Woodpeckers, Baltimore Orioles, Red-Breasted Nuthatches (a good deal smaller than the more common White-Breasted), and Carolina Wrens. I have wrens nesting in a hanging basket on my porch at Jackson and N. Euclid, among the fake poinsettias I never got around to removing in the Spring. (It’s fun to watch the antics of these spunky little birds whenever anyone approaches the nest.) I also can report that a Catbird was “singing his fool head off” a few weeks ago in my yard.

A number of people have contacted me who are not that knowledgeable about birds, but would like to learn more. I wonder if some experienced birder might take them under his/her “wing.” Beechwood Farms is also a great resource.

A RECOLLECTION: Lying on my deck, gazing up at three hawks circling on the updrafts, against the backdrop of an oh-so-blue sky. Whenever the juvenile one would wander too far ahead, it would be called back by the screech of one of its parents… just like a young family with a 3-year-old, strolling the street on a summer day.

A RECOMMENDATION: You might consider them weeds, but tall volunteers like goldenrod and wild aster are exquisite nectar for bees in the fall. We need to do what we can to stabilize the bee population. Why not leave these hardy native plants growing in some obscure corner of your garden?

Our neighborhood is blessed with a great deal of natural beauty. Send your observations regarding unusual birds and other aspects of the “wild side” of Highland Park to my email on the previous page — I’ll edit and compile them for this monthly newsletter. Your photos would be most welcome. No names or yard locations will be given without your approval. More timely bits of information will be posted on the Highland Park ListServ.
h, temps in the 90’s in Highland Park! Summer is clearly on its way, and with afternoons at the pool, jazz in the shade on Sunday evenings, or just a nap on the lounger in the backyard - what could be better?

Sunday worship at St. Andrew’s follows a Summer Schedule in June, July, and August, with one Sunday morning service at 10 a.m. Children are always welcome in the congregation, but it’s helpful to know as well that our Nursery for infants and toddlers will be staffed on Summer Sundays from 9:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. and that on most Sundays children will also have an invitation during the 10 a.m. service to participate in Children’s Chapel. Cool refreshments and conversation follow the service each Sunday in air-conditioned Brooks Hall.

In addition to Sunday services, the St. Andrew’s parish family continues through the summer months with a rich (though perhaps somewhat more leisurely) schedule of social and educational activities for all ages.

It’s a long-standing tradition that the parish is invited to “read a book together” over the summer, and this year we’ve chosen a book by retired Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams entitled “Where God Happens: Discovering Christ in One Another.” Williams explores connections between ancient expressions of Christian life and our contemporary context and challenges. On two evenings, June 26 and August 16, we’ll gather downstairs in Barley Hall at 7 p.m. to discuss, and to enjoy a cool glass of lemonade!

We’re also planning a trip to see our Pirates at PNC Park on Sunday afternoon, August 19, when the local team is scheduled to defeat the Chicago Cubs in a game beginning at 1:35 p.m. If you’d like to join the St. Andrew’s Cheering Section, please give the Church Office a call to reserve your ticket(s).

St. Andrew’s with our great Parish Choir, under the direction of our Organist and Choirmaster, and Highland Park neighbor, Peter Luley, offers opportunities for learning and expression and participation in choral worship in the rich Anglican sacred music. Our highly regarded Children’s “Godly Play” and “Tween” and Youth Group programs, under the direction of our Director of the Church School, Brandon Cooper, enrich the Christian life and formation of our families. And our midweek services and adult Bible Studies, lectures, and special programs will all resume our regular fall schedule on “Round Up Sunday,” September 9 - a day traditionally celebrated with a Parish Picnic in the Hampton Street Churchyard.

St. Andrew’s has been on the corner of Hampton Street and North Euclid Avenue and at the heart of our Highland Park neighborhood for over a century. If there is a pastoral need that we can help with - a baby to be baptized, a wedding to celebrate, a sick or shut-in friend or neighbor to be visited, a family to support at the time of a death - please feel free to be in touch. Or if you just need to find some space for a meeting or a family gathering, or to borrow a few chairs, we’ll be glad to help if we can. Call us at 412.661.1245, e-mail office@standrewspgh.org, visit our website www.standrewspgh.org, and “Like” our Facebook Page. We’re always glad to hear from you!
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