A Letter from the President

Covid-19 is here. At the time of publication, there are 58 known cases in Allegheny County, although testing has been quite limited. We can certainly expect more. Schools are closed. Firms are asking people to work at home. Businesses are cutting hours or closing. Many in our community may be feeling isolated, confused, or scared. Many want to help but don’t know how. The HPCC will do its part to keep you connected and informed.

• **Social Distancing** is the best line of defense for the community. During the 1918 influenza epidemic, rapid social distancing efforts in St. Louis saved untold lives, while in Philadelphia the refusal to cancel a World War I parade resulted in a rapid and avoidable spread of the disease.

**Effect of Early Interventions on Epidemic Spread in 1918**

But what does social distancing really mean? How can I protect myself and my family without losing my mind from isolation?

• **Resources.** The HPCC has posted links on social distancing strategies, as well as health information (both general and for parents, travelers, high-risk individuals, and those who are sick or caring for the sick), ways to deal with stress, state and local news, community resources, and resources for parents. Check out the new Covid-19 tab on our website, HPCCPgh.org. We will keep updating the page, so check back regularly.

• **If you need help, or want to help**, please join, follow, and share our new Facebook page, Highland Park Helping Hands. This group is open to Highland Park residents and businesses and is designed for posting requests for help and offers of assistance. The purpose is to connect neighbors who are quarantined, social distancing, or ill with other neighbors who can help. For example, you can post and respond to requests for grocery drop off, prescription pick-up, and any other needs that may come up. This type of social networking tool works best when there is a critical mass of people participating - thank you to the 230+ people who signed up in the first 24 hours! Because not everyone is on Facebook, we also encourage you to check-in with your neighbors and post requests for them as needed. If you have a sensitive request or special need, you can email the HPCC directly at HPCCPgh@gmail.com and a board member will get back to you within 24 hours.

Don’t panic. You are part of a community. There are people you can turn to for help - but also keep your eyes, ears, and hearts open to the people around you who may need your help, too.

“Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community.”
- Anthony D’angelo

With warmest regards -
Your Highland Park Community Council President,

Stephanie Walsh
At the time of publication, the primary elections in Pennsylvania are scheduled for April 28. The last day to register with a political party is April 13. PA law now allows all voters to request a mail-in ballot; requests are due April 21. For information on registering or requesting a mail-in ballot, visit https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/, or call 1.877.VOTESPA (1.877.868.3772). If the state makes any changes to voting procedures or dates due to Covid-19 concerns, the HPCC will post information on its website and the community ListServ.
HPCC Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2020

Meeting convened at 7:05 p.m.
by Stephanie Walsh

Zone 5 Update: Commander Vinanski, Lt. Gaunter, Officer Crawford

In response to the concerns raised at last month’s HPCC Community Meeting, Zone 5 increased patrols here in HP and looked more closely at robberies happening across the zone, resulting in some kids who were tied to burglaries being picked up. The result was that from Jan 20 - Feb 20, 2020, there was only ONE reported crime in HP - a theft from an unlocked vehicle. HP remains one of the safest neighborhoods in the city.

Zone 5 provided handouts for Block Watches which now are primarily virtual, utilizing online networks such as NextDoor. The also had handouts called “You and the Police” which provide information on the public’s rights, responsibilities, and the realities of encounters with law enforcement. Copies of these brochures are available from Officer Crawford in Zone 5 and by emailing the HPCC at HPCCPgh@gmail.com.

A resident asked about the air horn warnings that can be heard throughout the neighborhood. It was generally thought that these volunteer firefighter alarms from across the river. The officers said that they would make some calls to investigate. The also encouraged residents to call when they hear the alarms to notify Zone 5 so that they could investigate.

When asked about recent school lockdowns in the neighborhood, the officers explained that the lockdowns are typically the decision of the School Department, not the Police Department. The School Department monitors the Police Channel and will lockdown schools as a precaution when there are active incidents nearby. Usually students are not in danger, but the intention is to prevent students from leaving the building and encountering emergency vehicles, etc.

The Zone 5 Open House will be held on June 13, 2020 from noon until 4 pm.

Casa Brasil: Co-owner Tim Guthrie

Tim Guthrie introduced 3 dishes provided by Casa Brasil, care of the HPCC. Attendees got to enjoy fried plantains, gluten-free cheese bread, and churros with dulce de leche sauce. Tim explained the history of the restaurant, and described all they offer and their plans for expanded hours and services. In addition to offering regular lunch service, Casa Brasil also:

- Has a function space
- Hosts Brasilian dance parties
- Was hosting a Carnival Party on 2/22
- Hosts visiting chefs on Mondays and/or Tuesdays
- Are on social media
- Cater events on and off-site
- Have numerous vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free menu options

Census 2020: Dolores Tanglen

Dolores is a recruiter for the Census. She discussed the importance of the Census generally as well as employment opportunities. In Allegheny County, the Census pays $23.50/hour. Work is based in or near your community, can be part-time, and is flexible. They are hiring for census takers and other positions. The Census will be starting April 1 and run through June or July. Individuals must be 18 years old to work for the Census. All applications are done online at 2020census.gov/jobs.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.
by Stephanie Walsh
The city’s curbside recycling isn’t the only game in town if you’re a motivated recycling Pittsburgher. While the city only collects plastic bottles, jars, and jugs larger than 2” in their residential recycling program, if you’re willing to separately collect other items, you do have some other local options for recycling. Here are a few insider tips on where to take a few of these items:

**CHIP AND SNACK BAGS**

Subaru has partnered with REI to offer a TerraCycle snack wrapper recycling program at REI locations.

Currently the REI at South Side Works is collecting through this program. You can bring all snack wrappers including candy, chips, and granola to drop off in this box. They will accept snack size to family size.
You can also donate your foil-lined chip and snack bags to Jennifer Schurman, a local artist who creates 2D and 3D art using post-consumer waste. She has collection bins inside the East End Food Coop and nearby Construction Junction. Please be kind and make sure your bags are free of food crumbs before you drop them off!

SMALL PLASTIC CAPS

Currently Square Cafe in Regent Square is collecting bottle caps through a mail-in program from TerraCycle. Their collection bin is in the front atrium of their restaurant and accepts plastic caps from bottles, jugs, jars etc., including the twist off plastic caps that come on baby food pouches.
From March to May, there’s a new place to take your rigid #2 and #5 plastic items that aren’t accepted curbside - Protohaven, a non-profit Pittsburgh maker-space, has started a program that collects rigid #2 and #5 plastics to be shredded and turned into raw materials to be made into new plastic items like tools, bowls, sculptures, and more. You can drop off your plastic at Protohaven during their “Shredding Sundays” events, every Sunday from 10a.m. to 2p.m. You do not have to be a member of Protohaven to drop off or shred plastic. Just be sure to clean your plastic first and remove any labels. (www.protohaven.org)

Several local chains have plastic bag collections at their stores, including Giant Eagle and Target. The bags dropped off here often get recycled into things like benches and decking. However, these bins don’t accept all plastic bags. They generally accept plastic bags or plastic film that stretches if you push your fingers into it. This includes grocery bags, bread bags, cereal box liners, zipper baggies, produce bags, and overwrap on items like slats of water bottles. Also accepted are air pillows and bubble wrap (pop both first!) as well as all-plastic bubble mailers. Common not-accepted items include pre-washed salad bags, chip bags, frozen food bags (even if they are stretchy) and compostable bags. The PlasticFilmRecycling.org website has more information about what these bins collect.
One more potential destination for your plastic castoffs is the Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse. They accept all sorts of items for resell as crafting supplies. They generally won’t take anything that has been used with food. You can see their list of accepted items at http://pccr.org/donate/donation-guide/.

ABOUT THOSE CONSTRUCTION JUNCTION DUMPSTERS

Many neighbors are aware that there are recycling collection dumpsters near the entrance of the Construction Junction parking lot. However, not everyone realizes that these dumpsters are collected by the City and for the most part these dumpsters only accept the same items that are accepted in curbside recycling. This is particularly important when it comes to plastics – only rigid plastic bottles, jars, and jugs (without caps) are accepted – no bags, tubes, trays, clamshells, plastic cups, etc. Don’t take your clamshells, cups, etc to these dumpsters – you will be contaminating the accepted plastic items! And the same is true at all the city’s dropoff locations, even if you see old signage that says otherwise.

Recycle This is a column to share useful and practical info on recycling and other sustainable living practices here in Highland Park. Have something you want to share or a question you’d like to ask? Send to sabrina@recyclethispgh.com.
Gardening in early spring is risky because of the potential for frost. So what can we do on those lovely warm days that come occasionally in March? This would be a good time to cut ornamental grasses down to three inches above the ground. Once when I was clearing away all of the spent stems and leaves of my four lovely Miscanthus grasses, my neighbor asked me, is it worth it? She meant of course, all of the cutting with my brush saw, then filling so many bags with leaves and stems, and hauling them away to the mulch center. Yes, I said, without a thought. I love the look of those barren short stems sticking out of the ground because I know that in a week new shoots will begin to shoot up. Before I know it, my privacy fence of grasses will arrive.

At this time of year, clearing debris and leaves out of flowerbeds allows the new growth of bulb flowers to come up. This Sunday I gathered the leaves from my front yard that fell after fall from the huge pin oak that my neighbor planted 75 years ago. These leaves kept the plants and earthworms safe below all winter. As I removed them, I saw the yellow shoots of daffodil and snow drop leaves. In another few days, the sun will turn them green and they will continue to shoot up bringing their lovely flowers with them.

Brave souls can plant berry bushes in March. I planted Chester and Triple Crown blackberry bushes three years ago on March 30th when the delivery came earlier than expected. My son had prepared the soil for me the previous fall because it had to be dug deep to allow the bushes’ roots to set. The day after I planted them, we got an inch of snow. I panicked, thinking that I had lost the bushes. Come May, leaf buds appeared on their branches and both thornless bushes flourished with huge berries by August.

March is an excellent time to join a garden club for inspiration. On May 16th we will plan what flowers will go into the planters on Bryant street.

And save the date for our Highland Park Secret Garden Tour on July 12th!
We have started a program called Buddies and Runners. If you are feeling isolated and lonely or having a difficult time getting food, prescriptions or other necessities, you can reach out to our office and let us know. We can pair you up with a buddy who can help out. For some that may be a daily phone call or for others that may be someone who can assist you by getting groceries. Or if you have the time and ability to run errands for someone else you can be a runner.

During this time of uncertainty our services will be streamed on our Facebook page. Check us out live for our Sunday 9:00 a.m. service or visit us later for a replay of those services. We may be adding more options soon.

We are all in this together and with God’s grace and love we will make it through this trying and difficult time.

We at St. Andrew’s know that this is a stressful and anxious time for everyone. Please know we are committed to being a good neighbor to the residents of Highland Park.

Life is changing rapidly so please check our website, www.standrewspgh.org, our Facebook page, or our outgoing phone message for more information about the Church. If there is anything that we can help with please don’t hesitate to reach out to us. We have members of our congregation and our Outreach team willing to help our community.

St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church
5801 Hampton Street
Highland Park, Pittsburgh

The Rev. Dr. Moni McIntyre,
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Chris Worley

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**Membership Committee:** Chris Worley

**Nominating Committee:** Stephanie Walsh

**Welcoming Committee:** Todd Shirley

**Zoning Committee:** Jake Pawlak

**Bryant Street Festival:** Bob Staresinic

**Newsletter:** Monica Watt, editor@highlandpark.com

**Reservoir of Jazz:** Tonia Grubbs

**Yard Sale:** Jake Pawlak

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**Community Council**

**Highland Park Community Council**

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