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Hello Neighbors,

It’s hard to believe that it’s been six months since Covid-19 changed all of our lives, and yet the “new normal” - masks, social distancing, Zoom everything - still doesn’t feel normal. I finally remember to grab a mask on the way out the door, but I still yearn to hug my friends, miss visiting my extended family in person, and wonder daily about the long term impacts on everything from my kids and my job, to my favorite local businesses and society as a whole. And I’ve been fortunate: my husband and I can still work and our family has remained healthy.

The pandemic has caused everyone stress and forced people to find new ways to connect. For many, the HPCC’s Summer Porch Concert series provided a welcome outlet. With the concert series wrapping up this month, I want to give a special thanks to all of the musicians for sharing their talent and time with us - especially Tania and Jeff Grubbs and Jonathan Callard who performed nearly every weekend. They are a diverse and talented group, including many professional musicians, whose genres range from traditional jazz to jazz fusion, folk, flamenco, and synthesizer funk. Some came from outside the neighborhood - as did some audience members - but everyone came together to enjoy pleasant summer evenings of companionship and music. And, for at least an hour each week, we had a beautiful bit of respite from our worries. The porch concerts are just one example of how with a little creativity and generosity, we can connect and support each other through these challenging times.

This isn’t over yet, and in the coming months we’ll need our neighbors more than ever. So chins up, masks on, and hearts open, folks. No one said it would be easy, but we’re all in this together.

Stephanie Walsh
HPCC President
Thank you

Summer Porch Concert Performers!

- Alba Flamenca
- Barrett Black Denmon
- Christopher Shipton
- Devilish Merry
- Funky Fly Project
- Glass Run Gals
- Highland Park Mini Band
- Jonathan Callard and friends

- Kevin Wang
- Lilly Abreu and Eric Susoeff
- Olga Watkins Band
- Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Members: Scott Bell, Jeremy Black, Max Blair, Lorien Hart, Joe Merchant, Kyle Mustain, Jim Rodgers, David Sogg, and Gretchen Van Hoesen

- Tami Fire
- Tania & Jeff Grubbs and guests
- Roger Romero
- Sam Stucky
- Saul Straussman
- Tom Roberts
- Trevor Ring
- Uptown Quartet
August HPCC Community Zoom Meeting
8/20/20
Moderated by Stephanie Walsh and Howard Degenholtz
40 individuals in attendance
Meeting called to order by Stephanie Walsh, HPCC President, at 7:00 p.m.

Announcements:
• Karin Manovich, HPCC Board Vice President, has stepped down from her position. She has moved to Ohio to be closer to her family.
  – Karin was very involved with the Community and will be sorely missed by all.
• Betsy Rogerson, an HPCC Board member, has graciously agreed to assume the Vice President’s role. Betsy has been very active in several Committees/HPCC activities.
  – She was voted in the VP position by the Board, August 12th.
  – Welcome, Betsy!
• There is currently an open position on the Board.
  – All interested are encouraged to contact the HPCC President, Stephanie Walsh, at HPCCPgh@gmail.com

Super Duper Playground Update -
Presented by Sabrina Culyba:
• Stay tuned and alert for further updates. (See HPCC website for details.)
• The Committee is looking for people who were involved in the original Playground Project in order to recognize them and to provide historical perspective
  – Please send any pictures, newspaper articles, etc, pertaining to the original installation to the HPCC email - HPCCpgh@gmail.com.
  – For more information, visit hpccpgh.com and select About / Neighborhood Development. If you follow the link to the City’s website, you can sign up for updates from the City.
  – The HPCC Neighborhood Development page is a new addition to the website and has information on all big development projects happening in the neighborhood and park.

Update from Zone 5
• Representatives from Zone 5 were unable to attend the meeting.
Shooting Range Committee Update - Presented by David Klahr, Committee Chairman

- This committee has been working with representatives from the Pittsburgh Police to develop a mutually agreeable schedule for activity at the police shooting range.
- History on similar efforts in the past was presented.
- Those interested in being more involved on this issue should email David Klahr at klahr@andrew.cmu.edu.

Developer Activity Meeting: 925 Mellon Street- Presented by Ryan England, Second Studio, an Architectural/Engineering firm

- Currently this property has 3 apartments on the 2nd and 3rd floor. The first floor is a long-vacant retail space. The developer is proposing to convert the ground floor to another apartment (changing it from one non-conforming use to another). The existing three rental units on the upper floors would remain.
- This is the community’s opportunity to hear about the proposal, see the plans, ask the developer questions, and provide input.
- In the back of the building will clearly be defined into two parking spaces.
- A new A/C unit for the entire building will be installed.
- The upper floors will receive some restoration - painting and brick repointing.
- First floor will receive new windows and window treatments.
- A ‘historic” looking entry door/facade will be added.
- Adjacent neighbors were present and had questions.
- Numerous questions regarding the back of the building and drainage were posed.
- Feedback is encouraged.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:00 p.m. by Stephanie Walsh.
Between stories of long lines at the polls during the primaries and questions about USPS processing times, people are concerned about how easy it will be to vote in the upcoming election. The PA Supreme Court and Allegheny County Elections Division recently made some decisions that expand voting options and hopefully make it easier to vote & have your vote counted. In particular:

There are additional locations for dropping off mail-in ballots and the opportunity to vote in-person prior to November 3.

NEW VOTING OPTIONS

Additional Election Division offices will be operating three weekends in October: 10 & 11, 17 & 18, and 24 & 25.

- If you requested a mail-in ballot but have not received it, you can visit one of these locations and submit a ballot and it will be reflected that you cast a ballot.

- If you requested and received a mail-in ballot, you can return your ballot at one of these locations. Ballots must be returned by the voter, not another individual.

- If you have not requested a mail-in ballot, you can visit one of these locations, apply for a mail-in ballot, it will be processed on the spot, a ballot will be printed and given to you, and you’ll fill it out privately and submit it in a locked drop box.

Saturday, Oct. 10 – Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- County Office Building
- North Park Ice Rink
- South Park Ice Rink
- DPW Garage # 2 (Carnegie)
- CCAC Homewood

Sunday, Oct. 11 – Hours: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- County Office Building
- North Park Ice Rink
- South Park Ice Rink
- DPW Garage # 2 (Carnegie)
- CCAC Homewood

Saturday, Oct. 17 – Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- County Office Building
- South Park Ice Rink
- CCAC South
- Boyce Park Ski Lodge
- Shop ’n Save Hill District

Sunday, Oct. 18 – Hours: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- County Office Building
- South Park Ice Rink
- CCAC South
- Boyce Park Ski Lodge
- Shop ’n Save Hill District
**Saturday, Oct. 24 – Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**
- County Office Building
- Boyce Park Ski Lodge
- CCAC South
- CCAC Allegheny
- North Park Ice Rink

**Sunday, Oct. 25 – Hours: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.**
- County Office Building
- Boyce Park Ski Lodge
- CCAC South
- CCAC Allegheny
- North Park Ice Rink

**CHANGE TO MAIL-IN DEADLINE**
If you want to submit your ballot by mail, officials suggest sending them two weeks early. Previously ballots had to be received by the County Elections Office by close of business Election Day. However, the new rule is that ballots postmarked by 8 pm Election Day (Nov 3) and received by Nov. 6 will be counted. You can still return your mail-in ballot to the County Elections Office, 543 Forbes Street, Ste 604 by closing time on Election Day. Ballots must be returned by the voter, not another individual.

**TRADITIONAL IN-PERSON VOTING & NEW VOTING MACHINES**
Voters in Allegheny County will now fill out paper ballots that will be fed into a scanner which will record their votes. On November 3, polls will open at 7 am and close at 8 pm; plan ahead when you’ll vote and allocate sufficient time in case there’s a wait. Anyone in line at 8 pm will be allowed to vote. Most polling places will be the same as past elections. To confirm your polling location, use the PA Department of State’s Polling Place Search tool (www.pavoterservices.pa.gov).

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**REGISTRATION & OTHER DEADLINES**
- Deadline to register to vote: Oct 19.
- Last day to request a mail-in ballot: Oct 27, 5 pm
- Mail-in ballots must be postmarked by Nov 3, 8 pm (Election Day)
- Additional information about and applications for voting are available at votespa.com

**ELECTION RESULTS**
Because Pennsylvania and other states have extended the acceptable deadline for receipt of absentee ballots past election day, and because it is possible that the results will be contested by the losing candidate, it is possible that election results will not be known for several days or even weeks after the election. Please keep in mind that the process matters: it is better to wait for a definitive decision than to hurry a questionable one.
This year brought some new City projects and initiatives to Highland Park, such as the temporary closure of Reservoir Drive to cars and the creation of the North Euclid Neighborway. People couldn’t agree if the changes were good or bad, but everyone had something to say. Repeatedly, one thing we heard was that people want to be engaged earlier, learn more, and have more of a say when new projects are being considered. Good news - the city’s looking for you to engage right now!

The city recently launched a community engagement initiative as part of ForgingPGH: a new citywide comprehensive planning process. The intention is to take a comprehensive look at land use and develop a plan to guide investment and development across the city for the next two decades. According to the City Planning Office, the plan will provide an equitable framework for housing, development, mobility, sustainability and land use.

To participate, visit www.ForgingPgh.org. There you can review a report on current conditions and trends; participate in online workshops (through Oct 1); and sign-up for updates. The workshop also can be completed by calling 3-1-1 or visiting open Carnegie Library locations. In the spring, the city plans to have public presentations and open houses to review the data collected and help choose scenarios for the plan before it is presented to the Planning Commission for adoption and implementation.
HPCC AND CITY KICK OFF THE SUPER DUPER PLAYGROUND PROJECT

By Betsy Rogerson

This fall begins an exciting new chapter for one of Highland Park’s most treasured amenities, the Super Playground. Located on Reservoir Drive, the playground has served as one of Pittsburgh’s most beloved playspaces and the scene of countless memories for generations of local children.

Conceived in 1991, the Super Playground started out as a dream by two Highland Park mothers, Marsha Kolbe and Rosanne Levine. Tired of driving their children to playgrounds in other East End neighborhoods and inspired by a community-built playground that they visited in Buffalo, New York, they decided to take action. The two moms contacted the architect of the Buffalo playground and started what would become a year and a half-long process to build a safe, imaginative playground right in Highland Park.

The resulting Super Playground that we all know and love was a community effort in every sense of the word. Marsha and Rosanne spearheaded a group of committees that focused on fundraising, building, public relations, and food and supplies for the build day. One of the most important committees - and the reason that the Super Playground is the success that it is today - was the children’s committee. Groups of children from three area schools worked together to brainstorm their ideal playground and share their vision with the architect.

The Highland Park Super Playground was dedicated at a ribbon cutting in 1992 after a five-day build, completed by a team of 90 volunteers. The playground was originally built to last for twenty years. Though strong stewardship over the years by the Highland Park Community Council has extended that by nearly a decade, the playground is now ready for its second life. The HPCC is excited to announce the launch of the Super Duper Playground Project, a collaboration with the City of Pittsburgh, design firm Merritt Chase, and other neighborhood groups to redesign and reconstruct the playground.

With a budget of $750,000 provided by the City of Pittsburgh’s 2020 RAD funding, plus an additional $100,000 for the design and $39,000 from the HPCC Super Playground maintenance fund, the Super Duper Playground Project will be a year-long effort.

Community members, both young and old, will be invited to give their feedback and ideas through a series of surveys, community meetings, and other forms of outreach. The goal is to make a playground that will be imaginative, interactive, nature-based, and inclusive. A public art component that reflects the spirit of the community will be included, as will something dedicated to the original community volunteers who helped make it all possible.

For updates on the project, residents are encouraged to sign up on the City of Pittsburgh’s new Engage Pgh site: https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/highland-park-super-playground. There you will find a survey and a drawing upload area to share ideas on the playground, as well as a link to sign up for a community workshop on October 15th, 7:00 p.m. via Zoom as part of the HPCC October monthly meeting.

A Treasured Playspace is Ready for Its Second Chapter

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Bringing Plants Indoors for Winter

By Diana Pelletier, Highland Park Garden Club

The first red and pink leaves have fallen from the sugar Maple, signaling that we need to gather in the plants that won't make it through our tough Pennsylvania winter. Which do we want to keep safe inside so that we can enjoy them again next year? Which do we want to thin out so that we can replant or gift them in the spring? Overwintering plants takes a little time and effort and rewards us by saving money and having a healthy mature plant to replant in the spring each year. Several Highland Park Garden Club members have shared their expertise with me on how they protect their favorite plants.

Some plants can be left in their container over the winter when they are brought inside. Elaine has overwintered geraniums for decades. These are large beautiful plants. She does not take them out of the pot nor water them. In the spring when she sees green shoots, she brings the pot out on the porch, soaks it with water and pinches off the dead parts. She then fertilizes the plant every other week through the early summer. She said that for people interested in overwintering geraniums, they should purchase zonal geraniums rather than those raised from seed. Zonal plants are cultivated from cuttings and they produce a stronger plant with larger blossoms that can easily be overwintered.

Spike plants are stored in Nancy’s garage over the winter. To store them, she uses a removable tape such as painter’s tape to bind the leaves of each plant together, sort of like folding up an umbrella. Then she can fit several plants with a little dirt in one pot. She waters them sparingly over the winter. The advantage to overwintering them is that after a few years, some of these Spikes are four feet high and make a spectacular centerpiece for a container planting.

Susan’s husband loves Lantanas for their bright colors so she decided to overwinter two plants that had been growing in her yard. She dug them up and put them in a large pot in
layering peat moss and roots. Caladium, so nice in window boxes, also has rhizomes which can be dried and stored the same way. Cannas cannot take the cold at all, so their rhizomes must be dug up in the fall. They prefer to have air circulate around them when they are stored after being dried. They can be stored in a mesh bag in a garage or shed.

Tuberous begonias can be brought in and sat in a sunny window with minimal watering. Like other plants that are brought in, they will drop their leaves and flowers, but new leaves will grow back. Or you can dry out the tuberous roots, as with day lilies and preserve them in peat moss until spring. Having these lovely plants indoors, though dormant serves as a reminder to us that spring will return and that their beauty will remain with us year after year.

Some plants have tuberous roots called rhizomes, such as day lilies. They can winter in the ground here, but the fall is a great time to thin them out. I have a large planting of them and sometimes don’t have the time to replant after thinning them, so I store them and plant at my leisure in the spring. Dig up the rhizomes after the leaves turn yellow. Dust off the extra soil and dry them out somewhere away from sunlight. Put peat moss in a box and lay the rhizomes down, not touching each other, so that if one rots, it won’t spread. Continue
Given all the lovely yards and gardens in our neighborhood, it may be no surprise to learn that many folks around Highland Park are composting. From simple outdoor bins to indoor vermicomposting with worms to composting services with curbside pick-up, our neighbors are putting their food scraps, grass clippings, and fall leaves to good use. Here are some of their experiences and tips:

I often hear concerns about odor and critters from people as a reason to avoid composting. I have never had problems with any of these. Be sure there are plenty of open spaces for air movement. If air can’t get in, it will ferment anaerobically and that will smell bad. Be patient. Have fun. For a running start, ask your neighbors to contribute food and yard debris.

- Nancy Levine

As I’ve learned more about the devastation of climate change and the impact that humans have on the planet, I’ve taken small steps to decrease my footprint on earth. Composting started out as an idea and has quickly become a habit, a teaching opportunity with our children, and a way to easily recycle our yard/food waste into usable soil in our yard.

- Justin Sandherr

I’ve been composting for about 10 years now. We’re new to Pittsburgh (here 1.5 years) and have been composting most of that time and before that in Seattle… I use old pallets as the frame of the compost pile with chicken wire wrapped around them. I have a small food waste bin inside that we fill up through the week and then empty it into a 20 gallon plastic garbage can w/lid that’s outside. It also has a bunch of holes drilled into the side & bottom for air circulation.

- James Rooney
We recently started vermicomposting in our apartment indoors in HP. We've wanted to do regular backyard composting for a while, but as renters, we didn't have a good place to do this.

- Zibby Fry

We have been composting in a fashion for at least 15 years. I was afraid there might be an unpleasant odor at first so I placed it far away from the house. This was fine until winter weather called my ecological bluff and I was not willing to slog out to a distant snowy blur. We moved it near the kitchen door and now only truly icy conditions deter us. So we use it year round. One expert told me not to put tomatoes in my compost because they will also sprout. But, since the best tomato plants we get each year seem to come out of the compost heap, I ignored that advice.

- Diane Jackson

I compost in a very lazy manner that works. I've been composting for 30 years or longer. I have tried plastic composting bins and have not been satisfied with results, and I certainly don't want to buy any more plastic. I just throw everything into a pile in corner of the garden. I throw it out the window - coffee grounds, organic matter, compostable paper, eggshells, coffee grounds - never meat or cheese or pasta or bread. I have never had rats or any other problems. It helps if you can put your pile in a place where it will get rain, as moisture helps the stuff to break down. That is it. Composting is extremely easy. If you let it sit long enough, it will break down. I use my compost in my organic garden, on perennials, tomatoes, beans... it's much better soil than the potting soil you buy at the store. And it's free!

- Kimberly Latta

It feels pretty good to see all the things that were going to go to landfill be redirected to a more natural and environmentally conscientious path.

- Kasey Katt
Composting is a cheap way to replenish your yard’s nutrients for great gardens but the impact goes beyond your own home. Organic waste (including food and yard debris) is a huge source of landfill methane emissions, a significant greenhouse gas. Home composting, in contrast, creates a net-reduction in greenhouse gasses. In addition, taking food and yard waste out of the city waste stream reduces the money that the city spends on waste transport and landfill dumping. It also removes food waste from your own kitchen trash can, allowing you to go longer between emptying your trash, which in turn cuts down on the number of plastic bags you use yearly for your household trash. All of these are little things, but as the number of Pittsburghers who are composting continues to grow, together we can have a big impact and help Pittsburgh meet its Zero Waste goals.

Several HP neighbors got started with composting by attending a local PRC Workshop, which provides you with an outdoor compost bin. If you can’t compost at your home, both Shadyside Worms and Worm Return provide curbside pickup of food scraps for composting for a monthly fee. They also both offer workshops on vermicomposting with worms. The City has also partnered with Worm Return to provide a no-cost food waste drop-off at the East Liberty Farmers’ Market on Mondays, 3:00-7:00 p.m. You can also check out Share Waste to pair up with someone with a compost bin who wants your material - food scraps or yard debris.

PRC Composting Workshops: https://prc.org/programs/webinars/
Worm Return: https://www.wormreturn.com/
Shadyside Worms: https://shadysideworms.com/
Share Waste: https://sharewaste.com/
More info on composting options: https://recyclethispgh.com/item/food-waste/

Thank you to everyone who shared their photos, experiences, and advice for this article!
It is with delight and thanksgiving that the Vestry of St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church here in Highland Park announces the calling of the Rev. Chris Cole as the sixteenth Rector of St. Andrew’s.

Chris graduated with a degree in business from the University of North Carolina Charlotte and the Virginia Theological Seminary. He was ordained in July 2012 and has served as a Curate and Associate Rector in the Diocese of Atlanta before becoming the Senior Associate Rector at St. Mary’s Parish in Arlington, Virginia. He and his wife Alex married last November and she is the U.S. Managing Director of an international interior design firm. They moved to Pittsburgh the first week in September and Chris’s first Sunday Service was September 13. He is excited and looking forward to his work at St. Andrew’s.

St. Andrew’s continues to offer one live service a week at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays through at least September. This service will continue to be live-streamed on Facebook and available later on YouTube. Currently, we are evaluating whether we should add services. We do recommend that for the most up to date information please check our website standrewspgh.org or our outgoing phone message.

We have continued our outreach efforts this summer. Most recently we combined our efforts with other area churches to help the students of the Neighborhood Academy. Please visit our website for more information about our Outreach work.

In these uncertain times things may change rapidly so please visit our website, our Facebook page or our outgoing phone messages for the very latest updates. We are continuing to work on our reopening plans and making adjustments as necessary. We are committed to be a good neighbor here in this very special neighborhood. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to us for anything you may need. God Bless.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Marinov
WE GET HOMES SOLD!

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Howard Degenholtz
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Judy Beck

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Justin Sandherr
Bob Staresinic
Chris Worley

HPCC Contacts

HPCC Email: HPCCPgh@gmail.com
Website: hpccpgh.org
Mailing Address:
PO Box 5036
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Finance Committee: Glen Schultz
Membership Committee: Chris Worley
Nominating Committee: Stephanie Walsh
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Newsletter: Monica Watt,
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