

HIGHLAND PARK

Community Club
Newsletter for
March 2004



Edited by Ollie Rieley

President's Column

At the February meeting, I *did not* see my shadow. Then Friday it was a beautiful, sunny Spring day. But it didn't last!

Since the January meeting, the HPCC Board voted to recognize the Highland Park Community Plan as the official statement of the Highland Park community regarding community planning, development and revitalization. As we follow the recommendations, Highland Park will continue to be the best place to live in the City.

Speaking of the City, Mayor Murphy will attend the March HPCC meeting to speak about the current financial situation of the City of Pittsburgh. **The March meeting will be held at Fulton Academy of Geographic and Life Sciences at the normal time (7:30 P.M.).** This will give the community the chance to learn more about the school and appreciate what is going on there.

Dilworth Traditional Academy for the Arts and Humanities just held their Community Celebration and Art Auction at the school. That was a great event. There were so many people there to see the school and appreciate the great art. What was impressive to me was the amount and quality of the art work there. Many of the items up for bid were done by the students at the school, and were the most sought after. Thanks to all the students, parents, staff, sponsors and artists for a great show and for letting us find out what a gem we have at Dilworth.

I hope to see you at the Super Playground clean-up on March 20th. The Spring childrens event (April 3rd) is still being planned, so keep an eye out for information about times and location.

Bob Staresinic

Consumer Energy Meeting

Join Rep. Joseph Preston Jr., representatives from East End organizations and the major utility providers at the East End Community Wide Consumer Energy Meeting at Reizenstein Middle School. Your questions about how to file complaints, how to read your bills, energy costs and where to get help will all be addressed. The meeting will be held from 12-2 pm on Saturday March 6th.

SUPER PLAYGROUND SPRING CLEAN-UP MARCH 2004

Kate Zober

Volunteers are invited to get the Super Playground ready for another season of fun on *Saturday, March 20th*, the first day of spring! The days are getting longer, (okay— not that much longer, but at this point we should take every minute we can get!) and it's time to think about warm spring days spent up at the Park. As always, breakfast and lunch will be provided by our wonderful local businesses. Please come join your neighbors and friends for a few hours, and celebrate Spring's arrival— your help will be so appreciated!

If you are able to help either in the morning (9-12) or afternoon (12-3) of Saturday, March 20th, please call Kate Zober, at 412-661-9312.

Next Meeting
March 18, 2004 at 7:30 P.M.
At Fulton Academy
Meet Mayor Murphy, Tour the School

THE PITTSBURGH CAMERATA PRESENTS**“Pictures at an Exhibition”**

at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 5801 Hampton Street, on **Saturday, March 20 at 8:00 PM.** The 24-voice chamber choir performs a concert of choral music and the visual arts in collaboration with the Carnegie Museum of Art. Slides and narration accompany music by Palestrina, Weelkes, Monteverdi, Vaughan Williams, Taverner, Whitacre, Rachmaninov and more. **Tickets are \$15 and \$6 for students. 412 421-5884. For more information and a concert program listing, visit the Camerata's website at www.pittsburghcamerata.org**

AFTERNOON CONCERT SERIES AT PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY:

Chamber Music for Strings, Piano & Organ

in the Hicks Chapel Auditorium Saturday, March 6, 2004 at 3:00 P.M.. The ensemble includes Alison Fujito, violin, Stephanie Tretick, viola and violin, Lauren Scott Mallory, cello and Patricia Prattis Jennings, piano and organ performing works by Brahms, Rheinberger and Fauré. Tickets may be purchased at the door. Call 412 441-3304, Ext. 2196 for more information or to reserve tickets.

Treasurer's Report

February 2004

	Actual Year to Date
Income	\$14,544.00
Expense	\$7,123.51
Current Balance, All Accounts	\$21,045.65

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Newsletter: Ollie Rieley 661-1205

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Public Safety: John Cirola 665-0513

Recreation: Charlie Peterson 441-2766

Reservoir Covers: Dave Hance 361-4935

Restoration: Dave Hance 361-4935

Super Playground: Kate Zober 661-9312

Yard Sale: Judy Wolfe 441-7830

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Zoning: Dell Ziegler 363-0742

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HPCDC/HPCC Web: www.highlandparkpa.com

Phone Numbers Area Code 412 unless Noted

Put The Community Plan Into Action

Shelly Danko+Day

I have lived in the "southwest quadrant" of Highland Park for 5 years. (For those of you unfamiliar with the term, the "southwest quadrant" is the area bordered by Stanton, Negley, Wellesley and North St. Clair) In that time, I have seen children age 8, 9 and 10 grow up to be 13, 14 and 15 year old drug runners and drug dealers. The older dealers in the neighborhood have become the mentors for our youth, and something needs to be done about it.

As a co-founder of Mellon Street Neighbors, I have struggled with this crisis and searched for a solution. Now, I have a proposal. I would like the community to support me in a plan to apply a program to our neighborhood that will help to change the lives of our youth. NFTE – the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship is a program that was started in Brooklyn, NY in 1987 as an anti-poverty strategy. It is designed to teach young people (ages 11–18) to think as business people, to realize that there are more options for their future than minimum wage jobs or drug dealing. It teaches observation skills, problem solving, business, technology and life skills.

This program is traditionally taught in public schools as part of the curriculum however, currently it is only taught in 4 Pittsburgh schools. There is a need for a program that will directly, and immediately improve the outlook for our youth. I am proposing that our community, together with East Liberty and Bloomfield/Garfield come together to present this curriculum to the East End teens, who are at risk of falling into the same tribulations as past generations. Let's give them a new perspective. Let's teach them to fish...

The plan proposed is to take this proven curriculum and apply it as an after-school program for youth of the Highland Park, East Liberty and Bloomfield/Garfield communities - two days a week, two hours a day for 10 weeks. The total funding needed for a 3-year program is \$22,000. This will include teacher training, NFTE

support and supplies for 180 students.

Even more important than getting the funding, we need to find a TEACHER. This will be someone who will attend a one-week training course over the summer, at no cost to them, and then teach four hours per week for 10 weeks. In one of our communities we must have a retired entrepreneur or businessperson or teacher who is interested in providing hope for our formative young minds.

Then we need a location. Ideally, it would be a place within the 3-community area that could hold 30 students, either at desks or tables, and a chalkboard, dry-erase board, or easel for the teacher to use. The Union Project would be a great location! It is on several bus routes, and central to several communities.

As for the students, we need to identify 30 students per semester and make sure they get there. This is where community support really comes into play. If 30 of us make a commitment to guarantee that a young person gets to the session two evenings a week, for just 10 weeks, we can ensure the success of this neighborhood, tri-community initiative.

If you are interested in helping to, get this initiative off the ground, please feel free to contact me at (412) 661-4560 (evenings) or email me at shelly@pittsburghchamber.com Thank you!

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St. Andrew's Church

5801 Hampton Street * Highland Park

Sunday Morning Services - March

9:00 a.m. Holy Communion in the Chapel

11:00 a.m. Choral Morning Worship

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Nursery School at 11:00 a.m.

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Use 17 Objects To Create Peace

Highland Park poet-artist jai is encouraging creative adults and families to create peace (personal peace, world peace, family peace, etc.) as part of the Everyday Art project created by Cheryl Capezzuti with funding from Sprout.

Capezzuti, best known as the lint artist, wants people who like the arts to have more opportunities to create art. Every week beginning March 17, a different artist, poet, musician, photographer, etc. will post an art assignment on Capezzuti's Web site, www.everydayart.org. Anyone interested can do the assignment. Participants' work will then be exhibited online and may be part of upcoming exhibitions around town. Those who complete a number of assignments are eligible for prizes.

jai was chosen as one of 14 artists to be part of the first round of Everyday Art. Here's a preview of jai's Everyday Art assignment: Use 17 objects to create peace (personal peace, world peace, family peace.)

To start, think about a time when you felt peaceful. What were you doing? Wearing? Where were you? Who was with you?

Keeping that feeling in mind, gather 17 objects: maybe papers, shells, fabrics, wood, ribbons, personal things that are meaningful, things from nature, pictures from magazines, whatever.

Thinking peace, pick up one of your objects and attach it to paper, canvas, or a wall. Add another object, then another. Work spontaneously. Trust yourself. If you're unsure what to do next,

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think back to your scene of peace. Keep going until you feel finished. (If you haven't used all 17, that's okay.)

If you want, add words (poetry or prose), and use paint or felt-tip pens to enhance what you've done. Title your work. Enjoy your vision of peace.

Why 17 objects? Says jai, "The usual numbers often don't lead to peace so we need to try something new. I'm also celebrating the work of some friends of mine, led by Highland Park residents, Mary Beth Steisslinger and Maritza Mosquera. They created an innovative new peace symbol over a period of 17 months."

Fulton News

Fun To Be Fit

Linda Rose

Fulton Academy families and staff are discovering that it's "Fun To Be Fit". Meeting one evening per week in February and March, the program encourages families to exercise together. Second grade teacher Linda Rose runs the program in partnership with Renee Sarracino, Fitness Director at Club One. In addition to the fitness activities, the families are given information to encourage healthy habits at home. In its second year, the program continues to grow!

Ed. Note: I received this too late for last month issue but thought it still has interest.

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Remember
Next HPCC Meeting is at
Fulton Academy
March 18, 2004 at 7:30 P.M.
Meet Mayor Murphy
Tour Fulton Academy

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Around St. Andrew's

Bruce Robison

One of the neighborhood highlights around St. Andrew's this month will be the performance on Saturday evening, March 20, at 8 p.m., of the Pittsburgh Camerata, under the direction of Rebecca Rollett, in a program, "Pictures at an Exhibition," of choral works inspired by or related to famous works of art.

St. Andrew's is a regular East End concert venue for the Camerata, called "the city's premier chamber choir," and many in the neighborhood enjoy attending these performances. Tickets are sold at the door or by series subscription.

Sunday services at St. Andrew's are at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., with programs for children, youth, and adults "in between the services," beginning at 9:45 a.m. The Wednesday morning Midweek Service begins at 10:30 a.m. and is followed by informal Bible Study. During the Rector's sabbatical this winter our Sunday Clergy will include the Very Rev. George Werner, retired Dean of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in downtown Pittsburgh, the Rev. Carol Henley, former Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church, Rosedale/Verona, and now chaplain at the Pittsburgh V.A. Hospital, and the Rev. Dr. C. Don Keyes, Associate at St. Andrew's and Professor of Philosophy at Duquesne University. The Rev. Ken Kocharhook is "Sabbatical Supply" for our Wednesday morning services. (The Rector returns on Easter Sunday.)

St. Andrew's has been located at the corner of Hampton Street and North Euclid Avenue and an integral part of our Highland Park neighborhood for nearly a century. If there is a pastoral need with which we can be of assistance – a baby to be baptized, a wedding to be celebrated, a shut-in or ill neighbor or family member to be visited, a family to be supported at the time of a death – please let us know. Or if you simply need to borrow a few tables or chairs – or to schedule a back-up, "rainy day" location for a family reunion picnic—please know we'll do what we can. Office Hours are Tuesday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 12 noon and 1 p.m. – 3 p.m., and our phone number is (412) 661-1245.

Meeting Highlights - February 19, 2004

Andrea Mudd

President Bob Staresinic called the regular monthly meeting of the Highland Park Community Club to order at 7:35 pm.

Kelly Vitti presented the treasurer's report: the Club's current reserve is just over \$19,600 including two CD's of \$3,316 each and the bank account at \$13,800.

Bob Staresinic summarized budget recommendations for 2004-2005 proposed by the Finance Committee at their recent meeting. The recommendations do not include money Bob applied for on behalf of the Club through a Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development grant. The amount the Club may realize from the grant and the cost of certain items included in the budget are not yet determined but the Board accepted the recommendations of the Finance Committee and passed the Budget.

Support for the Pittsburgh Marathon and Reservoir of Jazz, as well as expenditure of \$60 for an ad in the East End Historical and Marketing Guide, a \$250 grant to the Union Project and a \$500 grant to Educational Innovations were approved. Amy Maceyko volunteered to design the ad for the Guide. A request by Vintage Adult Services to place an ad in their 2004 Gala program booklet was denied.

Committee Reports:

Web Site: Rudy Maceyko is requesting copies of old HPCC newsletters for inclusion on the website as part of the HPCC historical project.

Children's Committee: The Children's Committee is planning a Spring Event to be held on April 3. They need volunteers to help and request that interested persons contact Aimee DeFoe at aimfoe@yahoo.com or Bob at 412-441-8972.

Super Playground: The Super Playground Clean-up will be held on Saturday March 20th. Bob anticipates no major repairs so volunteers should plan to come out to tidy up the area and for the fun!

Reservoir of Jazz: The fountain at the Highland Ave. entrance to the Park is under construction. It is unclear when the project will be completed and whether work at the fountain site will affect production of the Reservoir of Jazz in August. In any case, planning for the 2004 Reservoir of Jazz is underway and Bob is requesting volunteers to help locate a mobile stage and to work on other related tasks.

Other business:

Union Project Director Jessica King discussed activities the Project will be resuming in the Spring and also invited the Club to work with them in developing new collaborative initiatives.

Two proposals for new youth entrepreneurial training programs were presented by Educational Initiatives(EI) and by Shelly Danko+Day.

- E.I. is developing a 10-week Young Entrepreneur's Club after-school program for 5th graders which would seek to impart the value of money and help kids learn to differentiate the relative economic value of different activities.
- The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) program for 11-18 year old students has captured the attention of HPCC member Shelly Danko+Day. One mission of NFTE is to offer life skills training and practical business experience to vulnerable inner-city youth as an alternative to destructive and/or illegal activities.

If you have a copy of the pocket folder HPCC used to distribute to new residents, HPCC Board member Lisa Solomon would appreciate an opportunity to look at it. This would help her in a project she is working on to develop a new neighborhood marketing brochure for potential homeowners.

Rep. Joseph Preston Jr. invited the entire community to attend a meeting concerning Consumer Energy Needs. A number of area community groups and utilities are co-sponsoring the meeting, which will be held Saturday March 6, 2004 from 12:00 to 2:00 pm at Reizenstein Middle School.

Bob announced the next regular monthly meeting of HPCC will be held at **Fulton Academy** on March 18th at 7:30 pm. Pittsburgh Mayor Tom Murphy will be speaking at the meeting so everyone is encouraged to come and participate in the discussion.

Bob welcomed new members and reminded us of the Dilworth Traditional Academy Art Auction on February 20 (which turned out to be a successful and wonderfully exciting event!).

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 P.M..



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Highland Park Community Plan Update

Michael P. Johnson

The Highland Park Community Plan has reached an important milestone: the final report is complete and approved by the boards of the Highland Park Community Club and Highland Park Community Development Corporation, and now we can consider next steps towards implementation. What this means, in English, is that after two years of surveys, data analysis, focus groups and retreats, we have a pretty good idea of the strategies that are necessary to achieve our original goals of a diverse, dynamic urban neighborhood that makes best use of our tremendous resources. These strategies include:

- Housing, Neighborhood Maintenance and Infrastructure: Improving the quality and value of residential properties
- Bryant St. Commercial District: Focused development on Bryant St.
- Education and Youth: Increasing resources of local schools
- Arts, Recreation and Youth Development: Highland Park youth group
- Community Health and Safety: Block watch groups

We are gratified to read coverage of the community plan and these strategies in two articles in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette ("Highland Park Looks at its Assets, Challenges", 1/26/04; "The City Neighborhood that Could", 2/4/04, reprinted on page 5). We now need community resident volunteers to work with local organizations make these strategies a reality! Before discussing how to do this, let's talk about the meaning of these strategies.

Improving the quality of residential housing in Highland Park, especially in the "southwest quadrant" will require individuals and organizations: 1.) to help tenants organize to negotiate with landlords for better-quality housing; 2.) to enable tenants to take advantage of existing services that will enable them to take better care of their own buildings and improve the quality of their lives; 3.) to provide housing counseling for mobility and home ownership, job training, family support counseling, and others. Individuals and organizations will also have to engage landlords, both large operators and "mom-and-pops", to design incentives for them to provide better quality rentals, as well as providing a clear message that the community will not tolerate blighted housing and a blind eye to tenant misbehavior. In addition, we should not forget that some homeowners' limited ability to maintain their properties can also benefit from support services provided directly by local as well as non-local volunteers and organizations.

Focusing commercial development on Bryant St. means that local organizations should oppose proposals for new commercial businesses outside of Bryant St. that represent "non-conforming uses". Also, local organizations should work with local merchants to improve the visibility and quality of the street itself, though better lighting, trash pick-up, and develop a means to recruit sustainable, high-quality new businesses to Bryant St. that satisfy unmet needs, according to the community plan survey (professional offices, family-style restaurants, local services, for example).

Increasing resources of local schools means that local volunteers and organizations should partner with local schools to improve teaching and recreational resources, recognizing that increased quality of local schools may encourage more local families to support them directly. Much is already being done in this regard--witness the work of Tania Grubbs and others to transform Dilworth Traditional Academy into an elementary arts magnet, and of Sal Wilcox and Education Innovations to provide academic support to Fulton Elementary. But we will need more local volunteers and organizations to work directly, especially with Fulton's Parent School Community Council, to engage parents of current students as well as teachers, to provide a variety of services: academic enrichment, after-school activities, direct parent contact and support, among others.

The last two categories are more self-explanatory: 1.) There was a clear consensus that a year-round Highland Park youth group would fill an important need. It would be advised by a local adult, would be a great way for young people to meet neighbors who might attend different schools. Such a group would provide safe recreational activities and mechanism for youth volunteers to meet needs of residents, especially seniors. 2.) There was clear support for a revitalized Block Watch organization that might combine crime watch efforts with more traditional block club tasks such as welcoming new neighbors, setting local expectations for property maintenance and resident conduct, etc.

Now, we need to find ways to match community volunteers and organizations with these important tasks. This will not be easy: the current financial state of the city makes additional government funding unlikely, and funding from non-governmental sources, such as foundations, is time-consuming and requires a significant administrative apparatus. We have started this process in a small way by posting sign-up sheets at Sandy's Deli and Tazza D'Oro for the four tasks listed above. We will put these sign-up sheets on the Highland Park and Community Plan websites (www.hIGHLANDPARKPA.COM and www.hIGHLANDPARKCOMMUNITY.COM, respectively) in the near future. But the ball, so to speak, now lies in the court of local volunteers and organizations to figure out how to coordinate resources and manage tasks, given the funding and time constraints that we all know about.

Of course, the Highland Park Community Plan is not going away (though I will take a lower profile for awhile): we want and depend on your input to ensure the community is addressing the most important issues and that it is doing so effectively. To contact the Community Plan, write, call or email at:

Highland Park Community Plan, The Highland Park Farm House,
1310 Heberton St., Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Call 412 665-3646 or email hp_cdc@netzero.net

Now that the easy part is over, let's get to work!

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Union Project Update

Justin Rothshank

www.unionproject.org

New Saturday Stained Glass Class in March!

This class will be held from 2 pm to 5 pm on eight Saturdays beginning March 6 and ending May 1, and excluding March 13. The class fee is \$175 which includes all tools and materials. The class will be held at Construction Junction, at the corner of N. Lexington & Meade in North Point Breeze. Students will work in pairs to clean, re-lead, and restore Union Project stained glass windows. To register for the class please call 412-478-3105 or email Justin@unionproject.org to get a registration form. Deadline for registration is February 27, however classes tend to fill up fast and early registration is recommended.

Summer and Fall Stained Glass classes are already filling up!

Visit www.unionproject.org/glass.htm for all the details.

Session 1 Deadline for registration April 16

Saturday's May 1; May 8; May 15; May 22; June 5; June 12; 9 am to 1 pm.

Session 2 Deadline for registration April 16

Wednesdays May 5; May 12; May 19; May 26; June 2; June 9; June 16; June 23; 6 pm to 9 pm.

Session 3 Deadline for registration June 25

Saturday's July 10; July 17; July 24; July 31; Aug 7; Aug 14; 9 am to 1 pm.

Session 4 Deadline for registration June 25

Thursdays July 8; July 15; July 22; July 29; August 5; August 12; August 19; August 26; 6 pm to 9 pm.

Session 5 Deadline for registration August 20

Saturdays Sept 11; Sept 18; Sept 25; Oct 2; Oct 9; Oct 16; 9 am to 1 pm.

Session 6 Deadline for registration August 20

Thursdays Sept. 16; Sept 23; Sept 30; Oct. 7; Oct 14; Oct 21; Oct 28; Nov. 4; 6 pm to 9 pm.

Special thanks to local papers

The Union Project was recently seen in the Pittsburgh Post Gazette and the Pittsburgh Tribune Review. Check out the stories by following the links below.

<http://www.postgazette.com/pg/04039/270522.stm>

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/search/s_177740.html

Restoring neighborhood space to connect, create, and celebrate.

New Contractors List --

Call for Contributions

The last Contractors list was issued in 2001. It is time for a new list! Mary Lee Snuffer has agreed to prepare one but all you folks out there need to give her input. For those who didn't see the last list - the Contractors List shows the name, specialty and phone number of contractors recommended by your neighbors. The person recommending the contractor is also listed with phone number so you can personally check with the recommender. And to give a sense of currency, the year the work was done is shown. Altogether it's a handy list to keep for when you need a plumber, roofer or what ever.

So please send recommendations to Mary Lee Snuffer at 837 N. Highland Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206. Or call her at 412 734-8477. Remember, the recommendation must include the contractor name, specialty, phone number, year of service, the recommenders name and phone number. We will try to include the updated list in the June or July issue of the newsletter.

Editor's Thoughts

Ollie Rieley

This issue contains several articles relating to the completion of the Community Plan. Micheal Johnson gives us his thought on issuing the plan, Clarke Thomas's wonderful article about Highland Park, originally printed in the Post-Gazette February 4 is reprinted here for those who may have missed it or would like to savor it again. And Shelly Danko+Day issues a call for action to help youth in the Southwest Quadrant. It is an exciting time in an exciting neighborhood. The Community Plan is a map showing where we should go to make the neighborhood even better. As Michael says: "***Now that the easy part is over, let's get to work!***"

I thought the Art Show and Auction at Dillworth Traditional Academy for the Arts and Sciences was tremendous. It was so nice moving up and down the hall, greeting friends, looking and bidding on the art, snacking on the treats. I hope this becomes an annual or bi-annual event! Congratulations to the Students, Staff, Parents, Sponsors and Artists for a great evening. Of course, I used the evening to recruit writers!

One of those recruited is jai. See the article on page 4. This sounds like a great event which will run over several weeks. I intend to look in occasionally, maybe even try to create something. Why don't you.



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MARCH CALENDAR	
MARCH 6	MEETING ON CONSUMER ENERGY NEEDS, REIZENSTEIN MIDDLE SCHOOL, NOON TO 2:00 P.M.
MARCH 6	AFTERNOON CONCERT, PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, 3:00 P.M., ADMISSION
MARCH 17	START OF "EVERYDAY ART", WWW.EVERYDAYART.ORG
MARCH 18	HPCC MEETING, FULTON ACADEMY, 7:30 P.M., MEET MAYOR MURPHY, TOUR THE SCHOOL
MARCH 20	SUPERPLAYGROUND SPRING CLEANUP, 9:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.
MARCH 20	PITTSBURGH CAMARATA CONCERT, ST. ANDREW'S, 8:00 P.M., ADMISSION
APRIL 3	HPCC CHILDREN'S SPRING EVENT, DETAILS TBA

Don't Forget:
Next HPCC Meeting, March 18th, 7:300 P.M. at
Fulton Academy