

Community Council Newsletter for December 2005



Edited by Lisa Williams, editor@highlandparkpa.com

The President's Column

Bob Staresinic, 412-441-8972, bob.63@netzero.net

Happy Holidays to All

Several years ago, the community created a Community Plan for Highland Park. This plan surveyed the neighborhood and identified areas that we were strong in and others that need some attention. The HPCC needs to take a look at that again and determine where we need to focus our energies and efforts. In the past year or two, we have been fortunate enough to be able to apply for PA Dept of Community and Economic Development funding thru the offices of Rep Joe Preston Jr and Sen. Jim Ferlo. That has allowed us to continue the Reservoir of Jazz and increase the mailing of the newsletter for the mass mailing. But I want to figure out what we can do to improve the neighborhood, based on the Community Plan. And if we get an opportunity for additional funding this coming year, how can we best use it?

Please take some time to review the Community Plan and let me know what would be the best use of our time and resources. If you need a copy of the Plan, you can see it at <http://communityconnections.heinz.cmu.edu/highlandpark/index.jsp>.

While some of the issues can be better addressed by the Highland Park Community Development Corp, the HPCC needs to address others. As you review the Plan, also consider how both organizations can work together to deal with the issues.

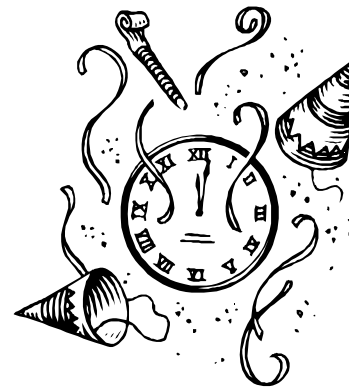
I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season. I know I am looking forward to the first snowfall, so I can start shoveling snow!

There is no December meeting, so I will see you on January 19th for the next meeting.

**No December HPCC Meeting
No January Newsletter**

Next Meeting will be January 19, 2006

Happy Holidays!



**THE NEXT HPCC MEETING IS 7:30 PM, THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 2006, AT ST.
ANDREWS**

HPCC Meeting Highlights

November 17, 2005

Bob Staresinic

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm without a quorum.

Bob Staresinic spoke about the Harvest Party held at the Farmhouse on November 5th. About 100 kids attended and the weather was beautiful.

Rep Joe Preston spoke about what is going on at the state level with taxes, and encouraged everyone to pay attention to what is going on with the schools. He feels that the new superintendent is doing a good job. Rep Preston spoke about the changes going on in the East End. A new hotel is to be built at the intersection of Highland and Penn Circle South, and the Highland Building will be rehabbed for retail/office/condo use. Rep Preston also handed out 2006 calendars.

Amy Maceyko reported that the clean up scheduled for the park on 11/19/05 was postponed. It will be scheduled for later in the year or spring.

After some general announcements, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.



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Bob Arnold 362-8746(07)
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danathomas838@hotmail.com
Children: Rachel Matos 361-3802
Day Camp: Janice Burgett 361-2195
Finance: Dell Ziegler 363-0742
House Tour: Amy Maceyko 441-9130; Brigitte Nadler 363-6869; Peter Hughes 363-4603
Membership: Kelly Meade 362-0331
Newsletter: Lisa Williams 665-3933
Nominating: Bob Staresinic 441-8972
Public Safety: Jan Stayianos 363-8208
Reservoir of Jazz: Tania Grubbs
Super Playground: ---
Yard Sale: Judy Wolfe 441-7830
Welcoming: Bob Staresinic 441-8972
Zoning: Dell Ziegler 363-0742

C. O. P. 665-3644 - Zone 5 665-3605
HPCC/HPCDC Web: www.highlandparkpa.com
Phone Numbers Area Code 412 unless Noted

Around St. Andrews

Bruce Robison

The early winter season, December and January, Advent, Christmastide, and Epiphany, is a time of many great services, programs, and activities around the St. Andrew's Parish scene.

On Tuesday evening, December 20, beginning at 7 p.m., all are invited to the traditional Neighborhood Carol Sing "Around the Bonfire" in the St. Andrew's Churchyard--with cookies and cocoa to follow in the Parish Hall. Great fun for all ages! Bundle up - and bring a flashlight!

The kids are also busy in preparation for the annual presentation of A Children's Pageant of Christmas at 11 a.m. on Sunday morning, December 18. Rehearsals are Saturday, December 3, 11 a.m. - noon, and Saturdays, December 10 and 17th, 10 a.m. - Noon. All welcome.

Of special interest to music lovers in the neighborhood will be the Advent Service of Evensong at 8 p.m. on Thursday, December 1st, followed with a musical recital by our good friend, Highland Park resident, Jenifer Johnson, with a program entitled "Piano Bach."

The Pittsburgh Camerata will be in concert at St. Andrew's on Saturday evening, December 17th, at 8 p.m., and the St. Andrew's Choir will present a seasonal service of Lessons and Carols at 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 18th. A Service of Music featuring Brass Ensemble and Choir will begin on Christmas Eve, December 24, at 10:30 p.m., in advance of the traditional 11 p.m. Christmas Service. A brief musical recital will be presented at 11 p.m. on Saturday evening, December 31, in advance of a service of Holy Communion and the Ringing in of New Year 2006 on the Great Bell of St. Andrew's. Champaign Toast to the New Year follows in the Parish Hall

This will be the 99th Christmas for St. Andrew's here in Highland Park (the first having been celebrated in December, 1906, after the Church was opened for services the preceding April). St. Andrew's is committed to serving the people of this neighborhood, and if there are any ways we can be of help with pastoral concerns (a baby to be

baptized, a marriage to celebrate, an ill or shut-in neighbor to visit, a family to comfort at the time of a death), please let us know. And if you just need to borrow a few tables or chairs--or to find a "rainy day" alternative location for a family picnic--give us a call as well. We're glad to be asked. St. Andrew's Office is open Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. 412 661-1245.

THE PITTSBURGH CAMERATA

presents

"The Holly & the Ivy"

Tired of Little Drummer Boy and Jingle Bells? Then join The Pittsburgh Camerata, the 24-voice professional chamber choir, for "The Holly & the Ivy" at **St Andrew's Episcopal Church, 5801 Hampton St., Highland Park on Saturday, December 17 at 8:00 PM.** This year the annual Christmas concert features floriferous carols and motets from around the world. The program includes the well-known (*Deck the Hall, O Tannenbaum* and of course, *The Holly and the Ivy*) and the rare (*From Lands that See the Sun Arise, Now Let Us All Rejoice In God Our Savior* and *Let the Heavens Rejoice*), plus Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*

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

St. Andrew's Church

5801 Hampton Street * Highland Park

Sunday Morning Services – December

9 a.m. Holy Communion in the Chapel

11 a.m. Choral Morning Worship

Nursery available during both services

9:45 am Church School / Classes

MidWeek Bible Study – Wed 10:30 am

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THE WAY WE WERE...

Pat Miller

OUR HIGHLAND PARK

After the Civil War, city leaders began to look for an effective way to supply water to a growing city. A reservoir and pumping station could solve the problem and what would become Highland Park was a natural choice because of its altitude and proximity to the river. The city bought land from Casper Negley and from James McCully and built the Brilliant Pumping Station. It pumped water from the Allegheny River and raised it 367 feet to the Highland Reservoir. On March 5, 1879 the first water from the Highland Reservoir reached downtown Pittsburgh.


But our area was destined to be more than just a water supplier. Enter Edward Bigelow. He was born in Pittsburgh in 1850, became a civil engineer, and in 1880 was appointed "City Engineer". The 1867 "Common Ground Improvement Act" had authorized Allegheny (now the Northside) to set aside land for a public park and Bigelow thought Pittsburgh should do the same. He asked City Council to appoint a Committee on Parks. It did in 1889 and set aside land near Highland Reservoir for a park. The Department of Public Works was also created in 1889 with Bigelow as its first director. He immediately began to negotiate with Mary Schenley and persuaded her to donate several hundred acres to create Schenley Park. He then worked on getting land to create a park in our area. On behalf of the city he aggressively negotiated with 120 different owners to buy up all the surrounding properties.

Highland Park opened in 1893 and occupied 366 acres making it Pittsburgh's second largest park. In 1897 Bigelow found the necessary city funds to have 15,000 trees planted in the park. The gate statuary was added during 1896-1900 and remains in place today. The Highland Ave. gate features women and the Stanton Ave. gate features men on horseback, all beautifully restored in 1996.

When the park first opened, the walk around the reservoir was in a figure 8 shape because a walkway bisected the reservoir dividing it into Basin A and Basin B. Then in 1965 the midsection of the bisecting walkway collapsed giving us just one large basin and the configuration we still have today.

While no one apparently felt it important to restore the walkway, we have recently enjoyed the greatest restoration of all: the fountain, reflecting pool, and gardens that were there at the Highland Ave.

entrance in 1890 are now back in their entire Victorian splendor. Mr. Bigelow would be proud!



Celebrate

with Us!

Holiday Worship at the Cathedral of Hope

Christmas Eve
Saturday, Dec 24


6 pm Christmas Eve Early Service, in the Chapel. Specially prepared with children in mind with music, carols and a special retelling of the Christmas Story.

10:45 pm Candlelight Communion Service, in the Sanctuary. Gather about our Lord's table to celebrate the love that has come into the midst of our life. Chancel Choir, organ and handbells invite you into the wonder of this night of nights.

Christmas Day
Sunday, Dec 25

8 am Good Samaritan Worship. A service of music, prayer and personal witness.

11 am Sanctuary Worship. Gather with us Christmas morning to sing carols and to hear the "Festival of Lessons and Carols," interwoven with prayers for peace.




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School Board Update

Patrick Dowd

The Pittsburgh Public Schools are confronting a number of serious challenges. Academically, we have an NCLB status of "School Improvement II" and face the real possibility of state take-over next fall. Financially, in 2006 we face a \$47 million budget deficit. Regarding labor relations, we face serious challenges in the negotiations of a new contract with our teachers.

Superintendent Mark Roosevelt began tackling these challenges with the announcement of his realignment plan and the 2006 preliminary budget, both of which are harbingers of the great work we can expect from him.

The foundation of his realignment plan is a new way of thinking about "high performing schools." Working with RAND Corporation, the Superintendent developed a complex index for measuring school performance that is much richer than simple PSSA test scores. Rating schools on a scale of one to five, five being the highest, the index measures how well schools are demonstrating achievement gains for their students. This much fairer rating system helps measure the value a school adds to improving student achievement. Details on the system and the ratings of each school are on my website.

The Superintendent used this rating system to craft his bold and visionary plan. He proposes eliminating more than 8,000 excess seats through the closing of 20 schools. The students in these schools will move to higher achieving schools or to schools with dramatically enhanced academic programs. One of the most important initiatives in the plan is the creation of 8 Accelerated Learning Academies. These rigorous academies will be set in nationally proven academic models of success and will have such attributes as an extended learning day, more time on learning and performance-based incentives for principals. For details on the plan go to my website.

Last month the Board agreed to vote on the plan in its entirety. This is a victory for transparent governance. There will be no back-room deals to spare individual schools from closing and the Board will have to vote based on the best interest of all children in Pittsburgh. That vote is scheduled February 28, 2006. The Board will host public hearings in November, December, January and February and will weigh carefully public comment. Superintendent Roosevelt has also announced his 2006 Preliminary Budget. He proposes a 2.9% spending increase over the 2005 Budget and calls

for no tax increases. The Superintendent has said, "Right-sizing our facilities, moving forward with workforce reductions and prioritizing programs, and freezes on equipment purchases and travel are only the beginning of what will strengthen the financial future of the District." Additionally, as a result of significant reductions in revenues approved by the state, the Superintendent will formally request state funding in the amount of \$20.4 million annually as a way to make up for lost revenues which are expected to total \$64.2 million by 2009. The 2006 Preliminary Budget is available on my website.

Superintendent Roosevelt's realignment plan and preliminary budget are just the beginning of a long-needed series of reforms designed to raise expectations and improve educational outcomes in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. I hope you can take time to review all the material presented.

As always, I eagerly welcome your comments and concerns. You can reach me at patrick@patrickdowd.org or by mail at 341 South Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 or by phone at 412.622.3770. To speak at a Board public hearing all you have to do is call 412.622.3600. I look forward to hearing from you.

Park Clean Up Event

Dennis Meyer, coordinator for the City of Pittsburgh's "Partners in Parks" program, is looking for volunteers to help clean up the lower portion of the park near Butler Street and One Wild Place. This is a chance to clean up a part of the park that is visible from the bridge and the area near the Zoo parking lot.

Partners in Parks will supply garbage bags, any needed tools, and supplies, and coordination with city crews for removal of large debris.

Dennis is looking for as many volunteers as he can get for this volunteer clean-up event to be held on the morning of Saturday, January 14, 2006 (weather permitting).

We need at least 12 people to volunteer. We tried to organize the clean-up event in November but didn't get enough volunteers. Please let Dennis know if you're interested in helping!

Dennis Meyer, Park Partners Coordinator
City of Pittsburgh/DPW, Partners in Parks

Email: Dennis.Meyer@city.pittsburgh.pa.us
Phone: 412-255-2676
Fax: 412-255-2728

Winter Tai Chi Classes

Susy Robison

Tai Chi Classes continue this winter at St. Andrew's in Highland Park on Monday evenings starting January 9th. The Second Level classes will be from 6:30 – 8:00 PM and the Basic Level class will follow from 8:00 – 9:15 PM.

Tai Chi, practiced by men and women of all ages, is an ancient Chinese system of exercise with slow and gentle motion that raises and balances the energy of the body leading to improved health and vitality. In addition, Tai Chi can be a Martial Art or system of self-defense and a meditation in motion.

Our instructor is Judy Crow who trained in the Yang style Long Form by Y.K. Chou and has taught Tai Chi for twenty years in the Pittsburgh area.

These 10-week Tai Chi courses will be held Mondays starting January 9th. The fee for each 10-week course is \$55.00 per person. Or, bring a friend for \$100. Classes will be held at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 5801 Hampton Street in Highland Park.

To register for Basic or Second Level classes or for more information please call Judy at 412-363-2748.



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DECEMBER 2005 CALENDAR

Dec	NO DECEMBER HPCC MEETING & NO JANUARY NEWSLETTER
Dec 17	The Pittsburgh Camerata, 8 PM, St. Andrews
Jan 19	HPCC Monthly Meeting, 7:30 pm, St. Andrews
Jan 19	HPCC Newsletter Articles Due! Send to editor@highlandparkpa.com