

November 2020

Highland Park

Community Council Newsletter

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Happy Thanksgiving

A Letter from the President

Hello Neighbors,

Have you seen it? Last month, the HPCC launched a new community parklet on Bryant Street! Be sure to check out the article and pictures in this issue of last month's Neighborhood Clean-up and Pumpkin Patch. It's been great seeing so many people enjoying the new picnic tables - usually with take-out from one of our Bryant Street businesses - whenever there's sunshine and warm temps!

So far November has brought the end of daylight savings time (means less light for evening strolls) and cooling temps, so now my thoughts have turned to the upcoming fall and winter holidays. Thanksgiving, the assorted December holidays, and New Year's typically turn the weeks from mid-November to Jan. 1 into a blur of cooking and baking, decorating, enjoying holiday music, traveling, and gathering with family and friends. This year, knowing that those special gatherings won't be happening or that loved ones will be missing, is making a stressful year nearly unbearable for many.

The HPCC wants to do what it can to lift spirits and give people an opportunity to connect and celebrate safely. With that in mind, we're providing you a chance to:



- **Help Seniors.** Since the onset of COVID-19, neighbors have generously been providing donations of nonperishables and toiletries for those served by Vintage Senior Center:

the first week of November we brought over a dozen bags! Our neighborhood is now one of their biggest donors of food, and due in part to our support, they are expanding their food program. Previously they added donations to the package of frozen meals provided to each senior weekly. Now they are giving their clients the opportunity to go "shopping" at their food pantry so that they can choose the extra food and personal items that they want and need.

In honor of Thanksgiving, we're asking neighbors to provide bags of Thanksgiving trimmings for senior households, or to donate a Giant Eagle gift card and let us do the shopping. The shopping list and instructions are in the newsletter; note that donations are due by 5 p.m. on November 12.



- **Light-up Highland Park.** The city's light-up night may be cancelled, but that won't stop us from making our neighborhood bright and cheerful this December! We'll be asking everyone to display festive lights, and Dec. 12, encouraging you to wander the neighborhood and admire them. We'll let you know the most decorated blocks, ask people to share pictures, and seek volunteers to provide self-serve refreshments - keep posted for more info!

Despite the challenges we face, there is always much to be grateful for. Thank you HPCC Board Members and volunteers for all your hard work on behalf of the community, and thank you neighbors for making Highland Park such a wonderful place to live.

As ever, with warm regards,

Stephanie Walsh
HPCC President

Thanksgiving

Food Drive

Vintage Senior Center Thanksgiving Trimmings Bags Shopping List

- 2 cans of veggies
- 1 can cranberry sauce
- 1 can sweet potatoes
- 1 box stuffing mix
- 1 box instant potatoes, au gratin potatoes, or corn bread mix
- 1 jar gravy
- Either:
 - (A) Two 21-oz jars of canned fruit pie filling, OR
 - (B) One 15 oz can pumpkin pie filling and one 12-oz can of evaporated milk
- Boxed pie crust mix; either:
 - (A) Two boxes for fruit fillings, OR
 - (B) One box for pumpkin pie fillings

Donations must be dropped off on the porch at 1315 N. Sheridan Ave. by 5 p.m., Thursday, November 12. If possible, please put all items for a basket in a double-bagged brown paper grocery bag with handles.

Giant Eagle gift cards are also appreciated. \$25 will pay for an entire trimmings bag for a senior household, but donations of any size are appreciated! Questions? Email Stephanie at HPCCPgh@gmail.com.

Thank you for your generosity and
Happy Thanksgiving!

INTRODUCING: The Bryant Street Parklet!

Clean-up Day

On October 24, the HPCC organized a clean-up to prepare for the “opening” of the new community green space on the corner of Bryant Street and N. Euclid Ave. This new parklet is the result of a unique agreement between the HPCC and the property owner, the Highland Park Community Development Corporation (HPCDC). Approximately 30 volunteers came out to beautify the space – amazing considering the cool, damp weather! They disassembled and removed the old picnic tables; built four new picnic tables; weeded and pruned enough plant matter to fill three dozen leaf and lawn bags; dug out large chunks of broken cement; and pulled out other miscellaneous trash and debris - transforming this underutilized space into a lovely resource for the neighborhood.

Special thanks to LaScola’s for providing coffee and cider for our volunteers, and to Grounded Strategies for providing the tools. And of course, thank you so much to all of the volunteers who showed-up and pitched-in!

To view more photos, [click here](#).



Pumpkin Patch

On October 25th, upwards of 200 visitors came by and explored the parklet, chose pumpkins, enjoyed the decorations, picked up Halloween craft packs, and visited Shelob's - or was it Aragog's? - den. Pumpkins were free but we did accept non-perishables for Vintage Senior Center and donations for the HPCC. Leftover pumpkins were given to our Bryant Street and adjacent businesses. Please note that everyone was great about wearing masks at both events, for the Pumpkin Patch photos, we allowed people to briefly remove their masks and share their beautiful smiles. Special thanks to Bryant Street Market for co-sponsoring the event. And thank you to all the folks who generously gave to the Vintage Senior Center and the HPCC!

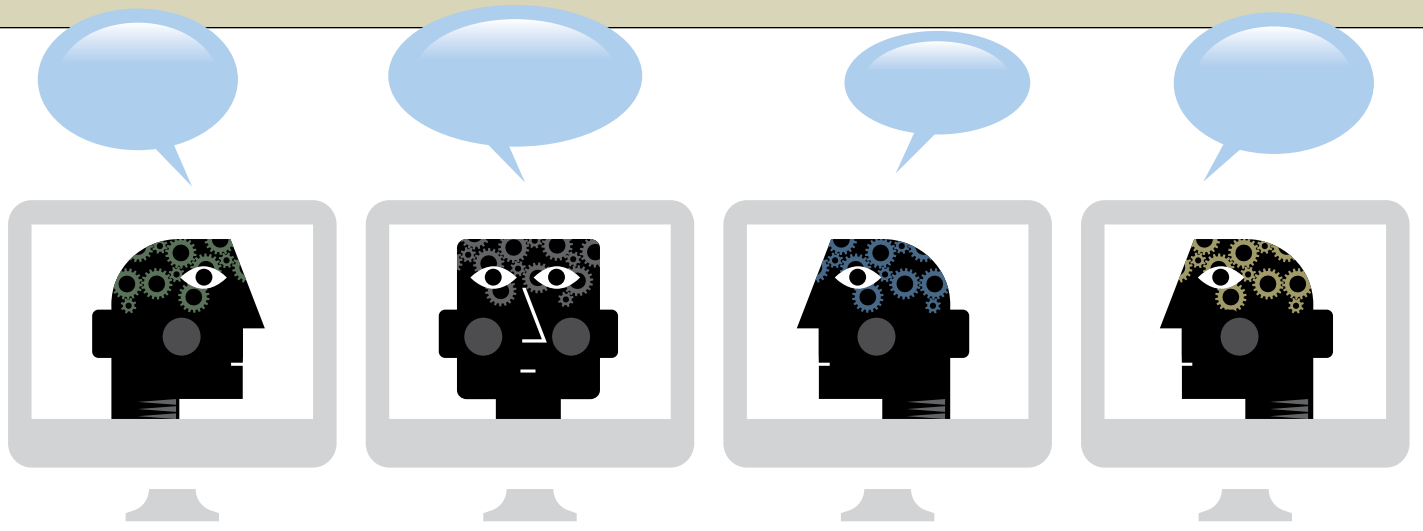
To view more photos, [click here](#).



Before

After





HPCC October Meeting Minutes

Attendance : There were 55 attendees

Called to order by Stephanie Walsh at 7:06 p.m.

The entire meeting can be viewed at engage.pittsburghpa.gov; select "Highland Park Super Playground" and look for the link to the video in the right margin.

AGENDA:

1. Announcements:
 - a. As of this week, the empty lot at the corner of Bryant Street and N. Euclid Avenue next to the Casa Basil restaurant will officially become a community green space.
 - i. The parklet represents a unique agreement between the property owner, the Highland Park Community Development Corporation. (HPCDC), and the HPCC.
 - ii. The parklet will not only provide an attractive green space in our business district for community members to enjoy, but will also serve as a way for us to support our local businesses by creating more outdoor seating options for customers and visitors to Bryant Street.
 - iii. The initial agreement is for six months with future possibilities of becoming longer term usage as a public space.

- iv. A Community Clean-Up Day of the parklet is scheduled for this weekend. Volunteers will be solicited for debris removal, weeding, disposal of current picnic tables, construction of new picnic tables, etc.
 - v. The parklet will then be transformed into a Halloween Pumpkin Patch the next day!

The remainder of the meeting was the first Community Engagement Meeting on the redesign of the Super Playground in Highland Park. This part of the meeting was facilitated by the City's contractors for the project, Merritt Chase.

- a. The session was very engaging, interactive, and involved input from some of our younger neighbors who are Super Playground users.
 - b. The next Community Input meeting is scheduled for December 3, 2020. Merritt Chase will survey people regarding the best time.

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.





City of Pittsburgh SNOW ANGELS

Winter is Just Around the Corner - *Snow Angels are Here to Help!*

Pittsburgh's winters present challenges for some neighbors. The City of Pittsburgh Snow Angels program connects neighbors in need to nearby volunteers who shovel and salt their property when it snows.

Snow-covered sidewalks can be hazardous for everyone. The City of Pittsburgh's Snow Angels Program pairs older residents and residents with disabilities with nearby neighbors who volunteer to assist them with snow removal on their sidewalks and walkways.

Along with fostering stronger community relationships and relieving some of the stress that comes from a snowfall or freeze, Snow Angels make our sidewalks safer for those who are outside during the winter weather – like postal carriers, firefighters, police officers, and other neighbors.

Why Volunteer?

Because helping your neighbors is SNOW much fun!

- You can sign up online to offer help as a volunteer.

- The Snow Angels Program will work to pair you with a nearby neighbor.
- We will be in touch when you have been matched with a neighbor in need.

To sign up to volunteer, visit pittsburghpa.gov/snowangels for everything you need to know about volunteering with Snow Angels.

Request Help from a Snow Angel

Here are the requirements neighbors must meet to request a Snow Angel:

- Be at least 60 years old or have a physical disability
- Live within the City of Pittsburgh limits
- Do not have resources (financial or family/friends nearby) to assist with snow removal

Sign up online by visiting pittsburghpa.gov/snowangels or by calling 311.

Snow Angels Program, City of Pittsburgh

Office of Community Affairs
412-255-0846
snowangels@pittsburghpa.gov

Stay Safe in the Garden

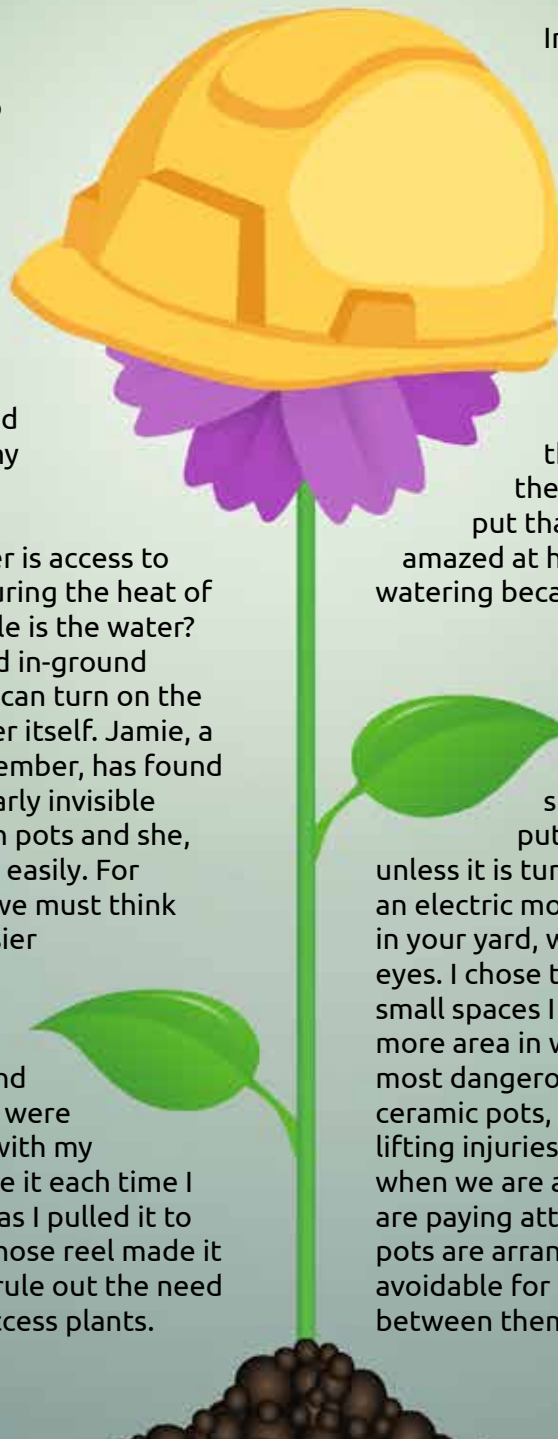
By Diana Pelletier, HPCC Garden Club

The last squash has been harvested from my garden and new bulbs are sunk deep in the earth, contemplating their spring blossoms. As I think of the seasons to come, I realize that I want to be able to garden into my eighties as my neighbor Ted did. I remember seeing him putting in his garden the entire 35 years that I have lived here. What can I do to make my garden safer as I age?

The first concern of a gardener is access to water. We must water daily during the heat of the summer. So, how accessible is the water? Some gardeners have installed in-ground watering systems where they can turn on the water and let the garden water itself. Jamie, a Highland Park Garden Club member, has found a system of hoses that are nearly invisible between her container garden pots and she, too, can manage her watering easily. For those of us relying on hoses, we must think of how we can make them easier to access. My only outdoor faucet was on the side of my house, seemingly giving me access to both the front and back gardens. However, there were steps to reach both. I fought with my hose to unwind it and untangle it each time I used it. Once I tripped over it as I pulled it to the back yard. Putting it on a hose reel made it easier to unwind, but did not rule out the need to go up and down stairs to access plants.

In my front yard, I got a better nozzle so that I could aim to the far side of the garden to get water to my tall grasses and day lilies and then still have a lighter spray for the closer impatiens and coleus. This addition helped me to avoid the front steps. For my back yard, I had my plumber install a faucet in the back of the house, which eliminated the need to use the side steps. I put that hose also on a reel and was amazed at how much easier and safer watering became.

Lawn mowers cause the largest number of gardening accidents. Wear gloves and closed shoes when mowing. Never put your hand on the mower unless it is turned off or unplugged if using an electric mower. If there are loose rocks in your yard, wear goggles to protect your eyes. I chose to get rid of my grass. In the small spaces I have to work with, it gave me more area in which to garden! The second most dangerous objects in the garden are ceramic pots, both as tripping hazards and lifting injuries. Accidents don't happen when we are aware of our surroundings or are paying attention. Make sure that your pots are arranged in a way to make them avoidable for tripping. Allow space to move between them for watering.





When we think of planning our gardens, we dream of the exotic and beautiful plants and the lovely patio areas and such lovely furniture! Just as important, though, is building in safety. The hardscape in my yard was created by the previous owner who was more concerned with not having her three children drag a lot of dirt into the house which is surrounded by cement sidewalks on three sides. There are narrow steps that I would like to remove and an odd entrance to the back yard. Eventually I will have it redesigned so that instead of steps, there will be a sidewalk that is ramped gradually to follow the slope of the land. The opening to the back yard from the street will be on the patio, so that it is level and will eliminate the step with a turn onto the patio. When I designed the brick path and second patio that are in the backyard, I had considered gravel, but thought that it would be too messy to sweep leaves out of.

I asked my Pilates teacher to show me how to lift heavy pots. She told me, "Use your legs, not your back. Face the object, bend your knees slightly, and push your butt out as though you are going to sit down. Don't bend your back to pick up the object. Bend your knees. Slowly lower yourself to reach the pot using your thigh muscles. They will lift you and the pot more safely than your back. Keep your back relaxed." She also told me that if I found myself using my back, then the object was too heavy for me and I needed someone else to lift it.



However, the gravel also would have been a tripping hazard as one of my neighbors has found out. Falls are the greatest danger as we age. As the snow and ice begin to accumulate, I have chosen a narrow part of my patio and sidewalk to clear, which is all that I and my mailman need to get access from the street to the house. Each spring, I check the bricks to make sure that none have heaved to create an uneven surface to trip on.





It has two sturdy handles that give me that extra stability and support I need to stand again after weeding. With planning and a little research, we can create gardens that are safe for us to work in and also a joy to be in no matter what age.



Some safety ideas seem so common sense, such as wearing gloves to protect our hands from blisters from using tools and from plants with thorns. Winter is a good time to peruse catalogs to learn of new ergonomic tools to make life in the garden safer. I recently got a kneeling bench and cannot believe how much easier it is on my legs than squatting was.



RECYCLE THIS

By Sabrina Culyba, sabrina@recyclethispgh.com

OUT WITH THE BAG, IN WITH THE BIN!

Brand new blue bins appeared throughout the neighborhood in early November. Branded "Property of City of Pittsburgh," these 32-gallon plastic cans are part of the first wave of new recycling bins being distributed to every Pittsburgh residential property serviced by the city's curbside recycling program. Our neighborhood is, along with nearby Garfield and East Liberty, the recipient of this first wave, which will empower Highland Park residents to finally ditch blue bags for recycling day!

Eliminating the blue bag is one of the driving reasons that the city is providing these dedicated recycling bins. Now there is no need to bag up your recyclables. Simply wash them as needed and put directly into the bin. This is great news for recycling in Pittsburgh because those blue bags can cause major problems at the recycling processing facility where they can get caught up in machinery. The bags also themselves are not recycled, so anyone purchasing blue bags to put out for recycling was simply adding additional plastic waste into the stream. The new bag-less bins means more of what's picked up curbside is likely to



be successfully recycled and less plastic waste will end up in the landfill. As a small bonus, the bins themselves are made with at least 5% recycled plastic.

Maybe you've already purchased a blue bin yourself and you're wondering if you can continue to use your old bin? The short answer is yes*. The City hopes to have everyone moved over to the new bins over the next 3 years. During that time, the City will still be accepting recyclables in other bins and even bags (but seriously, avoid bags!). However, you should use the new bin if you can. If it's not big enough for you, you can put out additional bins next to your city-issued bin. Also, you can continue to put out cardboard by placing it, flattened, in a larger cardboard box next to your blue bin.

Some neighbors have asked if they could give their bin to someone else or get another bin from a neighbor who doesn't need theirs. The answer to these questions is no. The bins have barcodes on them that link them to your specific address. This also means you shouldn't take the bin with you if you move. It stays with the property.

If you have mobility issues preventing the use of the new recycling bin, you can contact 311, call 412-255-2621, tweet @PGH311, or go to <http://pittsburghpa.gov/311> for assistance.

Oh, and if you've got leftover blue bags that you no longer have any need for, you can recycle them at plastic film & bag collection bins at Giant Eagle and Target.

RECYCLE YOUR YARD SIGNS!

Now through December 4th, the City is offering three dropoff locations for yard sign recycling. These locations will accept flexible plastic film signs, rigid corrugated plastic signs, and also the metal stands for both.

There are 3 locations, open M-F, 6am-2pm, including one near Highland Park at 6814 Hamilton Ave Pittsburgh, PA 15208.

Find out more at <https://pittsburghpa.gov/dpw/yard-sign-recycling>

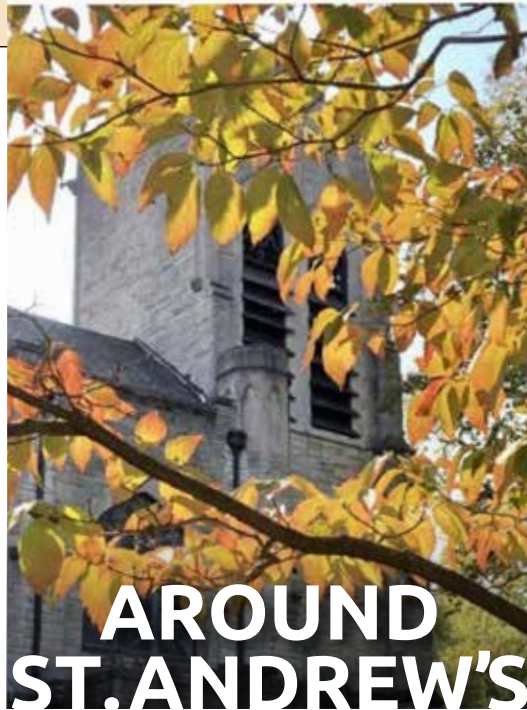


RECYCLE THIS

Recycle This is a column to share useful and practical info on recycling and other sustainable living practices here in Highland Park. Get more tips on recycling in Pittsburgh at RecycleThisPgh.com.

Celebrating Thanksgiving this month has reminded us at St. Andrew's that we are so grateful to be a part of this amazing neighborhood.

Highland Park is such a robust, diverse area and we are proud to be a member of it. We are so thankful for our wonderful neighbors. Over the last month we put out a call for volunteers for a fruit tree planting in Larimer and the annual Crop Walk through Highland Park and you responded. Thank you and God Bless. From our family to yours, we wish you a very Happy Thanksgiving.



AROUND ST. ANDREW'S

By Becky Marinov

practice social distancing, sit only with family or pod members and use our main door on Hampton Street or the handicap accessible door on North Euclid. As always please take a moment and check our website, Facebook page or our outgoing phone message for the most up to date information.

Our Friends of Music program continues to hold Evensong services the first Thursday of every month at 8:00 p.m. and the third Sunday at 4:30 p.m. Again we will live stream those services and make them

available on YouTube. We ask that you follow the same procedures as you would if you were coming to our regular 10:00 a.m. service.

While we are not yet holding Sunday School classes there are links available on our website for Godly Play stories from St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Mt. Lebanon. If you are not familiar with Godly Play it is a Montessori based Sunday school curriculum for children pre-school through fourth grade. We invite you to check it out.

We are here for you. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Check us out on Facebook or our website at www.standrewspgh.org. God Bless.



St. Andrew's continues to hold one service every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome here and if you can't join us in person our services are live streamed on Facebook and available on YouTube. We have worked hard to try and correct some earlier technical difficulties so if it has been awhile since you tuned in then you may want to try again. Please remember if you do come in person to please wear your face mask,



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