

GAZEBO EXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • MARCH 2021

Parks and Recreation projects on horizon

Parks Superintendent Alex Brown said a continued downward trend of COVID-19 cases made it possible for Highland to host a carnival for children with special needs at Lincoln Community Center. As long as the numbers continue to decline, Parks and Recreation is moving forward with one goal: a return to normal. ❖

[UPGRADES TO CONCESSIONS & HVAC SYSTEM]

On tap this summer are upgrades to the concession stands at Main Square, Homestead, Sheppard and Markley parks, installation of a new HVAC system at Lincoln Community Center Fieldhouse and replacement of the equipment necessary to keep the system in tip-top shape.

“Those projects may not be the bells-and-whistles projects people consider first when they think of Parks and Recreation, but are absolutely vital to what we do,” Brown said. “We invest in what we have and look for additions based on what the community wants.”

The cost of the project to replace the 22-year-old heating, cooling and ventilation system is expected to be \$300,000. When complete, the field house will have an energy-efficient system that performs better and saves money.

Brown said the park board is also investigating the possibility of adding solar lighting along the bike trail. Each light would have its own solar cell and soar 20 feet over the trail. ❖

[NEW PLAYGROUNDS]

Brightly colored swings, slides, adaptive climbing equipment and more will be installed this year as part of new playgrounds at Northwood and Terrace Estates parks.

The new equipment will mirror that found at the town’s 23 other playgrounds.

The price tag: \$50,000 per park.

“The Request for Proposals were due the first week of March,” Brown said. “We plan to order equipment for both playgrounds later this month and install this summer.” ❖



[PARKS 5-YEAR MASTER PLAN]

The Park and Recreation five-year master plan (2021-25) is packed with details to enhance recreation throughout Highland in the coming years. **INFO:** Visit the parks website – highlandparks.org – for details.

[PARKS & SHELTERS]

The shelters at Homestead, Meadows, Markley and Sheppard parks are available for rent. Each park also has washrooms and drinking fountains for your convenience. **INFO:** Call (219) 838-0114 for availability and pricing.

[BEWARE AMAZON SCAM]

Highland police advise residents to beware of a new scam that involves phone calls and emails from Amazon claiming there was a mistake on a transaction. If you receive a call or email from Amazon or a similar business, do not give personal information, your password or remote access to your computer. Call the company directly at the number you have from prior billing statements. Never use contact information provided by the caller or emailer.

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NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

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Town Council appoints new members to Highland boards and commissions

Following hours of interviews, the Town Council selected a cadre of community members to serve on boards and commissions that help determine the focus for economic development, park projects, green space and celebrations throughout 2021 and beyond.

Council President Roger Sheeman extended a hearty thanks to everyone who volunteered to help steer the town.

“We had more candidates this year than we have had in years — each and every one of them quality individuals,” he said. “Because we had more residents than there were openings, we had to make some difficult choices.”

Sheeman encouraged everyone to get and stay involved. The Community Events Commission and Highland Main Street are always in need of volunteers.

“Those who are taking on new roles as well as those who were reappointed will help make key decisions,” he said. “Everyone who steps up makes a difference for our community.”

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS: Joseph Grzynski (reappointed to co-extensive term with plan commission term for which there is no fixed term) and David Helms (reappointed).

COMMUNITY EVENTS COMMISSION: Four-year terms: Jacqueline Herrera (reappointed) and Kristen Smith (reappointed). One-year terms: Michael Blejski (reappointed), Elizabeth Alakel (reappointed), Jeffrey Pena (new), Debra Trevino (new), Stan Allen (new) and Kristen Gonzalez (new). Two four-year positions and three one-year positions remain open.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION: John Bach (new).

HIGHLAND MAIN STREET BUREAU: Appointments deferred.

JOINT BOARD OF DELEGATES OF THE INTERLOCAL COOPERATION ETHICS ENTITY: Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin (reappointed).

LAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION: Fire Chief William R. Timmer (reappointed as town representative).

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Councilman Tom Black (reappointed).

NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION: Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin (reappointed).

PARKS & RECREATION BOARD: Carlos Aburto (reappointed).

PLAN COMMISSION: Hunter Balczo (new).

POLICE COMMISSION: Steven Jurczak (reappointed) and James K. Slagle (reappointed).

REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION: Robyn Radford (reappointed) and Cyril Heurter (reappointed).

SANITARY BOARD: Richard Garcia (reappointed) and Greg Cieslak (reappointed).

TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION: Three-year terms: Public Works Director Mark Knesek (new public works representative), Steve Jurczak (reappointed police commission representative), Chief Pete Hojnicki and Cmdr. John Banasiak (reappointed police department representatives), Chief William Timmer (reappointed fire department representative) and Tom Black (town council representative with co-extensive term as councilman).

TREE ADVISORY BOARD: Judy Vaughn (reappointed) and Joan Robach (new). Appointment of chairperson deferred.

WATERWORKS BOARD: George A. Smith (reappointed) and Jason Tharp (new).



School crossing guards keeping our kids safe – rain, sleet or lots of snow!

Retired elementary school principal Terry Anderson thought he was done with work — until he was approached to fill in as a crossing guard at Southridge Elementary.

Eight years later, safely escorting students to and from Southridge at Grace and Martha streets has become an important part of his day.

“Being a crossing guard is a perfect fit,” the 45-year Highland resident said. “I love being around children and their parents. I get to know them and every year, there is a new group of students to get to know. Parents are always getting me to promise I won’t retire until their kids move on to the Middle School. I know I’ll never retire.”

Highland Police Cmdr. John

[HOW TO APPLY]

Interested in becoming a crossing guard or substituting? Starting pay is \$9.95 per hour. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and pass a background check. Applications are available at the Highland Police Department, 3315 Ridge Road.

QUESTIONS? Contact Cmdr. John Banasiak at jbanasiak@highland.in.gov or (219) 838-3184.

Banasiak said Anderson is one of the many valued members of the crossing guard crew.

“These dedicated souls make sure they are at their corner to help children safely cross,” he said. “We rest easier because we know they are there as valued members of our team.”

[COVID-19 VACCINES]

Highland residents age 60 and older are eligible to schedule a vaccination appointment, as are long-term care residents, first responders (firefighters, police officers and sheriff’s deputies, emergency medical services, reservists and correctional officers) who are regularly called to the scene of an emergency to give medical aid, and healthcare workers.

Simply visit ourshot.in.gov or call 2-1-1 to schedule your vaccination today. There are currently 19 vaccination sites available in Lake County:

- ▶ Community Hospital - Munster
- ▶ Community Stroke and Rehabilitation - Crown Point
- ▶ East Chicago Health Department
- ▶ Franciscan Health - Crown Point and Hammond
- ▶ Gary Health Department
- ▶ Healthlinc - East Chicago
- ▶ Lake County Fairgrounds
- ▶ Northshore Health - Hammond, Lake Station and Merrillville
- ▶ Sam’s Club - Merrillville
- ▶ Regional Health Systems - East Chicago clinic
- ▶ Methodist Hospital - Northlake and Southlake
- ▶ Walmart - Hammond, Merrillville and Schererville

Please be patient, as vaccine supply is limited. Additional groups will be eligible as soon as vaccine supplies permit.

INFO: Visit ourshot.in.gov or call 2-1-1 for more information.



ART CLASS

[JUNIOR PAINT WORKSHOP]

Our trained instructor will show junior artists – ages 7 to 12 – how to paint a 12” x 12” canvas. No experience is required.

WHEN: 5-6:30 p.m. Thursdays, March 18 (Starfish Shore) and April 15 (Adorable Pug).

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center
FEE: \$15 residents | \$18 nonresidents

[CANVAS PAINT WORKSHOP]

Our trained instructor will show artists – ages 13+ – how to paint a 16” x 20” canvas. No experience is required.

WHEN: 6:30-9 p.m. Thursdays, March 18 (Rolling Waves) and April 15 (Wish).

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center
FEE: \$25 residents | \$30 nonresidents

[FRED'S ART FOR KIDS]

Kids – ages 10-16 – will learn drawing, colored pencil, pen and ink through cartooning, acrylic painting and more. New students will start from the beginning, returning students will build on previous session.

WHEN: 4:30-5:30 p.m. Fridays, March 26-April 30

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center
FEE: \$36 residents | \$41 nonresidents

INFO: Learn more about these and other classes at highlandparks.org or call (219) 838-0114.

[COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE]

Do you have items you would like to resell, but don't want to invite people into your home to show your products? Rent a booth space!

WHEN: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, **March 20**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

VENDOR FEES: \$34 for 10' x 10' interior space or \$56 for 23' x 6' wall space. Cost includes 7% sales tax.

PLEASE NOTE: Booth space selection is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Tables, chairs, extension cords and moving carts are not provided.

INFO: highlandparks.org or (219) 838-0114

[MARCH RESTAURANT CRAWL]

The Highland Restaurant Crawl is the last Tuesday of every month with downtown restaurants changing up their menus with \$5 specials and businesses offering great promotions.

WHEN: 5-9 p.m. Tuesday, **March 30**

WHERE: Downtown Highland

INFO: Visit the Highland Redevelopment Commission on Facebook or the town website – highland.in.gov – for updates.

[ADULT SLOW-PITCH SOFTBALL]

Registration is underway for men's and co-rec softball teams. League format will depend on number of teams in division. Top teams receive cash (check) prizes. Rosters are limited to 20 players. Players must be 18 years or older.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. weeknights, 5:30 p.m. Sundays. Season begins **April 13** (single games) and **May 9** (double-header).

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

FEE: \$650 per team. Deposit must be made in order to reserve your spot!

INFO: highlandparks.org or (219) 838-0114

[CANCELLATIONS]

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny and the North Township East Egg Hunt at Wicker Memorial Park have been canceled this year because of COVID-19 restrictions.