

SAFETY FIRST

Highland awarded \$240,000 Safe Streets and Roads Grant

The Highland Redevelopment Commission secured federal grant funds in October geared to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries throughout town.

Unveiled in 2022, Safe Streets and Roads for All is a five year, \$5 billion program that is making road safety improvements a priority.

Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra is coordinating the local effort, which involves the Town Council and all municipal departments as part of a team. As a group, they will be looking at intersections that have higher-than-expected accidents as well as pedestrian safety.

Becerra said the town's charge is to develop a comprehensive plan and recommendations that require action. Future grant requests will be based on those recommendations.

[ABOUT THE GRANT]

Highland is one of eight communities in Indiana awarded grants during the first of two FY23 announcements for the Safe Streets and Roads for All competitive grant program

The \$240,000 will help Highland develop a safety action plan.

Helping communities plan and design safer streets is a key element of USDOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy to combat the crisis of deaths on our nation's roads.

[WHAT'S NEXT?]

Town officials, department heads and key stakeholders met for a first meeting Nov. 29. The results of that collaboration will be used to advance the safer streets program in Highland.

[SNOW REMINDERS]

When snow was the trick nature played on the region for Halloween, it seemed all-but-certain routine dumps of the white stuff wouldn't be far behind.

The Old Farmer's Almanac predicts Highland's winter will be colder than normal. Precipitation and snowfall are expected to be above normal, with the snowiest periods from late December through most of January.

Highland rules on handling snow are straightforward: Parking rules are enforced to keep cars off streets and allow plows to more safely clear roads for safe travel.

The consequences for violators are very real: vehicles are towed at the owner's expense when they are left in the street during a two-inch or more snowfall.



[SNOW PARKING BAN]

All on-street parking is banned when there is more than two inches of new-fallen snow. This allows plows to do their jobs in the first critical hours after snowfall.



[SNOW REMOVAL]

The Highland noise ordinance bans the use of snowblowers and snowplows in residential neighborhoods between midnight and 6 a.m. If you contract for snow removal, please ask the company to schedule your service between 6 a.m. and midnight to avoid disturbing neighbors.

[HOLIDAY TRASH PICKUP]

Highland residents are reminded that trash and recyclables will be collected on Wednesdays during the holidays. Christmas week collection will be Wednesday, **December 27**. New Year's Day week collection will be Wednesday, **January 3**.

[TOWN GARAGE CLOSED]

December 16 will be the last Saturday the Town Garage will be open from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m for dumping unwanted items until March 2, 2024.



WARD 1
BERNIE ZEMEN
 bzemen@comcast.net
 (219) 781-1056



WARD 2
TOYA SMITH
 tsmith@highland.in.gov
 (312) 719-1928



WARD 3
MARK SCHOCKE
 mschocke@highland.in.gov
 (219) 207-2075



WARD 4
TOM BLACK
 tblack@highland.in.gov
 (219) 301.2077



WARD 5
PHILIP SCHEERINGA
 pscheeringa@highland.in.gov
 (219) 741-2841



CLERK-TREASURER
MARK HERAK
 mherak@highland.in.gov
 (219) 838-1080

NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

Send your suggestions to:
gazeboexpress@theideafactory.us.com

The Gazebo Express is produced by:
 The Idea Factory • (219) 779-9041
www.theideafactory.us.com

Printed by Lithographic Communications
 9701 Indiana Parkway, Munster, IN 46321

Highland Town Council members – new and old – reflect on time in office, bid farewell to residents

As we gear up to welcome the 30th Town Council, we are saying a fond farewell to three council members:

Bernie Zemen – Ward 1: At every turn, Bernie Zemen decided to be part of the change he wanted to see. Since 2004, Zemen has worked for projects he believed would be best for the town. Sources of pride for the lifelong Highland resident: the renovation and expansion of Lincoln Center as well as the new police department. “My best way to serve: I paid attention, asked questions and did what I thought was best,” he said. “We brought in development, kept tax rates low and moved Highland forward.”

Toya Smith – Ward 2: On the council just shy of two years, Councilwoman Toya Smith is looking for new ways she can serve Highland residents when she leaves. “I was blessed to be on the Town Council for even that short amount of time,” she said. “I want to make myself useful in an arena that enhances our local economy.”

Mark Schocke – Ward 3: Mark Schocke ran for Town Council determined to be a voice for those looking to preserve a piece of Highland history. As a councilman, he asked the questions and looked for answers to keep the town on track. “It has been a great blessing to serve,” he said.



Highland author shines spotlight on rookery

Growing up on Highway Avenue, Alex Ross played in the woods near what is now the Heron Rookery. During the COVID lockdown in 2020, the natural area teeming with all manner of birds and water-loving animals became a haven for Ross, his wife and two sons.

More than 60,000 photos later, “**Between Home and the Highland Rookery**” was published, a

breathtakingly beautiful collection of 120 species of birds, butterflies, bugs, even American mink, that make their homes at the Highland Rookery.

“**Between Home and the Highland Rookery**” is available at Promise You Art House, 8830 Kennedy Ave., Highland and Center for Visual and Performing Arts Gift Shop, 1040 Ridge Road, Munster. Cost is \$50.



CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY

Safe communities start when citizens take ownership, working with law enforcement. That's where the Citizen's Police Academy comes in. The 10-week course allows residents to see how Highland's finest operates – up close and personal. From ride-alongs to weekly classes that follow crime from its source to the courts, participants have the opportunity to become part of the crime-fighting team. Topics covered include:

- ★ Police and department tour
- ★ Lake County Courts and Prosecutors Office
- ★ Gangs and drugs
- ★ Ride-alongs
- ★ Police Employees Assistance
- ★ Criminal investigation and evidence collection
- ★ Firearms training simulator
- ★ School Resource Officer
- ★ Police chaplain program
- ★ Police K9 program

Officers Justin O'Malley and Kyle Rhein are prepped and ready to lead their first Citizens Police Academy," Deputy Cmdr. Shawn Anderson said. "These classes are popular with residents who see some of what we do at HPD."

[HOW TO APPLY]

Applications are now being accepted for the next Citizen's Police Academy class, which starts 7-9 p.m. **March 5** and continues each Tuesday through **April 30**. Applications are available at highland.in.gov. Deadline to apply is **January 12**.

QUESTIONS? Call the HPD at (219) 838-3184.

[BUSINESS LICENSE RENEWAL]

Every Highland business is required to get a business license and renew it annually. Visit the town website – highland.in.gov – to download a business license form. Complete the application and submit it along with the appropriate fee to:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK-TREASURER
Highland Town Hall
3333 Ridge Road
Highland, IN 46322

Please make checks payable to the Town of Highland.

QUESTIONS? Call (219) 838-1080.

[ANIMAL LICENSE RENEWAL]

All dogs and cats that call Highland home need a license. Registering is a one-step process that begins and ends at the Clerk-Treasurer's Office, 3333 Ridge Road. Pet owners must provide contact information as well as pet name, breed, sex, color, spay/neuter, vet and current rabies vaccination certificate. The owner will then receive a registration tag the pet is required to wear.



[CHRISTMAS TREES]

Wondering what to do with that live fir after the tinsel, ornaments and lights have been packed away? You have two options: Haul it yourself to Main Square Park or, simply leave it at the curb and let Public Works haul it to Main Square for you. Either way works and stokes the fires for the beloved Twelfth Night Celebration – the tradition of burning discarded Christmas trees – on **January 6**.

[HOLIDAY CANVAS PAINT]

Our trained instructor will show artists – ages 13+ – how to paint a 16” x 20” **Charlie Brown Christmas** canvas. No experience is required for this fun, no stress experience. You will leave with your creation at the end of class.

WHEN: 6:30-9 p.m. **December 14**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

FEE: \$27 residents | \$32 nonresidents

INFO: highlandparks.org

[PARENTS NIGHT OUT]

Better than a babysitter! Enjoy a night on the town or a peaceful evening at home wrapping Christmas gifts while our trained martial arts instructors wear out your kids – ages 6-14! Participants will have a blast, make new friends and burn lots of energy. Pizza, water and juice included.

WHEN: 5-9 p.m. **December 15**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

FEE: \$45 residents | \$48 nonresidents

INFO: highlandparks.org

[CRAFTS, COOKIES & COCOA]

Children – ages 6 to 10 – will get into the holiday spirit making a holiday craft, decorating some cookies and enjoying hot chocolate!

WHEN: 6-7:30 p.m. **December 20**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

FEE: \$15 residents | \$18 nonresidents

REGISTER BY: **December 15**

INFO: highlandparks.org

[COMMUNITY BAND CONCERT]

Enjoy the sounds of the season at the Highland Community Band's annual Christmas concert.

WHEN: 7-9 p.m. **December 21.**

Doors open at 5 p.m.

WHERE: HHS Monbeck Auditorium

**[HOLIDAY FIRE TRUCK]**

It's time to get your jingle on! In its second year, Highland's bright yellow Holiday Firetruck – decked out in festive lights – will be making the rounds throughout town from 5-7 p.m. Saturday, **December 9** and Saturday, **December 16.**

“We'll have designated stops for residents to take pictures,” Deputy Cmdr. Shawn Anderson said. **INFO:** Check out Highland's Police and Fire Facebook pages for the final route and stops.

[NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS]

Ring in the new year with a fireworks display at midnight **December 31** at Main Square Park. Bring the family to enjoy the midnight show and fireworks spectacular!

[TWELFTH NIGHT CELEBRATION]

We'll wrap up the holidays at 6 p.m. **January 6** with a Twelfth Night celebration. Bring your Christmas trees to Main Square Park to light up the night.

