

April 2011

Highland Park

Community Council Newsletter

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From Black & White to **VIVID COLOR**

THE STORY OF UNION PROJECT'S COMMUNITY RESTORED STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

Imagine a nearly condemned century-old church building at the crossroads of several diverse urban neighborhoods. It's dark: stained glass windows broken and boarded...

Continued on page 3

*H*ello, everyone! I'd like to congratulate you for holding in your hands the first... no, wait a minute. What I mean is that, mailed to your very door is this inaugural... no, no, no...

Well, we've done it. With this issue of our newsletter, the Highland Park Community Council (HPCC) is marking the beginning of a significant expansion into the world of online stuff. This comes in several parts:

1. The HPCC Newsletter. Like many other organizations with a history of sending out print material to other folks via snail mail, we've had to confront some very real issues over the last few years. Changes in the way people get their information and connect with others, budgetary issues, and an ongoing dialog within the HPCC about what best serves our mission have all led to the decision to start electronically distributing our newsletter via the Highland Park Neighborhood E-mail list (or listserv). We'll be reaching more people, saving printing and mailing costs, and enjoying greater flexibility with our newsletter's content. We also have re-designed the newsletter and will be able to easily distribute it in gorgeous color. My thanks to Monica Watt, Lisa Williams, and others who have labored to bring this to reality. We look forward to keeping you informed about the many wonderful events and opportunities in our part of the city. We also hope that this will help you to connect better with our neighborhood!

2. Our website. HPCC Board superguru David Atkinson has been spearheading a complete overhaul of our website, with serious input from Monica Watt and some benevolent nods from yours truly. We're not quite ready to unveil it yet, so consider this my modest attempt to generate some buzz... great photos, details of local businesses, events, and (drum roll please...) the opportunity for you to make your mark on it as well. There will be a contest for you to participate in. There will be a fabulous prize. The winner will have their winning entry featured prominently on our new web real estate. And that's all I can tell you for now - the HPCC agents with sunglasses and concealed weapons are even now motioning that I should be quiet. But be on the lookout for a big announcement sometime in the not-too-distant future.

3. The Listserv. The e-mail list has served us well for a long time, and it's not going anywhere. You can continue to use it for keeping in touch, buying and selling, announcing events, finding contractors, announcing lost keys, and anything else you can convince supermoderator Bob Staresinic to post. However, in addition to the listserv, I'd like to make those of you who spend significant portions of your life on Facebook (Cityville, anyone?) aware of the Highland Park Pittsburgh Facebook page at www.facebook.com/highland.park.pittsburgh. This is an additional venue for sharing thoughts and photos, and initiating community discussions. The Facebook page also easily supports discussion forum threads, which can help with focused conversations on a specific topic.

We are committed to providing the best services we can, and to reaching out to as many members of our community as possible. We also are continuing to work to make Highland Park the best neighborhood it can be. We hope you like the changes you see here and elsewhere. We also hope to see you soon, either at HPCC meetings (third Thursdays of most months, 7 PM at St. Andrews - www.standrewspgh.org/site/Welcome.html), online, or around the neighborhood. Until then...

Eric D. Randall
President
Highland Park
Community Council

A
Letter
from the
President



HPCC February Meeting Minutes

by *Bob Staresinic*

Eric Randall, HPCC President, called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm with a quorum present.

Zone 5 Commander O'Connor spoke about activities in Highland Park since he became the commander in June 2010. With the exception of 2 shootings in the Summer of 2010, much of the crime in Highland Park have been car break-ins. There are about 70 officers available for street patrol in Zone 5. He is working on increasing patrols, and the officers have begun ticketing cars parked against the flow of traffic.

Jana Finder introduced Teri Rucker as the new Children's Committee Chairperson.

Nancy Arnold announces that Portland Street is the next location for street tree planting, which will be happening this Spring. She has submitted an application for Heberton and Winterton Streets to have trees planted in Fall 2011. The flower beds at the entrance to the Park need volunteers to help maintain them.

Glen Shultz reported on the cell phone tower that the Zoo and Verizon spoke about at the November meeting. The zoning board gave approval to the project contingent on a review of the landscaping plans by the community.

Kelly Vitti announced that planning has begun for activities on Bryant St for the Marathon, and for the Bryant Street Festival.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

The next meeting is Thursday, April 21 at 7:00 p.m. at The Union Project. Guest speakers include Mr. Kevin L. Bivins, principle of Pittsburgh Fulton PreK-5 and Jessica McNally of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy who's project objective is to reconnect students and school communities to nature by enhancing the grounds of all Pittsburgh Public Schools with greenery and outdoor spaces. We hope to see you there!



Continued from cover.

A hundred dead pigeons on the sanctuary floor, fallen from gaping holes in the roof. Inside there's no heat and outside it's overgrown with vines slowly deteriorating architectural details. It's become a magnet for drugs and prostitution and frightening to passersby. Time and neglect have stripped this once prominent civic building of its dignity, leaving it wearing a coat of black dust.

Perhaps if you lived in Highland Park long enough, you knew this place. It was the Union Baptist Church, located at the corner of North Negley and Stanton Avenues.

In 2001, a new vision for this building took shape. Jessica King and Justin Rothshank, then members of the Pittsburgh Urban Leadership Service Experience (PULSE), stood at the corner bus stop and dreamed a new kind of community gathering place here. In fact, with the help of Dr. John Stahl-Wert, founder of PULSE and the Pittsburgh Leadership Foundation,

From Black & White



they purchased the building and formed a new non-profit preserving part of the church's original name: The **Union Project** was born.

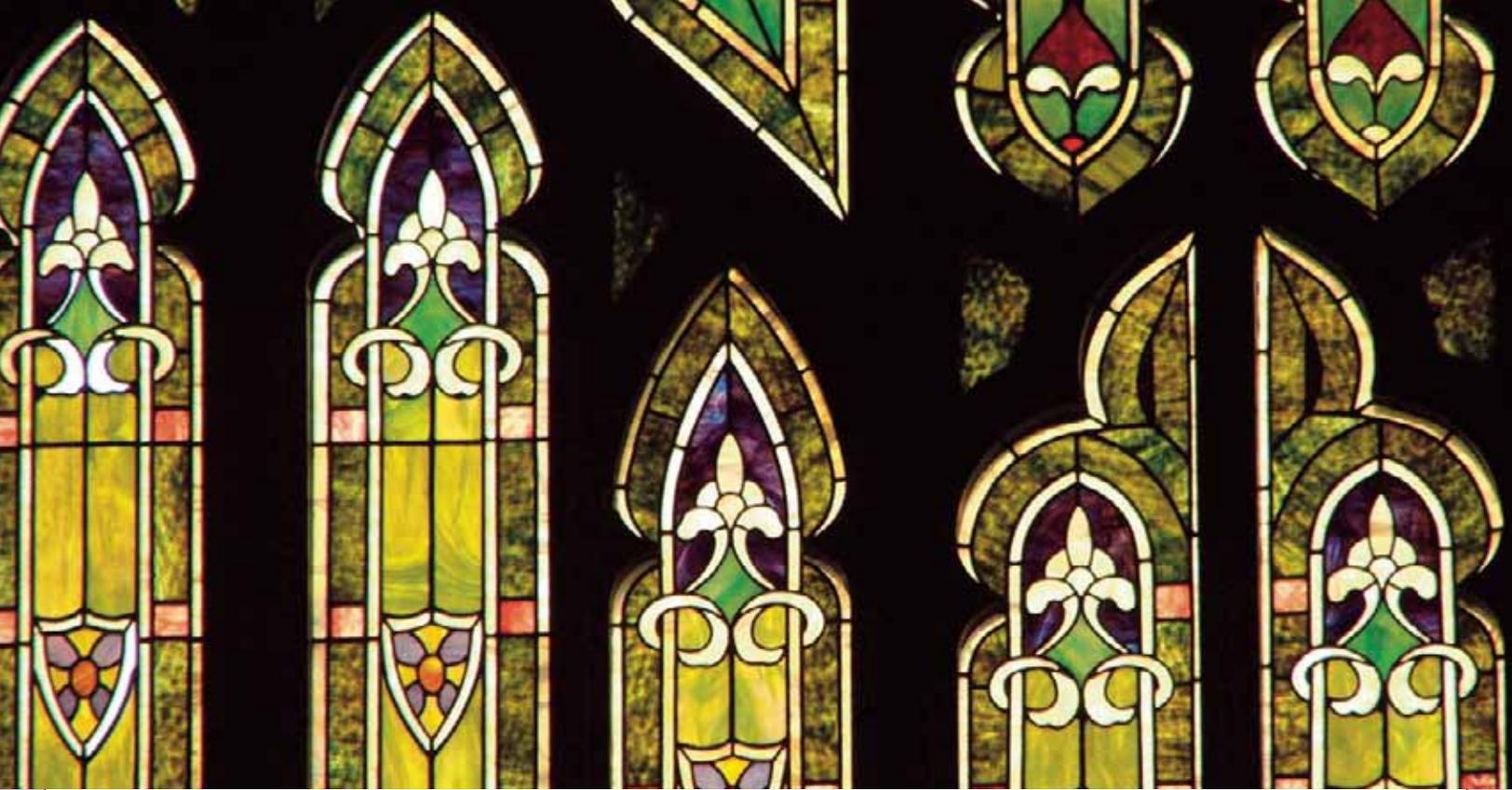
From day one, the renovation effort was infused with creativity and innovation - initially drawing on the Mennonite and Amish Barn-raising concept, where a community comes together to build up their neighbor's barn or home. One of the biggest renovation challenges facing Union Project was figuring out how to restore all 155 original stained glass windows, an estimated \$1,000,000 project.



to VIVID COLOR

*By Jeffrey Dorsey,
Union Project Executive Director*

Early on Dr. John Stahl-Wert met with Mr. Bruce Seiling, Director of Institutional Advancement at Carlow College and Rev. Mike Wurschmidt, pastor of Shepherd's Heart Fellowship in the spring of 1999. Mr. Seiling gave Dr. Stahl-Wert a tour of St. Agnes Church and showed him the church's stained glass restoration needs. It was Mr. Seiling's vision to restore the church's valuable stained glass by offering stained glass



restoration classes in the community, thus reviving a dying art and getting the expensive work done by students in training from a master. Dr. Stahl-Wert enthusiastically passed this exciting idea on to the rest of the founding Union Project board of directors.

Several stained glass professionals were also consulted for bids on the project including Willets Stained Glass Studios in Philadelphia and Peter Boucher and Dick Lynn of Pittsburgh. But the \$1,000,000 made hiring the job out prohibitive. UP board and staff continued talking with artisans and organizations about their interest and ability to help us with this project including Renaissance Glassworks Inc., Penn Avenue Arts Initiative, the Pittsburgh Glass Center, and Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, and eventually met glass artist Catherine Berard, owner of Prism Stained Glass in Lawrenceville.

Catherine expressed immediate interest (and quiet skepticism about the potential for success) in helping us formalize a class structure that would allow class members to learn skills and use the Union Project windows as class material. Classes started in 2003, some of them even being held at Construction Junction as Union Project was undergoing major renovations to build out office spaces.

Catherine also introduced us to her friend Sasha Dizdarevich who has been able to assist us with carefully removing old windows, reinstalling the restored windows, and preparing and installing plate glass and aluminum storm frames to protect the new windows from further vandalism or weather damage.



By 2005, nearly half of the windows had been restored and installed through community classes. Glass Action was born - evolving the restoration classes into job training for unemployed neighborhood residents and creating a new social enterprise to generate revenue to help Union Project become more sustainable. Mike Bellinger was hired to oversee four former adjudicated young adults in a new stained glass glazier apprentice program. After working on Union Project's windows one of the young adults even went on to make his career as a stained glass artist in California.

Unfortunately, Glass Action was closed in 2007 after Mike left. The difficulty in bidding jobs, managing the program effectively, and generating enough revenue to become sustainable was more complicated than anticipated, and the Union Project board agreed to put the idea on hold indefinitely.

Then in 2009, with one third of Union Project's windows still boarded up, the board of directors hired new Executive Director, Jeffrey Dorsey. Dorsey helped orchestrate an organizational restructure that included restarting stained glass classes involving the community once again and helping to complete the windows in our Great Hall (the rental of which is one of UP's main sources of income). Jeffrey met with

Catherine Berard, and Prism Stained Glass agreed to partner with UP to complete the original restoration project. KEYS AmeriCorps member, Jenna Vanden Brink, was also hired as UP's new arts programming coordinator to manage the project and grow UP's ceramic co-op as part of our new Community Arts Program.

But, we aren't quite done yet! As we enter 2011, we will install the final eight stained glass vent



windows and finish what we started nearly a decade ago. We are fundraising to install storm windows on all the large Great Hall windows, which includes repairing exterior window sashes and sills and re-painting them before installing the protective glass. And, some of you have even inquired with us about starting a new stained glass co-op like our ceramics co-op, where members can share their love and skills of glass restoration,

and even repair local residential windows with, or for, homeowners. Additionally, Phase III (2013-2015) UP will transform our side yard into a neighborhood green space/ outdoor rentable space. Current plans include integration of glass and ceramic features including local artist-made furniture. Stay tuned!

In the meantime, it is with deepest gratitude and appreciation that I recognize

and thank our founding members and staff, Bruce, Catherine, Sasha, and more than 350 residents and volunteers (including some of you reading this article) who spent countless hours in 25 classes to help make this vision a reality. With their help, Union Project has solved our million dollar problem and continues to transform a dark corner into a beautiful community anchor. Today the sun is shining on and

through stunning community restored stained glass windows.

Total project funding to date is \$150,000 and revenue generated through class fees and funding from the Mennonite Economic Development Associates and their Department of Health and Human Services Compassion Capital funds, the Richard King Mellon Foundation, Laurel Foundation, a matching grant from the PA Historic & Museum Commission.

Want to see our completed community stained glass close up?

Join us this April 1-3rd for our first Spring Open House where our beautiful community restored windows will be featured along with nearly \$300,000 of additional capital improvements we've just completed including cleaning and repointing our exterior stone and major improvements to our beautiful Great Hall. This event is free (unless otherwise noted) to the public and also includes:

Friday:

6-8:30PM - Club Family

\$5/individual & \$10/family

Saturday:

10AM-1PM - "Birds, Trees and Robots" GAGI Festival's family fun

Noon-3PM - UP's Open Ceramic Studio

\$8/hour including light instruction

2-6PM - Union Project's Open House

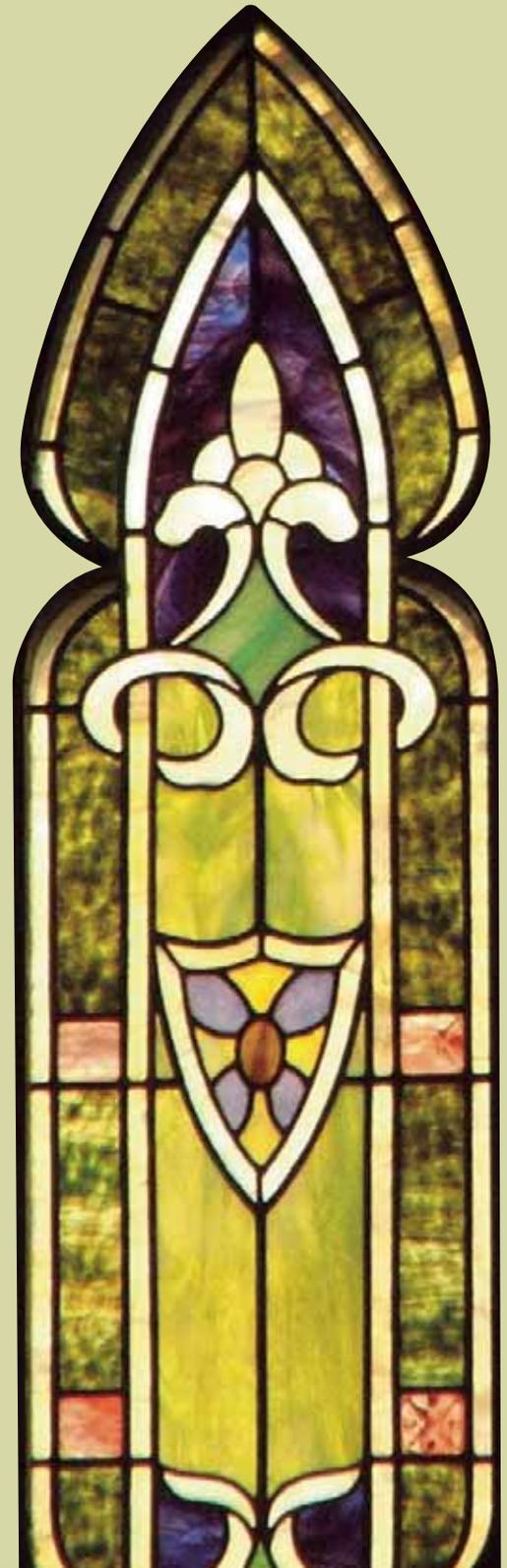
Tour our space, meet many of our preferred vendors and learn more about how you can rent our space or your next event. Plus we unveil the new look for our website.

Sunday:

Noon-6PM - Volunteer Day

Want to help us continue to maintain and improve our space. Join your neighbors and helping us on one of several projects going on this day.

The Union Project is a community arts and enterprise center where our mission is to use our space to bring people together to connect, create and celebrate. To date Union Project has cultivated nearly 35,000 community volunteers to help us renovate our space and created three social enterprises including: Space Rental@UP, EatUP Café, Glass Action, Ceramics@UP. UP has helped create 96 jobs, serves over 20,000 people annually, and generates half the costs of our operations annually. For more information about Union Project, our stained glass project, or to make a tax deductible donation, contact us today at (412) 363-4550 or log onto www.unionproject.org.



Around St. Andrew's

By Bruce Robison

The Bucs are playing ball, in transition from Bradenton to Pittsburgh, and winter gives way to Spring - and we move on here at St. Andrew's and in the Church Calendar to the rich seasons of Lent and Eastertide.

A special invitation in this Lent to services of Choral Evensong. On Thursday, April 7, at 8 p.m., the St. Andrew's Parish Choir will sing, and the service will be followed by a musical recital featuring soprano Amy Stabnau, accompanied by Dr. Alastair Stout, piano. And on Palm Sunday, April 17, at 4:30 p.m., the St. Andrew's Schola Cantorum will sing Choral Evensong. Our Guest Preacher that afternoon will be the Rev. Canon James Shoucair, Rector of Christ Episcopal Church of the North Hills.

Holy Week at St. Andrew's will include a Maundy Thursday service "Around the Table" in the St. Andrew's Parish Hall at 6 p.m. on April 21, followed by a Pot Luck supper. On Good Friday, April 22, we observe the traditional Great Three Hours with Stations of the Cross at noon, the Prayer Book Good Friday service with the reading of the Passion Gospel of St. John, meditations, and hymns

at 1 p.m., and then, at 2 p.m., a Service of Music and Reflection, with St. Andrew's Choir singing a selection of J.S. Bach's Passiontide Motets. At 3 p.m. the Great Bell of St. Andrew's is tolled 33 times, to mark the hour of Jesus' death.

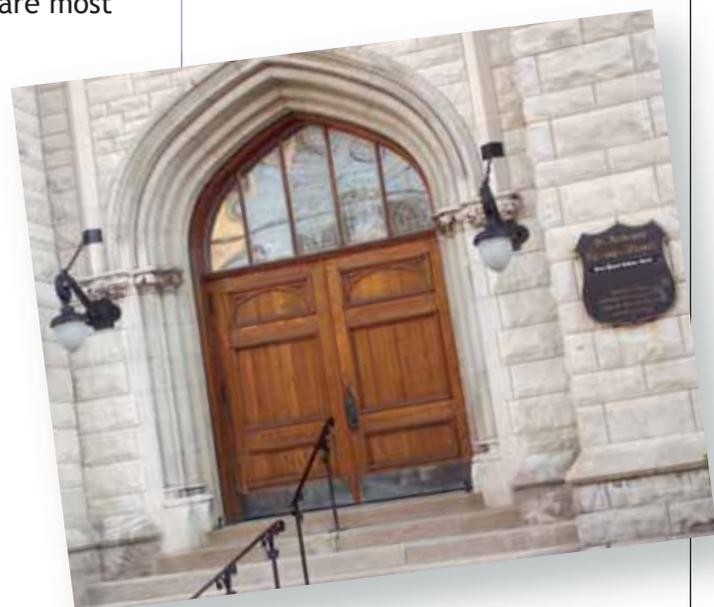
Holy Saturday, April 23, includes at 10 a.m. a fun event for the kids and families of the parish and neighborhood, as we gather in the Parish Hall and Kitchen to color Easter Eggs! Please bring a dozen (or more) hard-boiled eggs to color and take home with you, and a dozen (or more) to contribute to the St. Andrew's Easter Morning Easter Egg Hunt.

Easter Sunday, April 24, includes two Festival Services, at 9 a.m. and (with full choir and brass) at 11 a.m., and with Easter Egg Hunt and Champagne Reception in the Churchyard following the later service. All are most welcome!

And we might just mention that our first Choral Evensong of Eastertide, on Thursday evening, May 5, at 8 p.m., will be followed by a recital featuring Pittsburgh jazz pianist Bill McConnell. A very special treat indeed.

St. Andrew's, in the 5800 block of Hampton Street, has been at the heart of this neighborhood of Highland Park for over a century now. If you have a pastoral concern we can help with - a baby to be baptized, a marriage to celebrate, a sick or shut-in family member or neighbor who would appreciate a visit and a blessing, a family to comfort at the time of the death of a loved one - or if you simply would like to borrow a table or find some space for a family gathering too large for your living room, please feel free to give our Church Office a call at (412) 661-1245, or visit us at www.standrewspgh.org.

We're always glad to hear from you.



Citizens Against Litter Rooted in Highland Park

At our last HPCC meeting, someone brought up the subject of litter. Prompted, no doubt, by all of the debris that has built up over the winter months. The discussion centered around organizing a team of volunteers to clean up their blocks or streets on a regular basis. I reached out to Boris Weinstein, the founder of Citizens Against Litter and a Highland Park native son, to tell us how he got started. — Monica Watt

I grew up on Mellon Street near Stanton Ave.

I founded Citizens Against Litter in Shadyside many years later in 2002, convinced that a program — with volunteers working together and with a plan — would spread to other neighborhoods.

The idea is simple. Each person can make a difference. People who care and want a cleaner neighborhood must pick up for people who don't care and litter. Picking up litter once in awhile doesn't make a neighborhood clean. Concerned people should pick up litter often in order to control it.

Ideally, neighborhoods should be divided into zones of streets, alleys, parks and play areas. One or two volunteers assigned to each zone can keep their zones litter-free when they focus on this responsibility regularly.

Highland Park has participated in every Let's Redd Up Pittsburgh since 2006.

Today, 10 years later, most of the city's 90 neighborhoods participate in spring and fall Redd Ups and attract as many as 10,000 children and adults of all ages. This year's spring Redd Up dates are April 15, 16 and 17. Volunteers are always needed.

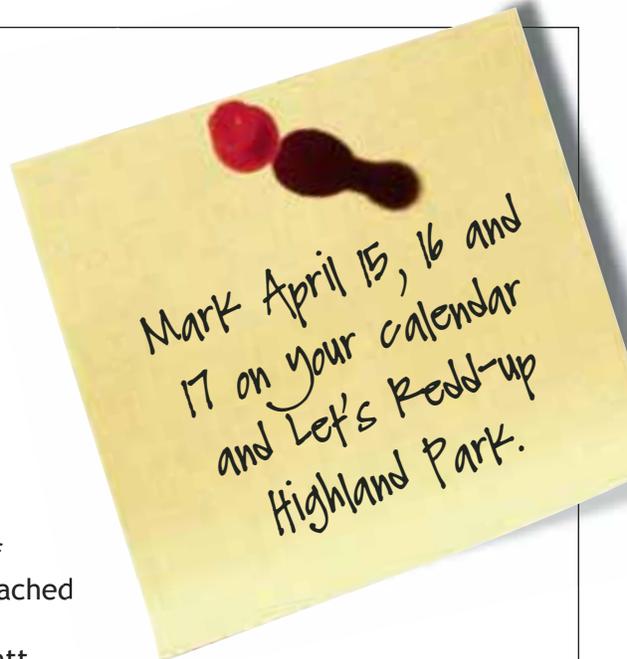
Redd Up fervor is elsewhere too. As many as 200 to 250 communities and groups with 20,000 volunteers in Allegheny,

Butler, Beaver, Washington and Westmoreland counties sign in with Citizen Against Litter twice a year.

Redd Ups work because a few advocates in each neighborhood demonstrate leadership. They recruit volunteers, pick the places to be cleaned, get the supplies and supervise the event. They also work closely with Public Works to collect filled litter bags. Neighborhood stewards also work with Allegheny CleanWays (412-381-1301) to remove litter, trash, tires and discarded construction material from illegal dumpsites.

Mark your calendars and sign-up to volunteer this year. Highland Park is one of the most beautiful areas of our city. Help us keep it that way!

For more information about Citizens Against Litter, contact Boris Weinstein at (412) 688-9120 or e-mail boris.weinstein@verizon.net.



TREES FOR HIGHLAND PARK:

Many Hands Make
Light Work.



Please volunteer to help make Highland Park more beautiful. We need volunteers to help plant trees on Saturday, April 2, 2011.

TreeVitalize Pittsburgh has awarded Highland Park 30 street trees to plant on Portland St. and Jackson St. The trees are free, but our community needs to plant them. We need volunteers from 8:45 am to noon (rain or shine). If you can volunteer, contact Nancy Arnold. nlevinearnold@gmail.com or (412) 414-8449.

Children ages 8 and older are encouraged to help along with their parents or a responsible adult. We hope to have activities for younger children.

If you can't make it, there are other ways to contribute. You can make a tax-deductible donation to buy food for the volunteers. Make your checks out to the TreePittsburgh. Write "Highland Park" in the memo line on the check. Mail them to (or just put them in my mail slot). You can bake something for the volunteers such as, cookies, muffins, breads etc...

1232 N Highland Ave
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Thanks to our community volunteers and organizers, this will be our fifth Highland Park Tree Planting since 2009! We have planted 70 trees on Stanton, 20 on N Highland and 20 on Mellon Terrace.

Here is what trees do for our community:

1. Make our neighborhood a beautiful and pleasant place to walk in or drive through
2. Decrease crime
3. Increase the value of our houses
4. Calm traffic
5. Decrease our heating and cooling costs
6. Decrease air and water pollution
7. Help manage storm water run-off

For more details on how trees benefit our neighborhood and a look at the studies that support these claims about trees, go to: www.treepittsburgh.org

Thank You From the Spring 2011 Tree Planting Team.



Update from the Office of Councilman Patrick Dowd

NEWS AND UPDATES

COUNCIL TO GO

Lawrenceville, Friday April 15th 7:30 - 9pm at Perk Me Up, 4407 Butler Street.

Join Councilman Patrick Dowd at Council to Go, his mobile district office, to voice your concerns, ideas, and questions about local government and services.

Allegheny River Greenway

City Councilman Patrick Dowd recently led City Council in the passage of the legislation designating a protected 'greenway' along the Allegheny River stretching from Morningside through Stanton Heights.

Stanton Heights Parklet Development

A proposed parklet is taking shape in Stanton Heights along Stanton Avenue.

Lawrenceville Off-Lease Exercise Area

Calling all dog-lovers! There is proposal for an enclosed off-leash exercise area along the Allegheny Riverfront Trail in Lawrenceville in the proximity of the 40th Street Bridge.

HPCC Officers

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Kelly Vitti (412) 361-7669

Secretary

Bob Staresinic (412) 441-8972

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Rachel Matos (412) 361-3802

Paul Miller (412) 365-0675

Mike Nadler (412) 363-3483

Nancy Levine-Arnold

Sarah Trbovic

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House Tour - OPEN

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Lynn Banker-Burns (412) 361-8863

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Reservoir of Jazz -

Ethan Winograd (412) 352-2767

Super Playground -

Monica Watt (412) 361-7902 &

Vernon Simmons (412) 661-1366

Yard Sale - Paul Miller (412) 365-0675

Welcoming - Bob Staresinic (412) 441-8972

Zoning - Dell Ziegler (412) 363-0742



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*The Rev. Dr. Bruce Monroe Robison, Rector
The Ven. Archdeacon Jean D. Chess, Deacon
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At St. Andrew's

Sunday Morning Services

9 a.m.

In the Chapel

11 a.m.

Choral Service in the Anglican Tradition

Nursery Care: 8:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

*Church School, Youth, and Adult Programs,
Sunday Mornings, 9:45 – 10:45 a.m.*

Wednesday Morning Service

Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

Rector's Bible Study 11:15 a.m. – Noon

Choral Evensong

First Thursday of the Month, 8 p.m.

Third Sunday of the Month, 4:30 p.m.

*Check our Website for Special and Holiday
Services and Activities*

You Are Welcome Here

*5801 Hampton Street, Highland Park, Pittsburgh
412 661-1245 www.standrewspgh.org*



Highland Park
Community Council



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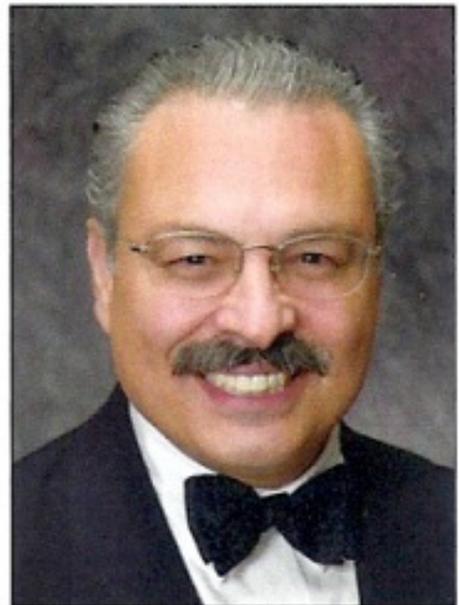
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