

Merry Christmas

# GAZEBO EXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • DECEMBER 2015

## HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

### Highland Police Department moves into new state-of-the-art facility

For the first time in nearly 50 years, Highland Police have a new department to call their own.

Equipped with all of the necessities of modern-day policing, Chief Pete Hojnicky said he, the department's 42 sworn officers and 25 VIPs are eager to welcome residents to the new facility.

"This is a beautiful new building that will allow us to function even better as a department," Hojnicky said. "We have had interest from other departments that are finding their physical plant doesn't operate as they had hoped. The Council hired an architect that specializes in public safety to guarantee our building meets our needs."

Councilman Bernie Zemen is eager to see the building in action. "These guys have been working in what amounts to a dungeon for the last 45 years. Every room in the new building has natural light – and that's just for starters."

Councilman Dan Vassar said it's exciting to watch the facility take shape, knowing the town is providing our officers with the tools they need to do their job. "It's a beautiful building. More than that, though, it's what our town – and our police department – need." 🐾



[JOSH CARLASCIO PHOTOS]

### OPEN HOUSE & DEDICATION

Join the Highland Police Department for a public open house and dedication of the new, state-of-the-art police station. Meet our community's law enforcement officers and tour the new digs they call home.

**WHEN:** 10 a.m. Saturday, **DEC. 19.**

**WHERE:** 3315 Ridge Road. The dedication ceremony starts at 10 a.m. in the Community Room, located off the lobby on the second floor. Guided tours will follow.

**NOTE:** An open house for the law enforcement community will be held at a later date.

**INFO:** Call (219) 838-3184.

### NEW TRAFFIC LIGHT

The town will trial a flashing light at the 45th Street Fire Station to alert east/west traffic to emergency vehicles leaving the station. The flashing light will be activated from inside firetrucks and rescue vehicles only during emergency calls.

The Town Council approved spending \$37,675 on the project – about 25 percent of what it would cost to install a conventional traffic light. Hawk Enterprises is expected to have the light installed and operational by mid-December.

### TOWN HALL PARKING

The Town Council wants to make access easier for people who have business at the Municipal Building.

A proposal being studied would increase the number of parking spaces between the new police station and municipal offices located on what was the west parking lot. Estimates and a rendering of the expanded parking area are expected early next year.



### ... TOWN TICKER ...

Join the **Lincoln Community Center Fitness Center** after December 9 and pay no initiation fee. ... The hunt is on for a replacement rescue truck. The town expects to spend up to \$350,000 to replace the 20-year-old workhorse of the **Highland Fire Department**.

## SNOW RULES HELP KEEP HIGHLAND STREETS SAFE DURING WINTER

A wallop of the white stuff that arrived earlier than normal this year packed a punch that left residents scrambling for gloves, scarves and the rules for winter parking and snow shoveling.

The dos and don'ts of winter were delivered earlier this year and are intended to be an easy reference guide to make it easier for snow plows to do their job while you do your part to keep your walks and drives shoveled.

"These rules were created by the Town Council, police, public works and code enforcement to keep everyone safe," Public Works Director John Bach said. "We also need to keep all streets passable no matter how much snow falls." 🐾

**LEARN MORE:** Download the Snow and Ice Control Operations Plan on the town website – [highland.in.gov](http://highland.in.gov) – and learn how you can help keep Highland's streets safe this winter.

### LEAF SCHEDULE EXTENDED

Recent snowfall put leaf collection crews one full week behind schedule. New collection dates are as follows:

**DECEMBER 7:** Area 6

**DECEMBER 8:** Area 7

**DECEMBER 9:** Area 8

**DECEMBER 10:** Area 9

**DECEMBER 11:** Area 10

Visit [highland.in.gov](http://highland.in.gov) for collection map.

**FACADE IMPROVEMENTS**

The Redevelopment Commission has granted preliminary approval for a façade improvement grant for property located at 8411 Kennedy Avenue. The building houses three Highland businesses: Mark R. Machnic, CPA; the Edward Jones office of Doug Lewis; and the Family Eyecare office of Dr. James Ferguson.

The total façade project cost is \$28,000, including the façade grant of \$8,400. This is the ninth Façade Improvement Grant approved by the Redevelopment Commission. Total grants approved for all nine projects is \$107,268. The total project costs were about \$386,000.

Washington D.C.-based Main Street America concluded in May that even a small investment in the exterior of a property had measurable impacts on sales and the ability of a business to attract new customers.

Eighty percent of businesses surveyed saw an increase in the number of first-time customers and 90 percent saw an increase in overall sales.



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**NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?**

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**LAKE COUNTY 911 LEADERS ‘WILL NOT REST UNTIL THERE ARE NO MORE MISTAKES’**

One major problem with an inadequate response to a 911 call by dispatchers at the Lake County consolidated dispatch center has been followed by two other major failures. In each case, a county resident was left dead.

Fire Chief Bill Timmer, who serves as Highland’s liaison to Lake County 911, said each of the three instances showcase problems in a system that is expected to work flawlessly.

“We have zero tolerance for any failing. We need to depend on 911,” he said. “Our confidence has been shaken, but will continue to work to make the system what it needs to be to protect every resident who calls 911.”

In addition to the administration at Lake County 911, the county fire chiefs meet weekly to discuss performance and remedies. The county’s police chiefs also meet regularly and stakeholders meet at least once a month.

“We are working to improve the system every day,” he said. “Our expectation is that six months from now, the situation will be better than it is today. We will not rest until there are no more mistakes.”

**THE 411 ON 911 ...**

Although the dispatching function for police, fire and ambulance have become part of the county’s unified call center, it will be Highland police and fire who respond to your call.



**CALL 911** to request all police, fire or medical services – both emergency and nonemergency.



**CALL 911** to report or cancel an activated alarm at a home or business. Alarm companies must call the 911 center at (219) 755-6546 for a confidential phone number to report an active alarm.



**CALL (219) 838-3184** to leave a message for Highland police personnel. The department remains staffed 24/7 to take recovered property, make reports and monitor e-bay/Craigslist transactions as well as parental custody transfers.

**SIGN UP FOR NIXLE ...**

Did you know nearly 4,000 people have signed up for Highland’s Nixle alerts? Have you? In the event of an emergency, police send out details via text message, email – or both.

**INFO:** Visit [highlandpolice.com](http://highlandpolice.com) or register online at [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com).

**HIGHLAND GETS FIRST RAILROAD QUIET ZONE**

Griffith-based Walsh & Kelly is creating a quiet zone at the CSX tracks that cross Kennedy Avenue midway between 45th and Main.

Necessary to make an at-grade crossing a no-horn zone requires automated crossing gates and the installation of a concrete median between northbound and southbound traffic. Cost of the projects is about \$60,000.

The Town Council will be studying the effects of this first no-horn zone before considering similar changes at other crossings in town.

Highland has seven crossings but only three automated gates. Equipping remaining crossings would cost \$2 million to \$3 million and require the consent of the rail companies.

“We have several crossings that could benefit from automated gates,” Council President Mark Herak said. “We are grateful we’ve had no recent accidents, but are always looking at ways we can enhance safety.”

**ABOUT QUIET ZONES**

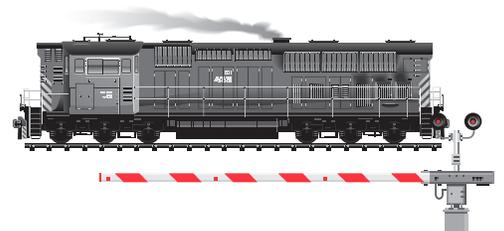
A quiet zone is a section of a rail line at least one-half mile in length in which railroads no longer routinely sound their horns when approaching at-grade crossings.

Train horns are prohibited in quiet zones when approaching and entering crossings and does not include horn use within passenger stations or rail yards.

Train horns may be sounded in emergency situations or to comply with other railroad or Federal rules even within a quiet zone.

Quiet zone regulations do not eliminate the use of locomotive bells at crossings.

**LEARN MORE:** Visit the Federal Railroad Administration website at [www.fra.dot.gov](http://www.fra.dot.gov).



# Indiana's Bicentennial TORCH RELAY



A torch relay that meanders through all of Indiana's 92 counties is one of the major events planned as part of state's 2016 bicentennial celebration.

The Bicentennial Torch Relay will begin in Corydon in September and continue uninterrupted on a 2,300-mile journey connecting generations and communities on a six-week trek, which will culminate on the Statehouse lawn.

In all, more than 1,800 torchbearers will be selected to represent each of the state's counties. Lake County, which is the 80th stop on the relay, will designate 34 residents to pass the torch while the flame is in the Northwest corner of the state.

"I understand that the Indiana Bicentennial Commission regards the selection to carry a torch as a great honor," said Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin, who is part of Lake County's Bicentennial Committee.

"I encourage everyone who is interested to apply to carry the torch. We definitely want a cross-section of all of our communities and it would be great to see Highland represented."

## ABOUT INDIANA'S BICENTENNIAL

Indiana's 2016 Bicentennial celebration aims to honor our state's 200 years of history, and to do so in a modern way that engages all 6.5 million Hoosiers and leaves a lasting legacy for future generations. Join the conversation on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

**LEARN MORE:** [www.in.gov/ibc](http://www.in.gov/ibc)

## ABOUT THE RELAY

The Indiana Bicentennial Torch Relay honors Hoosiers who have demonstrated exceptional public service, achievement, acts of heroism or volunteer service. More than 1,800 torchbearers will be selected to carry the torch with 34 in Lake County.

**INFO:** Nominate a torchbearer online by January 31 at [www.in.gov/ibc/torchrelay](http://www.in.gov/ibc/torchrelay)

## TORCH RELAY FACTS

- ✓ Not a runner? No worries. The torch relay is friendly to walkers as well as those who have mobility challenges.
- ✓ The torch will be primarily transported by people, passing the flame from torchbearer to torchbearer. The relay will also employ other modes of conveyance that are symbolic of Indiana's history and heritage, including watercraft, farm equipment, a racecar, horse and wagon, antique automobile and others.
- ✓ Engineering faculty and students at Purdue University are creating the torch, specially designed to withstand the elements.
- ✓ The route showcases locations of natural beauty, local interest and historic significance to the state.

## HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

'Tis the season when crime can flourish. Police Chief Pete Hojnicky says there are things each of us can do to protect ourselves and our property during the upcoming holidays.

- ✱ Keep doors locked and valuables out of plain view.
- ✱ Make arrangements for a trusted neighbor or relative to pick-up or take delivery of mailed packages.
- ✱ Leave outside/inside lights on after dark. Preferably on a motion sensor.
- ✱ Beware of phone scams seeking personal information.

## IF YOU ARE ON VACATION ...

- ✱ Contact the police at (219) 838-3184 to put your residence on a vacation checklist. Highland VIPs will physically check the security of your home while you are away
- ✱ Put lights, radios and TVs on timers when leaving for an extended time.
- ✱ Make arrangements for your mail and newspapers to be picked up.
- ✱ Have someone shovel your driveway and walkways.
- ✱ Take in your trash cans.
- ✱ Inform a trusted neighbor or relative to check your house.

## IF YOU ARE SHOPPING ...

- ✱ Shop with friends or family.
- ✱ Do not carry large sums of money or all of your credit cards. Carry only what you need on your person.
- ✱ Park in a well-lit area.
- ✱ Lock your vehicle.
- ✱ Store valuables in the trunk.
- ✱ Avoid carrying purses.
- ✱ Be aware of your surroundings.

## REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

Residents are asked to immediately report suspicious people, behavior or vehicles to police by calling 911.

## TOWNSHIP OFFERS RESIDENTS 211 SOCIAL SERVICE ASSISTANCE

Did you know social service assistance can be accessed simply by dialing 211? A call to 211 activates a personal emergency response system designed to keep North Township residents from falling through the cracks. An online chat feature is available at [nwi211.com](http://nwi211.com).

Help is available 24/7 for crises that cannot wait — such as the threat of suicide, addiction issues and senior assistance.

The 211 system provides a vital safety net for the most vulnerable members of the community. These are the kind of emergencies that come without warning.

The 211 system is free and confidential and works in concert with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It provides an advocate for individuals who are not in a place where they can advocate for themselves. 🐾

## SIGN UP FOR CALL LIST

If you are a senior or homebound and would like to be part of the township's well-being checks, call the trustee's office at (219) 932-2530, ext. 324.

**INFO:** Winterization kits and shoveling assistance are also available. Call (219) 932-2530 to see if you qualify.

## ZUMBA 2-WEEK MINI

Ditch the workout and join the party. Zumba is a high-energy, dance-inspired workout for all ages and levels. No experience required.

**WHEN:** 6 to 6:55 p.m. Wednesdays and Fridays, **DEC. 9** through **DEC. 18**

**WHERE:** Lincoln Community Fitness Center  
**FEE:** \$19.50 residents / \$21.50 nonresidents  
**ONLINE CODE:** 300023

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

## CANVAS PAINT NIGHT

Trained Instructor Fred Holly will show you step-by-step how to paint your own 16" x 20" canvas. It's a fun, stress-free class and no experience is required. Snacks and refreshments included.

**WHEN:** 6 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, **DEC. 16**

**WHERE:** Lincoln Community Center  
**FEE:** \$25 residents / \$30 nonresidents  
**ONLINE CODE:** 349003

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

## FLORIDA BUS TRIP

Register now for Park & Recreation's spring trip to Florida from March 5-13. Visit the Fountain of Youth and the historic Kingsley Plantation. Take a narrated cruise on the St. Johns River and enjoy guided tours of Amelia Island, St. Augustine and Jacksonville. Trip includes 14 meals.

**WHEN: MARCH 5-13**

**WHERE:** Amelia Island, St. Augustine and Jacksonville, Florida

**FEE:** \$740 per person based on double occupancy. Add \$240 for single occupancy. A \$75 deposit is due upon signing.

**DEADLINE:** Balance is due **DEC. 29**

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

## DINING SAVVY WORKSHOP

Join Community in Schools of Lake County for a two-day Dining Savvy workshop. Students ages 8-14 will learn about table manners, napkin etiquette, handling silverware dining in public, hard-to-eat foods and more. Lunch is served.

**WHEN:** 11:30 to 1:30 p.m. **DEC. 28-29**

**WHERE:** Theo's Steak and Seafood, 9144 Indianapolis Blvd., Highland

**FEE:** \$45 per person. Register online at [www.cislakecounty.org](http://www.cislakecounty.org) and click on "Sign Me Up" under upcoming events.

**INFO:** cislakecounty.org or (219) 378-9114.

## YOUTH WITH DISTINCTION

Students ages 8-14 will learn leadership skills such as remembering names, telephone etiquette, addressing grown-ups, thank you notes, classic dances and more.

**WHEN:** 11:30 to 1:30 p.m. **DEC. 12** and **19**

**WHERE:** Lincoln Community Center

**FEE:** \$15 per person per session. Register online at [www.cislakecounty.org](http://www.cislakecounty.org) and click on "Sign Me Up" link under upcoming events.

**INFO:** cislakecounty.org or (219) 378-9114.

## HOME DECORATING CONTEST

Decorate your home for the holidays and you could be eligible for cash prizes. Enter the contest and let your Park Board be the judge of the best decorated homes. Highland residents only please. Entry forms available at Lincoln Center.

**ENTRY DEADLINE:** December 6

**JUDGING:** 6 to 8 p.m. December 10

**AWARDS:** Announced December 12

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## NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS

Ring in the new year with a fireworks display at Main Square Park. Bring the family to enjoy the midnight show. Hot chocolate will be served.

**WHEN:** Midnight December 31

**WHERE:** Main Square Park

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT

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

**WHEN:** 7 p.m. December 17

**WHERE:** Highland High School Monbeck Auditorium

**WANT TO JOIN US?** Email Director Greg Jasek at [maestroflute@att.net](mailto:maestroflute@att.net).

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## TWELFTH NIGHT CELEBRATION

The Holiday Festival of Lights will close with a Twelfth Night celebration. Bring your Christmas trees to Main Square to light up the night. Hot chocolate will be served to warm your hearts and toes.

**WHEN:** 6 p.m. January 6

**WHERE:** Main Square Park

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information on these Parks & Recreation holidays events, please call (219) 838-0114 or visit [www.highlandparks.org](http://www.highlandparks.org).



Merry Christmas  
and Happy New Year