



HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY! Saint Patrick himself would have to deal with pinching on his feast day. His color was "Saint Patrick's blue," a light shade. The color green only became associated with the big day after it was linked to the Irish independence movement in the late 18th century.



GAZEBO EXPRESS

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

HISTORIC LANDMARK

Town Theatre on the road to National Register of Historic Places

A detailed historic analysis of the Town Theatre has been submitted to state preservation officials, marking the beginning of an effort to have the movie house declared a national landmark.

Indiana Landmarks contributed to the effort, making the Highland theatre one of 10 places in the state to receive a grant from its Partners in Preservation program. In Highland's case, PiP funding paid half of the \$1,400 nomination fee.

Town Council President Mark Herak heralded the nomination as an important first step.

"A listing on the National Register of Historic Places will make the Town eligible for funding, which is vital as the project advances," Herak said. "The Town is a perfect fit for the national register."

ABOUT INDIANA LANDMARKS

Indiana Landmarks is a nonprofit organization, fighting to defend architecturally unique, historically significant, and communally cherished properties, just like the Town Theatre.

INFO: Call Indiana Landmarks' Northwest Field Office at (219) 947-2657 or email Tiffany Tolbert at ttolbert@indianalandmarks.org.

It is one of a dwindling number of WWII-era movie theaters. In addition, it will serve as a mini-museum for the public."

Tiffany Tolbert, director of Indiana Landmarks Northwest Field Office, agreed the listing will allow funding and incentives available only to structures designated historic.

"We do what we can to support historically significant structures," she said. "This is a positive step for the Town." 🍀

WATER PROJECT WILL IMPACT KENNEDY TRAFFIC

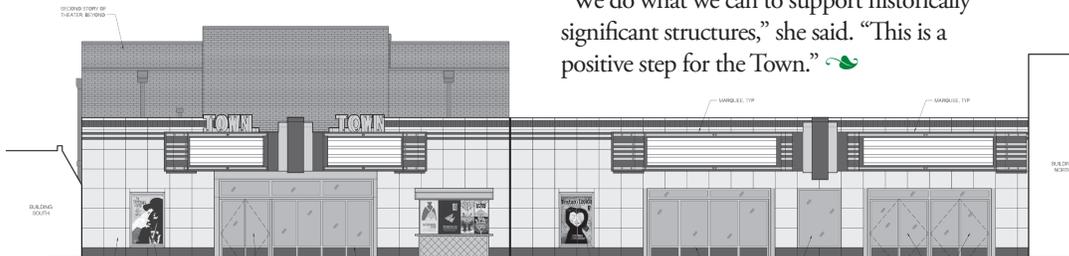
Lane restrictions along Kennedy Avenue from Highway Avenue to the Cady Marsh ditch may begin as early as April.

Public Works Director John Bach said the first phase of a \$2.36 million project to reline and upgrade water pipes is going to mean traffic along Kennedy Avenue will be reduced to one lane in each direction for most of the 2015 construction season.

"We've already talked to the Council of Community Events about the impact this project is going to have on the Twilight Parade July 3," Bach said. "It is absolutely essential that we improve our water lines, but it is going to make traveling Kennedy Avenue a challenge."

... TOWN TICKER ...

The public is invited to the next meeting of the **Town Theatre Board** 6:30 p.m. March 23 at Town Hall, 3333 Ridge Road. ... The **Purdue Alumni Club of Northwest Indiana** is offering two scholarships. The \$700 **Book Scholarship** is for graduating high school seniors who plan on attending any Purdue campus in the Fall of 2015. The \$1,200 **Purdue Scholar Award** is available to Purdue students who have completed their first year. **INFO:** Call (219) 779-8012 or visit their website purduealumni.org/nwindiana.



RESIDENTS HELP CREATE A VISION FOR HIGHLAND'S FUTURE

If you've ever thought, "Wouldn't it be great if we had _____ in Highland," here's the chance to have your voice heard.

The Redevelopment Commission has scheduled an input session to hear what the community wants. No idea is too small or too large. Come for 10 minutes or stay for two hours. The meeting is an open forum.

As part of a \$30,000 Creating Livable Communities grant, the idea session will provide

fodder for the Redevelopment Commission and Highland Main Street as they continue to plan a dynamic vision for the town.

"We have been working to create a landscape where downtown Highland becomes an arts and cultural hub for the region" Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro said.

"We also want to hear about ideas for all of Highland. We will create partnerships based upon the ideas raised by the community." 🍀

COMMUNITY MEETING

Members of the Redevelopment Commission, Highland Main Street, the Arts & Cultural District Committee, the Redevelopment Director and other town officials want to hear your ideas!

WHEN: 5 to 7 p.m. **MARCH 19**

WHERE: Highland Town Hall, 3333 Ridge Road

INFO: Call (219) 972-7598 or email Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro at cpetro@highland.in.gov.

EMERALD ASH BORER

As soon as trees start leafing this spring, Public Works will be out assessing the damage from the emerald ash borer that occurred over the winter. The tiny metallic-looking insect is making its way across the country, destroying the ash population as it goes.

Public Works Director John Bach said all of the ash trees in town have been inventoried and ranked for which ones will need to be taken down first. Smaller trees will be removed by Public Works. The town will contract for the removal of larger ash varieties.

INFO: Call the Public Works department at (219) 972-5083.

CRIME WATCH MEETING

Learn about the latest crime trends at this month's crime watch meeting.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. **MARCH 11**

WHERE: Highland Library

INFO: Call (219) 838-3184 or email sanderson@highland.in.gov.



A married father of three, Lou Melgarejo's oldest daughter Bianca is autistic. Lou says Bianca has taught him more about life, respect and unconditional love than anybody. They have a bond like no other and Lou's only wish for his daughter is that she grows up to be the best Bianca she can be.

HIGHLAND TO LIGHT IT UP BLUE FOR GLOBAL AUTISM AWARENESS

In the days leading up to April 2, the Melgarejo family walks their Strong Place neighborhood handing out blue light bulbs.

This year, the Highland family hopes the effort will be adopted throughout town, beginning with a proclamation from the Town Council.

Light it Up Blue is a global initiative to increase awareness and support for those, like Bianca Melgarejo, who have autism.

From porch lights to soft blue lights on trees and bushes, support for Light it Up Blue has expanded to include some of the largest – and smallest – buildings in the world.

“One in 68 children in the United States will be diagnosed with some form of autism,” Lou Melgarejo said. “Light it Up Blue focuses on the children and the work that is being done to find out what causes it and find a cure.”

The father of three didn't know much about autism until Bianca's development began to regress at 13 months old. It would be another three years before the diagnosis was official.

Today, Melgarejo is a member of the board for the Chicago Chapter of Autism Speaks and chairman of Light it Up Blue Chicago.

ABOUT AUTISM AWARENESS

It was a request from the tiny nation of Qatar to the United Nations in 2007 that put World Autism Awareness Day (April 2) on the calendar - and on the map.

A GLOBAL INITIATIVE

World Autism Awareness Day is celebrated around the globe with a cascade of blue lights on some of the world's most recognizable buildings, including the Empire State Building in New York City and Kingdom Tower in Saudi Arabia. In Chicago, more than 300 buildings Light It Up Blue, including the Willis Tower, Soldier Field, John Hancock, Blue Cross/Blue Shield and the Wrigley Building.

LOU'S BLOG

Highland resident Lou Melgarejo uses his engaging blog and vlogs to raise awareness and speak publicly about autism. Check it out at – lous-land.blogspot.com.

GETTING YOUR BLUE ON

Home Depot is the national sponsor of Light It Up Blue. The Schererville store, 960 U.S. Highway 41, has a limited number of blue light bulbs in stock. Blue lights are also available online at www.homedepot.com.



WARD 1

BERNIE ZEMEN - vice president
bzemen@comcast.net
(219) 781-1056



WARD 2

MARK HERAK - president
mherak@highland.in.gov
(219) 838-0126



WARD 3

DAN VASSAR
dvassar@highland.in.gov
(219) 924-1945



WARD 4

STEVEN WAGNER
swagner@highland.in.gov
(219) 718-3199



WARD 5

KONNIE KUIPER
kkuiper@highland.in.gov
(219) 924-7820

NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

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

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BEST OF HIGHLAND

This year's "Best of Highland" honors a cadre of folks who have made an indelible footprint on the town.

From business owners and public servants to the civic-minded, who have the spirit of volunteerism in their souls, the 2015 ceremony is all about recognizing dozens of individuals who make Highland a vibrant community.

"Every year, we hear great stories about wonderful people in our town we hadn't heard of before," Chamber Executive Director Mary Luptak said. "This year, we received more nominations than ever before. The town has embraced this event and has made it a success."

In addition to community nominations, longtime owners of Doctors Pharmacy, Dave and Kathleen Gortat, will receive the Legacy Award while Ken, Bill and Fred Leep – the latest generation to own Pleasant View Dairy, which began in Highland in the 1930s – will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The event will be held at 6 p.m. March 12 at the Wicker Park Social Center. Tickets are \$40.

New in 2015 will be a panel of celebrity judges, who will vote along with attendees to determine the town's best restaurant.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THIS YEAR'S PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS!

Cakes By Karen, Dickey's Barbecue, Dining Solutions, Grindhouse Café, Round the Clock, Texas Corral, Theo's, Town Club and Traditions.



CIVIL SERVANT FINALISTS

CIVIL SERVANT

Bridget DeYoung, Highland Redevelopment
Dawn Diamantopoulos, Highland Main Street
Renee and James Jones, Highland Emergency Fund
Rich Underkofler, Highland Community Foundation

PARKS DEPARTMENT

Bob Knight, Chris Ray, Katie Solina

PUBLIC SAFETY – FIRE, POLICE, VIPS

John Banasiak, Brandon Norris, Keith Thompson Sr.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Rich Hoekstra, Bob Johnsen, Judy Vaughn

SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND

JJ Boylan, Warren School
Courtney Condes, Highland Middle School
Amanda Johnsen, Warren School
Sally Johnson, Highland Middle School
Sharon Konopasek, Warren School
Becky Rycerz, Merkle School

CHAMBER AWARD FINALISTS

BUSINESS PERSON

Keith Bruxvoort, Strack & Van Til
Joyce Koch, Embassy Place at White Oak Estates
Drs. Sarah and Joseph Paun, Paun Family Chiropractic and Wellness

CHAMBER VOLUNTEER

Tom Alexander, Providence Bank
Kimberly Blaesing, Tiger Plumbing
John Hamstra, Leeps Supply, Mercy Hill Church
Will Hudson, Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance
Vickie Rust, First Midwest Bank

BEAUTIFICATION

Community Hospital, GFS Marketplace, Milestone Therapy, North Central Veterinary Emergency Center

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Ken Leep, Bill Leep, Fred Leep, Pleasant View Dairy

LEGACY AWARD

Dave and Kathleen Gortat, Doctors Pharmacy

TIME TO REGISTER FOR KINDERGARTEN

The public elementary schools will hold kindergarten registration the week of March 9. Parents are urged to bring their children and the items listed below to the school that serves their immediate district according to the following schedule:

8:45 – 11 AM:

Last names "K" through "Z"

12:15 – 2:30 PM:

Last names "A" through "J"

MONDAY, MARCH 9

Johnston Elementary School
8220 Fifth St. • (219) 923-2428

TUESDAY, MARCH 10

Merkley Elementary School
9340 Fifth St. • (219) 922-5640

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

Southridge Elementary School
9221 Johnston St. • (219) 922-5650

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

Warren Elementary School
2901 100th St. • (219) 922-5660

AGE REQUIREMENT: Students must be 5 years of age on or before Aug. 1, 2015

ITEMS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION:

- Five proofs of residency

Two of the following: NIPSCO, water, phone, cable (utility bills/deposit receipts)

Two of the following: Driver's license/state ID showing current address, vehicle registration, recent paycheck/unemployment check receipt.

One of the following: Lease and rent receipt, mortgage and homeowners insurance documents, notarized letter with three proofs of residency from the homeowner (parent/guardian must provide ID listed above)

- Proof of custody, if applicable
- Birth certificate
- Social security number
- Current immunization records (name and phone number of pediatrician)

LITTLE LIGHTS PRESCHOOL

Little Lights Preschool is hosting an early registration day for its fall session. Meet your teachers, see the building and ask questions.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to noon **MARCH 24**

WHERE: Suburban Bible Church, 3010 41st St.

INFO: Visit www.littlelightssbc.com or www.facebook.com/littlelights for info and downloadable registration forms.

INDOOR STREET MARKET

Escape the cold and stop indoors for your favorite breads, cheeses, honey, cupcakes, pet treats and more.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, **MARCH 14.**

The market continues on the second Saturday of the month through May.

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

VENDOR FEES: \$21.40 per month, \$48.15 for 3 months. Full fee must be paid at time of reservation.

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

HHS BAND CRAFT FAIR

The best in arts and crafts will be showcased at this annual band craft fair. The two-day event features jewelry, ceramics, fiber arts and more.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, **MARCH 21** and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, **MARCH 22**

WHERE: Highland Middle School

INFO: Call Pam Finke at (219) 313-0644.

REGISTER FOR SWIM LESSONS

Highland High School will teach children – ages 5 and up – how to swim. Register your child for the April session from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

MARCH 24 and **26** at the high school pool.

WHEN: 3:30 to 4:15 p.m. or 4:15 to 5 p.m.

APRIL 7-10 and **APRIL 13-16**

WHERE: Highland High School pool

NOTE: Please use Door P to enter pool area for registration and lessons.

FEE: \$35 cash or check, \$40 late registration

INFO: Email rharrington@highland.k12.in.us.

COMMUNITY BAND CONCERT

Celebrate spring at the Highland Community Band performance. Admission is free.

WHEN: 7 p.m. **MARCH 26**

WHERE: Highland High Monbeck Auditorium

WANT TO JOIN? This band of volunteers is open to anyone from the area who is high school age or older. Rehearsals are held at 7 p.m. Wednesdays at the Highland High School band room.

INFO: Email Greg Jasek at maestrolute@att.net.

MEN'S OPEN BASKETBALL

Register now for this 18 and over league, which plays a regular season and an end-of-season tournament. Teams are guaranteed at least 10 games and must provide shirts or jerseys that are the same color with numbers on the back. Provide jersey color when registering to avoid duplicates.

WHEN: 6 p.m. Tuesdays, **MARCH 24 - MAY 26**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

FEE: \$480 per team. Deadline is March 15.

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

Highland breakfast with the bunny

Join the Easter Bunny and his furry friends for a continental breakfast. Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, the event also features a bike drawing, basket raffles and photos with the bunny.

WHEN: Saturday, **MARCH 28**

SEATINGS: 8:30 and 10 a.m.

WHERE: Highland High School cafeteria

TICKETS: \$6 and must be purchased

in advanced at Lincoln Center or the Highland Chamber office.

INFO: Call (219) 923-3666.

North Township Easter egg hunt

Grab your basket and head to Wicker Park for the 9th annual North Township Easter Egg Hunt. Children ages 1 to 10 are invited to hunt for filled eggs.

DJ music, a bouncy house and a visit from the Easter Bunny will be part of the day's activities.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to noon **MARCH 28**

WHERE: Wicker Park Pavilion

INFO: Call Events Coordinator Kelly Bridges at (219) 932-2530, ext. 331.



COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE

Do you enjoy shopping for rare items, such as comic books, sports cards, Hot wheels, autographs and other memorabilia? Roger Parker from P & P Collectibles will promote the card show in conjunction with the Community Garage Sale, featuring household items, toys, books, and more!

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, **MARCH 14**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

ADMISSION: Free

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

CALLING ALL VENDORS!

It's time for the spring craft show and vendor fair, featuring candles, jewelry, handbags, home décor, skin care, gourmet dips and more. Parks and Rec is always looking for new vendors who sell unique items. No wholesalers or used/resale items.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, **APRIL 11**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

VENDOR FEES: \$32.10 for 10' x 10' interior space and \$53.50 for 23' x 6' wall booth.

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