



# TROJAN TODAY

YOUR SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND SOURCE FOR NEWS AND EVENTS | APRIL 2018

>> NORTHWEST INDIANA SYMPHONY



SHOWBOAT AND SHOW TUNES – 7:30 PM MAY 12

## No make believe! ... ‘Ol’ Man River’ and other showstoppers coming to Monbeck Auditorium

Conductor Kirk Muspratt and the 75-members of his Northwest Indiana Symphony Orchestra continue the next chapter in their storied career at Highland High School’s Monbeck Auditorium.

John Cain, executive director of South Shore Arts and NISO, said the symphony’s cadre of talented musicians, vocalists and chorus are looking forward to performing “Showboat and Show Tunes” in Highland May 12. The evening performance features two hours of some of the most beloved songs from Broadway.

“The symphony has performed at Monbeck before and found it to be a beautiful venue,” Cain said.

“Upgrades to the sound system have made it professional quality.

Most people don’t realize it, but at 1,422 seats, Monbeck Auditorium is one of the largest school performance theaters in the region.”

Highland was selected as the Lake County school venue for the professional orchestra. Valparaiso was similarly selected to host concerts in Porter County.

School Board President Carol Green-Fraley is looking forward to a great turnout from residents.

“As soon as we heard the Star Plaza was closing, we began discussions about bringing the symphony here. We were excited to be selected,” said Green-Fraley, a long-time patron of the arts. “There are not many communities that can claim they are a host community to a world-class symphony orchestra.”

VISIT [NISORCHESTRA.ORG](http://NISORCHESTRA.ORG) FOR TICKETS AND INFORMATION

### SCHOOL SAFETY

## Reunification drills next on safety docket

Whenever a national school tragedy strikes, Superintendent Brian Smith meets with the town’s public safety team to see what can be done to bolster security at Highland schools.

The district’s safety committee, made up of 10 faculty members with advanced training, continue to tweak the document that details what to do in any manner of emergency.

“With school safety, there is no such thing as a one-and-done,” Smith said. “We look to see what other districts are implementing and work with our local law enforcement to do everything we can and hope we never have to use it.”

Since 2013, Dr. Sherri Mitchell, director of curriculum, instruction and student services, said the School Town has implemented a series of measures that strategically place cameras in hallways and entrances, as well as advance security with the Raptor system that runs background checks on school visitors before authorizing entry.

Most recently, the safety committee took steps to simplify the process.

“We took our plan one step further, replacing the cumbersome code system with a two-code advisory – lock down or evacuate,” said High School Assistant Principal Justin Fronek, who coordinates the safety committee.

This spring, all schools will take part in a reunification drill that familiarizes students with an evacuation plan.

“It’s a process,” Mitchell said. “We’ve enhanced our system, but are always looking for what we can do next.”

## ADMINISTRATION

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## SCHOOL BOARD

**Carol Green Fraley**, President

**Patrick Krull**, Vice President

**Luanne Jurczak**, Secretary

**Vicki Crowe**, Member

**Robert Kuva**, Member

The school board meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. in the Administration Building, 9145 Kennedy Avenue, Highland.

**INFO:** Visit [hhs.highland.k12.in.us](https://hhs.highland.k12.in.us) for the latest information, including meeting agendas, school policies, board mission, beliefs and values.

## \$75,000 Digital Learning Grant expands STEM curriculum throughout our elementary schools

Highland is one of only two regional school districts to be awarded an Indiana Department of Education Digital Learning Grant.

Dr. Sherri Mitchell, director of curriculum, instruction & student services, is thrilled with the \$75,000 grant that expands the Science Technology Engineering and Math curriculum throughout the four elementary schools.

The addition of elementary STEM education opens students to hands-on, engaging training that promotes the acquisition of critical thinking, problem-solving skills.

“We have 42 teachers who will train during their summer vacation. It is outstanding to get that kind of commitment,” Mitchell said.

“All of our teachers are excited to begin the new curriculum this fall.” ❖



### ABOUT THE GRANT

“Maintaining a focus on STEM is vital to preparing students for success,” said Dr. Jennifer McCormick, Superintendent of Public Instruction. “I congratulate the awarded districts as I know they will use this grant to continue making a positive impact in their communities.”

In line with IDOE's 2018 Strategic Priorities, the Digital Learning Grants focus on proposals that included vetted STEM curriculum, devices for coding, robotics equipment and professional development for teachers. In all, 27 districts were awarded grants, ranging from \$11,000 to \$75,000.

### LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

## “Please join us for a free presentation that helps adults identify and react to signals of drug and alcohol abuse”



It's time for a wake-up call about drug abuse.

When 200 Lake County residents died from a drug overdose in 2016, we were horrified.

Then 2017 rolled around. Drugs claimed another 300 lives and we were left asking ourselves what else can we do.

We can all start by attending Wake-Up Call, a life-size exhibit of a teen bedroom with red flags that signal drug and alcohol use. The bedroom identifies spots where teens may hide drugs as well as household items that can double as drug paraphernalia and ways teens cover up drug and alcohol use.

The School Town of Highland is hosting this effort to educate adults about identifying and reacting to signals of drug use.

Highland is a wonderful community.

### WAKE-UP CALL

This free presentation – for adults 21 and older – is a companion to the Stairway to Heroin initiative that works with school districts throughout the Midwest to turn the tide on drug addiction.

**WHEN:** 6:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, **April 11**

**WHERE:** Highland High School auditorium

**REGISTRATION:** Please register online at [highlandwakeupcall.eventbrite.com](https://highlandwakeupcall.eventbrite.com).

**INFO:** Call Justin Fronck at (219) 922-5610 or Charity Lyda at (219) 308-2740.

Sadly, it isn't immune to the opioid crisis. The goal of this program is to educate all of us so we can help our kids.

I hope to see you there. ❖

**Brian Smith**  
Superintendent  
School Town of Highland

## CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2018

# Countdown to graduation

While the countdown for this year's seniors has already begun, High School Principal Patrick Weil has a clock of his own that is ticking.

It's a bittersweet time for Weil, who watched this class enter high school as uncertain freshman.

In four short years, they gained the confidence, poise, academic excellence and maturity to move on to the next phase of their lives.

"This is a class that is gifted both academically and in the arts. They are competitive in sports and embrace innovation," he said. "Most of all, this is a group of really nice kids who care about others – both inside and outside school."

Weil credits engaged parents and a healthy community for helping the graduates-to-be – as well as a school system filled with teachers who care about educating children holistically.

There is no denying there is something extraordinary about this group of nearly 300 graduates.

"These kids embrace life in a completely new way," Weil said. "It's not so much about them, but what they want to do to make a difference. I see great potential in these seniors."



### HATS OFF TO OUR LEADERS!

Valedictorian Matthew Cotner, left, and Salutatorian Ethan Fitt, right, will share the commencement spotlight when they walk Highland High's hallowed halls for the last time in June.

Come fall, Matt will be attending Notre Dame and has plans to major in economics at the university's College of Arts and Letters. Ethan will be attending Indiana University in Bloomington, where he will major in accounting and finance. He is a Direct Admit to the Kelley School of Business and a Kelley ACE Scholar.

"They will go out and use the skills and knowledge they have gleaned over the last four years and do something meaningful," he said. "This group of kids will make an impact in the world."



### DANCING THE NIGHT AWAY

Prom will be held from 6 to 10 p.m. **April 28** at The Halls of St. George in Schererville. Date request forms for out-of-towners, freshman and sophomores are required.

### DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS

Top students gather for an evening of excellence at 6 p.m. **May 17** in the high school auditorium for Highland Dollars for Scholars Awards Night.

### PICTURE PERFECT REHEARSAL

We'll take photos and rehearse for graduation from 7:45 to 11 a.m. **May 18** in the gymnasium and auditorium.

### GEARING UP FOR FINALS

Seniors take final exams **May 23, 24 and 25**. Grades will be available online **June 4**.

### POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE

The Class of 2018 gathers **June 3** for graduation. The ceremony will begin at 1:30 p.m. in the high school's Monbeck Auditorium. Every guest must have a ticket.



The Highland Education  
Foundation presents ...



# trivia Night

## Highland's stellar middle school teachers will defend title at this year's tournament

Middle School Principal Terry Mucha has been gearing up for this year's Trivia Night since last year's inaugural event.

A member of the Middle School Team that didn't win last year, Mucha is looking forward to besting the team that did.

Win, lose or draw, she said Trivia Night is a not-to-be-missed event.

A creation of the Highland Education Foundation, the event raises money that brings innovation to the classroom.

"It was an absolute riot," Mucha said. "We laughed all night.

"This year, we have four teams eyeing the trophy. It won't be easy. Language Arts Teacher Nick Kikalos is the only person on the planet who knows every kind of potato chip and that was one of the questions." ❖

### TRIVIA NIGHT

Put a team together and attempt to take the traveling trophy away from the 2017 trivia night winners.

**WHEN:** 6 to 10 p.m. **April 21**

**WHERE:** The Room, 8353 Indianapolis Boulevard, Highland

**TICKETS:** \$30 includes dinner, wine and beer along with your tournament play. Tables of eight are \$225.

**INFO:** For info or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Foundation President Judi Caddick at (219) 923-7621 or hefndevents@gmail.com.



### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### THEATER PERFORMANCE

The Highland Theater Company proudly presents "Les Miserables," a dramatic story set in 19th-century France, where Jean Valjean, who for decades has been hunted by the ruthless policeman Javert after breaking parole, agrees to care for a factory worker's daughter. The decision changes their lives forever.

**WHEN:** 7 p.m. Friday, **May 4** and Saturday, **May 5**; 2 p.m. Sunday, **May 6**

**WHERE:** Monbeck Auditorium at Highland High School, 9135 Erie St.

**TICKETS:** \$10 adults, \$8 students and seniors. Tickets are available online at [HTC.BookTix.com](http://HTC.BookTix.com) or at the box office one hour prior to curtain.

**INFO:** Call (219) 922-5610.

#### SPRING CONCERTS

Join us as we celebrate spring's arrival with instrumentals provided by our high school and middle school orchestras and bands.

**ORCHESTRA CONCERT:** 6:30 p.m. **May 8**

**BAND CONCERT:** 6:30 p.m. **May 15**

**WHERE:** Monbeck Auditorium at Highland High School, 9135 Erie St.

**ADMISSION:** Free

#### SPRING FLOWER SALE

Highland Athletic Booster Club is offering spring blooms at a deal too good to pass up. Buy a voucher. Buy two. Then head to Scheeringa Farms for all your flower needs.

**COST:** \$25 per voucher

**INFO:** Purchase vouchers from the Athletic Department or online at [HighlandAthleticBoosterClub.com](http://HighlandAthleticBoosterClub.com).

#### ATHLETICS GOLF OUTING

It's time to register for the Annual Highland Athletic Department golf outing. Proceeds benefit the entire Highland Athletic Department.

**WHEN:** 11 a.m. shotgun start **June 29**

**WHERE:** Wicker Park Golf Course

**FEE:** \$80 person/\$320 foursome includes golf, lunch and cookout.

**INFO:** Contact Athletic Director Ryan Harrington at (219) 922-5611 or [rharrington@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:rharrington@highland.k12.in.us).