

Remember  and Honor

## Finding Justice

**MILITARY DISCOVERS HIGHLAND FAMILY'S RELATIVE  
– A WWII PRISONER OF WAR – WHO NOW RESTS  
AT ARLINGTON CEMETERY**

When the wreath is laid this Memorial Day, the Angotti clan and their extended family will honor the service of Justice Buttala.

Highland resident Ken Angotti said his mother Betty was just eight years old when the Army sent a telegram that Justice was missing in action.

"It was devastating for all of us, especially my mother," Betty said.

"She always wondered if he was out there somewhere, hurt and alone."

### PRISONER OF WAR

In the spring of 1945, Buttala served as an observer aboard a B-29 "Superfortress" bomber assigned to 28th Bombardment Squadron, 19th Bombardment Group, 20th Air Force. On April 24, during a combat mission to Japan, the aircraft was shot down over Tachikawa, near Tokyo. Buttala survived the crash, but was held as a prisoner of war. He perished in the Tokyo Military Prison during a fire on May 26, 1945.

### PERFECT DNA MATCH

The military never gave up its search for Justice. In 2023, bones recovered from the prison fire were sent to the Philippines and then on to Hawaii. Buttala's sisters Betty and Ellen were a perfect DNA match to the recovered fragments. "We were lucky," Betty said. "We gave Justice a proper burial at Arlington National Cemetery. Not everyone has been so fortunate."



U.S. Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Justice J. Buttala, 24, of Chicago, Illinois, killed during World War II, was accounted for on Jan. 14, 2025.



### POLICE MEMORIAL

The Highland FOP invites the community to remember Highland's fallen officers during a memorial ceremony at 9 a.m. Saturday, **MAY 9** at Sheppard Park, 9217 Liable Road.

The service will honor Highland Police Officers Donald R. Sheppard, who was shot and killed by a prison escapee Nov. 12, 1971; and, Robert J. Markley, who was struck and killed by a drunk driver March 10, 1978.

Members of the extended Sheppard family will be traveling to Highland where they plan to attend the police memorial. The daughter of fallen officer Sheppard, Patricia Sheppard Linne, will be a featured speaker at the event.



### MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

Join us in recognizing Highland veterans and fallen heroes at 10 a.m. Monday, **MAY 25** at Main Square Park. Hosted by the Council of Community Events, the ceremony will include a presentation of colors, patriotic music, remarks from local officials and veterans as well as a moment of silence.

The memorial is open to the public. Guests are encouraged to arrive a few minutes early and bring a lawn chair for seating.

**[ SURVEY RESULTS ]**

Following a survey of how Highland prefers to get its Gazebo Express, residents overwhelmingly said they want to continue receiving their news printed and inserted with the water bill.

“I want to thank everyone who took the time to respond to the survey,” Council President George Georgeff said. “I have always been partial to reading the publication in its printed format. I’m glad our residents do, too.”

**[ CRIME WATCH MEETING ]**

The next Crime Watch meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. **May 13** in the Community Room at the Highland Police Department, 3315 Ridge Road. We will have a general discussion and review local crime statistics.



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[ Josh Carlascio photo ]

**HIGHLAND MOVES FORWARD TO ACQUIRE BLIGHTED FORMER ULTRA PROPERTY**

Nine years after the former Ultra Foods on Indianapolis Boulevard was shuttered, Town Council President George Georgeff said Highland is moving forward with a plan to acquire the land and buildings.

“We had hoped the former owner would repurpose the property or sell it to another commercial developer,” Georgeff said. “Over time, the property has become blighted and has numerous health and safety issues.

We were really left with few option,” Georgeff said. “Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra and I talked to the property management company on several occasions to check on the status only to find out they had few, if

any, prospects for a private sale.”

At that point, the Redevelopment Commission began discussing the idea of the town purchasing the property, which would have allowed officials to have the site secured.

The property management company wasn’t interested. The town council then voted to begin the process of taking ownership through the courts.

Town Attorney John Reed has filed paperwork necessary to move forward with eminent domain, a process that allows the town to purchase the property outright with a selling price based on a fair-market valuation determined by two independent appraisers appointed by a judge.

**HIGHLAND’S SUMMER ROAD PROJECTS GET BOOST FROM COMMUNITY CROSSINGS GRANT**

The town will be resurfacing 13 streets this summer, thanks to an investment of \$691,104.55 in local funds that are being matched by the Indiana Department of Transportation’s Community Crossings Matching Grant Program.

The project also includes storm sewer replacements, signage, ADA pavement markings and curb ramps.

**[ 2026 ROAD PROJECTS ]**

- » **Parkway Drive:** Terrace to Frontage
- » **Terrace Drive:** Parkway to Branton
- » **Southmoor Avenue:** Terrace to 99th Street
- » **99th Street:** Southmoor to Branton
- » **Wildwood Lane:** Briarwood to Northwood
- » **Wildwood Lane:** Ramblewood to Birchwood
- » **Whispering Oaks Court:** Prairie to Dead End
- » **Timberidge Lane:** Timberidge Court to Prairie
- » **Oakwood Court:** Timberidge Lane to Dead End
- » **Timberidge Court:** Dead End to Dead End
- » **Ridge Road:** Town Boundary to Indianapolis
- » **Ridge Road:** 575 feet west of Cline to Cline
- » **Ridge Road:** O’Day to Grace

## Highland Employee Spotlight: CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER BRIAN ORTH



## ENFORCEMENT OFFICER KEEPS RESIDENTS SAFE AND UP-TO-CODE

After 23 years as a Highland police officer, Brian Orth was looking for a new chapter – when opportunity found him. “Chief Ralph Potesta approached me about reviving the Code Enforcement Officer job,” Orth said.

Between his call sheet and follow-ups, Orth talked about a job that involves enforcing town laws.

“People care about how their town looks. They want greenspaces and buildings to be maintained – not overgrown or in disrepair. They want cars removed that are no longer driveable. That’s where I come in.”

**First call:** The first call involves a notice for a homeowner about overgrown grass. He’s prepared with paperwork detailing what needs to be remedied and the law that details town code.

**Second call:** The second involves yard signs that are permitted only on private property, not on the public

easement. “I’ll move them today and check back to make sure they stay in the yard,” he said, taking caution not to walk on the resident’s grass.

**Next up:** A return visit to ensure a mounting pile of brush is removed from a local business and a visit next door to let the business owner know the issue had been managed. Before lunch, he stops at a local auto detailing shop to discuss a resolution to a truck abandoned months ago. The afternoon includes patrols to check for compliance and a stop at one of the local elementary schools where he reads from one of his “Officer Brian and Thor” books, which reinforces safety for kids.

“I love this town. Highland is where I grew up,” he said. “My goal is to make a difference. I look around and I think I do.”



### [ HIGHLAND LAWN MAINTENANCE ]

Code Enforcement Officer Brian Orth of the Highland Police Department works closely with Code Enforcement Officer Carl Porter of the Building and Inspection Department to ensure lawn service companies are licensed to work in the Town of Highland. Building Commissioner Ken Mika reminds homeowners that with spring and summer comes the need for regular lawn maintenance, property beautification and storm cleanup. “We also advise residents to hire companies licensed to do work in Highland,” Mika said. “Too often, disreputable contractors follow in the wake of bad storms.”



[ **SPRING CLEANUP DAY** ]

Republic Services will schedule extra crews Tuesday, **May 19** to collect trash and rubbish generated by spring cleaning. **Not included:** Construction debris, concrete, electronics, televisions, household hazardous waste and leaves. Televisions, computers and electronics may be recycled at Public Works, 8001 Kennedy.



[ **TOWNWIDE GARAGE SALE** ]

Find the latest bargain or ultimate treasure at the Townwide Garage Sale from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Friday, **May 29** and Saturday, **May 30**. Visit [highland.in.gov](http://highland.in.gov) or Highland Council of Community Events on Facebook to register by **May 15** and download a map of participating residences.



[ **RESTAURANT CRAWL** ]

Join us for our Restaurant Crawl from 4-8 p.m. Tuesday, **May 26** in downtown Highland. Participating restaurants feature a special for \$7 or less, so that visitors can eat their way through downtown, stopping at their usual haunts and discovering new favorites along the way.



[ **COMMUNITY GARDEN** ]


Support the community garden and local farmers by purchasing \$1 and \$5 Veggie Bucks at Zandstra's Greenhouse or Scheeringa Farms. Every purchase goes toward plant donations for the garden. All produce harvested is donated to the St. James Food Pantry and local families in need. **Want to get involved?** Join us from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, **May 30** for our planting day.

# LIVE FROM THE SQUARE

Grab a lawn chair and head to Main Square Park for live entertainment.

## Saturday | June 6

**2-4 PM**  
**THE STINGRAYS**

**4:30-6:30 PM**  
 **ASHLYN**

**7-9 PM**  
**HENDRIX EFFECT**

## Saturday | August 15

**2-4 PM**  
**THE SHARKS**

**4:30-6:30 PM**  
**CARLTON**  
**& THE SOUL ENTERTAINERS**

**7-9 PM**  
 **PAWNZ**

[ **COMMUNITY BAND** ]  
 Enjoy the sounds of the season at the Highland Community Band's free concert from 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, **May 20** at Main Square Park. This band of volunteers is open to anyone high school age or older. To join, contact [maestroflute@att.net](mailto:maestroflute@att.net).

[ **PANCAKE BREAKFAST** ]

Join the Highland Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #122 and the Highland Fire Department Association from 9-11 a.m. **May 30** for a pancake breakfast at the Highland Fire Department Central Fire Station, 2901 Highway. Enjoy all-you-can-eat pancakes, sausage, coffee, juice and milk for a \$10 donation. Kids five and under eat free. Proceeds support community outreach.



[ **SUMMER CAMP** ]

Children ages 5-12 enjoy games, crafts, songs, drama, sports and field trips at Lincoln Community Center during our summer camp from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, **June 1-August 7**. (off July 3). Pre-camp is from 7-8:30 a.m. There will be a mandatory parent meeting at 6 p.m. **May 26**.  
**WEEKLY CAMP FEE:** \$130 R | \$150 NR  
**DAILY CAMP FEE:** \$30 R | \$35 NR  
**DAILY PRE-CAMP FEE:** \$7 R | \$8 NR  
**LATE PICK-UP:** \$10 per child every 15 minutes past 5 p.m.



[ **SIDEWALK SALE** ]

Highland Main Street invites you to shop downtown Highland from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, **June 13** during the annual Sidewalk Sale.



[ **HIGHLAND SHRED DAY** ]

Highland will shred confidential documents for free from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, **June 20** at Public Works, 8001 Kennedy. Proof of residency is required.

- ▶ 4 boxes no larger than 12x18x10 or 4 brown paper bags.
- ▶ No plastic covers, binder clips/notebooks or spiral notebooks.