Warm memories of winter holiday fun and good cheer in the neighborhood

Irvine Avenue sidewalk repairs receive funding; construction projected to take from June to late January

By Junction Coalition

Long-needed sidewalk construction on Irvine Street between Hazelwood and Greenfield Avenues got more attention recently when updates to the project’s Engage PGH page raised questions about funding.

Although the fact sheet linked from the webpage stated the project is only funded for design and the Department of Mobility and Transportation [DOMI] is looking for funding, construction is funded and slated to begin in June.

DOMI’s chief engineer, Eric Setzler, said the project received a grant of $120,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, plus $1 million in funding from the $335 million Pittsburgh received as part of the American Rescue Plan [ARP].

Mr. Setzler said the Irvine Street project consists mainly of sidewalk and curb replacements with updated graded ramps at intersections. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires these modifications.

“We would like to get as much curb reveal as possible,” he said, referring to the height of a curb that helps provide separation from the road. As layers of asphalt are added to a road over time, its level rises closer to the adjacent sidewalk.

Other Irvine Street improvements include adjusting drainage from the sidewalks and adding a small retaining wall to “hold the slope back”—especially near the Greenfield Avenue end of Irvine Street. The area currently has rock-filled wire cages called gabion baskets.

Mr. Setzler added that the project is on track, with design scheduled to wrap up by late January.

Run resident Barb Warwick noticed the outdated fact sheet and commented on the page, along with several other community members, calling for construction funds to be taken from the budget of the un-

Proposed laws will help making housing safer, healthier and more accessible

By Juliet Martinez

State Sen. Nikil Saval (D, Philadelphia) proposed two new laws and one amendment to an existing law in 2021. All three focus on housing access for renters, and home repairs for low-income households.

The Fair Chance Housing Act would amend the 1955 Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. This act outlaws discrimination based on race, color, religion, ancestry, age or national origin. The amendment would add criminal history to this list of protected statuses.

The 1955 act protects Pennsylvanians from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodation. However, landlords often reject rental applications of

See IRVINE on Page 5

Table of Contents

Publisher’s corner........................p.2
Community resources..................p.3
Garden and sustainability............p.4
Transportation.............................p.5
Health....................................p.7
31st Ward Wire............................p.8
Familiar faces............................p.10
School updates..........................p.13
Workforce development............p.14
Community news.......................p.15
Housing.....................................p.16
Community meeting report.......p.17
Audience participation..............p.17
Community voices....................p.18

See HOUSING on Page 16

See IRVINE on Page 5
We are changing our ad rates. Here’s why.

In case we haven’t met, I’m Juliet Martinez, the managing editor of The Homepage. Since I started in August, I have been getting to know more about the neighborhoods we cover. I have met some of you and learned a lot. In the process, I have gained a deeper respect for the resilient communities it is my privilege to serve.

But there is something that needs to change. Hazelwood Initiative, which publishes The Homepage, is a community development corporation. Our motto is “Building a stronger Hazelwood through inclusive community development.” The Homepage promotes this goal by keeping you informed about and — we hope — engaged in the news that affects you.

The Homepage also plays an important role as an advertising vehicle. We help small businesses attract new customers through advertising. But our current ad pricing structure has made this difficult. To put it simply, our smallest ads have been overpriced and our largest ads discounted. This puts small businesses at a disadvantage. It excludes them, which goes against our mission.

So, we have decided to make a change.

As of January 1, The Homepage has adopted a per-column-inch pricing structure. This means that if an advertiser has a small ad budget, they can afford to buy a small ad. Medium budget, medium ad, and so on. No mini-mart owner, food truck operator or mom-and-pop business in 15207 should ever feel they cannot afford to advertise in The Homepage.

For those who buy larger ad sizes, our rates will remain competitive with other community newspapers. Unlike other newspapers, The Homepage charges the same for color and black-and-white ads. And we offer generous discounts to community-based nonprofits.

If you have a small business of any kind, The Homepage is here to help you grow. And if you aren’t a business owner, please look through these pages and find local businesses to support. Together we can help our communities thrive.

Wishing you the very best in 2022,

Juliet Martinez

Become a Hazelwood Initiative member and make your voice heard!

Hazelwood Initiative proudly serves all residents of Hazelwood and Glen Hazel. While anyone can attend HI meetings, only members can elect or serve on the Board of Directors. Members also receive our weekly newsletter, keeping you informed about upcoming meetings, community events and job opportunities. Membership is free; having a voice in your community is priceless.

Visit https://tinyurl.com/HazelwoodInitiativeMembership or complete and return the following:

Title (circle one) Mr. Miss Mrs. Ms. Mx. Dr.
Name (first, last)______________________________
Street number______________________________
Apartment______________________________
City_____________________________________
State _________ Zip________
Email_______________@________________________
Phone________________________________________ Mobile Landline (circle one)
Age___________
Renter Homeowner (circle one)
Race_________________________________________________
Racial makeup of household______________________________

Return to:
Hazelwood Initiative
4901 Second Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15207
COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Food and clothing

Holy Cross Evangelical-Lutheran Chapel of Hazelwood
Food and clothing distribution: Saturday, September 4th, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., and Saturday, September 18th, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Community dinners: Sunday, September 5th, 4:00-6:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 19th 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.)
Phone: (412) 521-7084
Address: Holy Cross Evangelical-Lutheran Chapel, 5319 Second Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA, 15207

Hazelwood YMCA Food Pantry
Food box distribution: First Saturday of every month
Phone: (412) 421-2708
Address: 134 E. Elizabeth St, Pittsburgh, PA, 15207

Fishes and Loaves
Meals on Wheels: Monday through Friday
Monday through Friday, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Emergency food boxes: Pick up at Spartan Center 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday, or home delivery within 15 miles of the office.
Call to arrange food box pickup on the weekend.
Address: 131 E. Elizabeth St, Pittsburgh, PA, 15207
Phone number (412) 499-4313
Ask for Dylan Knapp-Scott

COVID-19 testing and vaccination

COVID-19 vaccinations
Rite-Aid
Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
4934 Second Ave, Pittsburgh, PA, 15207
Phone: (412) 421-6948
Book an appointment if possible at https://www.riteaid.com/locations/pa/pittsburgh/4934-second-avenue.html
Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson available

COVID-19 testing and vaccination
Hazelwood Family Health Center
4918 2nd Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15207
Phone: (641) 715-3900
Extension: 301402
Call for appointment
Call now for your booster shot if you have a weakened immune system due to cancer, solid organ transplant, steroid treatment or other cause.
Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson available

Housing and utilities

Action Housing: Emergency Rental Assistance Program
Visit: https://covidrentrelief.alleghenycounty.us
Call: (412) 248-0021
Email: rentalassistance@actionhousing.org

PWSA relief application:
Apply at https://www.pgh2o.com/residential-customer-assist
Call: Dollar Energy Fund at (866) 762-2348
Free housing legal services for renters and homeowners
Tenant Services
- Mediation: Third party trained mediators facilitate a resolution between landlord and tenant issues.
- Limited Legal Consultation: Attorneys provide limited and brief legal advice related to tenant issues and provide information on options, rights and responsibilities.
- Full Legal Representation: Attorneys provide representation through court proceedings to help prevent evictions and stabilize housing.

Homeowner Services
- Tangled Title: Legal assistance to help transfer the home’s record title to the current occupant.
- Foreclosure Prevention: Assistance to help prevent foreclosure by helping to explore options such as repayment plans, forbearance and deferrals, mortgage modifications, refinancing and/or bankruptcy.

For a Legal Assistance Program referral call: 412-534-6600
Non-English speakers please call: 412-530-5244

Hotlines, alerts, and general information

Allegheny County Health Dept.
24/7 hotline: 888-856-2774
Phone Alerts: www.alleghenycounty.us/alerts
General Information & Assistance: Call 2-1-1
OR text your zip code to 988-211
OR visit PA211sw.org

Center of Life
COVID-19 Online Resource Guide
centeroflifeonline.net/covid

Hazardwood Initiative Community Updates
facebook.com/hazardwoodinitiative
Praise Temple Community Hotline
*Answering M-F, 10am-2pm
412-422-1983
Resolve Crisis Services
(888) 796-8226
Mental health crisis support

Churches and houses of worship

First Ukrainian Reformed Church of Pittsburgh
221 Johnston Avenue Pittsburgh, 15207 412-421-0279
Fountain of Life Church
247 Johnston Ave, Pittsburgh, 15207 412-422-8794
www.fountainoflife.pgh.co
Holy Angels Church
408 Baldwin Road Pittsburgh, 15207 412-461-6906, https://facebook.com/holyangelshay

Hazardwood Initiative Community
3400 Glenwood Avenue Pittsburgh, PA, 15207
Call now for your booster shot if you are eligible.
COVID-19 Online Resource Guide
centeroflifeonline.net/covid

Emergency broadband assistance
The Emergency Broadband Benefit will provide a discount of up to $50 per month towards broadband service for eligible households and up to $75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to $100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute more than $10 and less than $50 toward the purchase price.
Apply online: https://getemergencybroadband.org/
For help applying or more information, call (833) 511-0311 between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Contact Hazelwood Initiative for help with rental assistance applications
Contact Tiffany Taulton, Director of Community Initiatives, at Hazelwood Initiative for help applying for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program [ERAP].
Mobile phone: 412-392-7427
taulton@hazelwoodinitiative.org

Medical Devices
Lending Library - Beth Shalom
Walkers, wheelchairs and canes available for short- or long-term loan to residents of Greenfield, Hazelwood, Squirrel Hill and Homestead.
Local delivery available.
To request an item, contact Rabbi Mark Asher Goodman at mgoodman@bethshalompgh.org or 412-421-2288
See bethshalompgh.org/medicaldevices/ for more information.

January 2022
Page Three
GARDEN AND SUSTAINABILITY

Oats win staring contest: An experiment with oats as a fall cover crop

By Matt Peters, Community Garden Manager

To the best of my knowledge, no one has ever won a staring contest with a bowl of oatmeal. This year I upped the game, and watched oats grow from seed to seed in our commons bed at the Community Garden on Monongahela Street.

The Experiment

I planted oats and field peas mixed together as a cover crop on the first of August. My plans included a vague notion of mowing it at the peak of biomass production, before it started putting up seed-heads or even making the high-carbon straw, to create a layer of natural mulch and feed the soil for next year. But the fall weather was so warm and mild, and the oats looked so healthy and vigorous, that I let it keep growing, watching the plant change from leaf-growing mode to seed-head-growing mode.

Hardier than expected

When frosts finally arrived in late November, I thought the cold nights would kill the above-ground parts. But the oats kept right on growing and the light frosts only served to stimulate sugar production in the plant tissues, a natural antifreeze. It was a rare treat to bite down on an unripe oat groat, still in the “milk” stage, and I would stop by the garden every few days to check on their progress.

Finally, the stand started to turn golden, the seed kernels started to firm up, and I decided it was time to harvest my crop. It was a simple task to strip the seeds right off the stalks by hand, and as luck would have it, Valerie happened to stop by just as I was getting started. She generously offered to spend a few minutes helping! We soon had maybe five or six quarts of oats in their green hulls, and we probably dropped almost that much during our collecting.

The Three Sisters: corn, beans and squash

This side of the Community Garden has long been a place for larger-scale growing projects such as a Three Sisters bed. Corn, beans, and squash are grown together as a polyculture, a balanced system of food production developed over centuries by Native Americans. When done properly, this approach nourishes the soil and increases fertility over time, as well as providing a complete nutritional profile.

Modern agricultural methods of corn production are focused on vast monocultures which leave the soil impoverished. Farmers must either use petrochemical fertilizers, add manure, or rotate to a crop that recharges the soil, such as beans. Beans are a legume, which means they can pull nitrogen from the atmosphere, and with the help of soil bacteria, make this nitrogen available to other plants as a nutrient.

When the three sisters are planted together, the corn stalks support the twining vines of the bean plants, and squash plants contribute large, shady leaves that keep weeds down, as well as delicious fall produce.

Return of the sisters in 2022

The last couple of years of experimenting with the Three Sisters model has resulted in a crop yielding mostly corn, a few squash plants, and rabbits grown fat on a diet of tender young bean plants. This means the soil hasn’t really been benefiting from the nitrogen enriching ability that beans bring to the system. I hoped to remedy this with a rotation of oats and field peas, and I am looking forward to seeing the results of my experiment when we till the soil this coming spring.

With the Three Rivers Village School soon to move in to the vacant YMCA building, we look forward to holding more programs with neighborhood children. Look for a series of workshops in the 2022 spring and summer growing season, open to the public and free of charge!
TRANSPORTATION
Irvine

- Continued from Front Page

popular Mon-Oakland Connector [MOC].

"$12 million is a lot of money and it’s just sitting there in DOMI’s coffers,” Ms. Warwick said, referring to the estimated MOC budget. “Now that everyone is finally acknowledging how misguided DOMI’s plan to build a shuttle road through Schenley Park really was, we can start using that money for mobility improvements the people of Pittsburgh actually need.”

Regarding the MOC budget, Mr. Setzler said, “I am seeing about $8 million [of City funds], not counting anything from PWSA [Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority].” He mentioned the $4 million difference had been redirected in the 2021 budget through an amendment introduced by District 5 Councilman Corey O’Connor. PWSA has a budget of more than $42 million to complete a stormwater project on the same land as the MOC.

The MOC, slated to be put on hold by incoming Pittsburgh mayor Ed Gainey, proposed connecting Oakland university campuses and the Hazelwood Green development through the park’s Junction Hollow section and two adjacent neighborhoods—The Run and Panther Hollow. Affected communities including The Run, Panther Hollow, Greenfield, South Oakland, and Hazelwood created their own plan for how MOC funds should be spent instead: Our Money, Our Solutions.

The ARP funding arises from controversy as well. When it was announced in July 2021, Mayor Bill Peduto drew criticism from constituents who said he needlessly rushed to set a major spending agenda that prioritized infrastructure above mitigating COVID-19-related harms, such as evictions.

“This is an important corridor for all modes of transportation,” said Anna Tang, a community organizer around bike transit issues. “It seems like the most vulnerable users are almost always last to get the infrastructure attention they need. [The sidewalk repairs] couldn’t come soon enough.”

Although several Hazelwood, Greenfield and Four Mile Run residents commented on the project webpage, Mr. Setzler said the feedback stage of design has passed. Other city departments have been sharing their projects and receiving community input on Engage PGH for longer.

“DOMI is catching up,” Mr. Setzler said. “Going forward, [Engage PGH] will be our main source for sharing project information. In general, projects will still have outreach to community groups and [virtual or in-person] public meetings.”

View the updated fact sheet and a new “virtual public plans display” at https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/irvine-street-sidewalk-gaps. The display features maps and a project schedule that projects construction will take seven months. In addition, a new feedback form was placed on the page above the existing 140-character comment field. You can also create an Engage PGH account to receive email alerts about upcoming projects.

Junction Coalition is a grassroots community organization that began in The Run. www.junctioncoalition.org

30 million adults suffer from thyroid imbalance. Don’t let dysfunction go undiagnosed.

Levels of key thyroid hormones can indicate whether there is a thyroid imbalance.

Murray Avenue Apothecary offers a Thyroid Imbalance Test Kit, available at www.MAApgh.com

4227 Murray Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15217 • 412.421.4994 MAApgh.com | labnaturals.com | YourGoodHealth.com

Thyroid Imbalance Test

Murray Avenue Apothecary offers a Thyroid Imbalance Test Kit, available at www.MAApgh.com

4227 Murray Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15217 • 412.421.4994 MAApgh.com | labnaturals.com | YourGoodHealth.com

Junction Coalition is a grassroots community organization that began in The Run. www.junctioncoalition.org
TRANSPORTATION

Advocates challenge Mayor-elect Gainey to focus on transit in first 100 days in office

By Juliet Martinez

A transit group has challenged Mayor-elect Ed Gainey to make Pittsburgh fairer and more accessible in his first 100 days. The Pittsburgh 100 Days Transit Platform sets ambitious goals for the incoming administration.

Pittsburghers for Public Transportation (PPT) created the platform with input from groups and individuals affected by transit inequity and lack of access. The 18-page document focuses on transit, land use, housing and infrastructure. It names four goals and 18 specific policy proposals. PPT released it on December 16 in anticipation of Gainey’s swearing into office on January 3.

Even though the Port Authority is a county agency, PPT made the case that Pittsburgh’s mayor can do a lot to promote better transit policies, stating, “Local transit initiatives have the power to map Pittsburgh’s transportation infrastructure... also means maintaining our sidewalks in all of our communities and identifying potential locations near excellent transit access for workforce and affordable housing.”

More than 27 organizations made statements supporting the platform. The Hill District Consensus Group focuses on building the leadership of residents of the Hill District. Director Carol Hardeman said, “There is a shortage of over 20,000 affordable homes in Pittsburgh... We need our city to plan for affordable housing and safe access to quality public transit to be located together.”

Five city council members support the program. Erika Strassburger said improving transit routes and adding more buses is important, but it is not enough. "Investing in our transportation infrastructure... also means promoting civic engagement... also means maintaining our sidewalks in all of our communities and identifying potential locations near excellent transit access for workforce and affordable housing.”


---

Research for Equity and Power promotes equitable development

By Andre Green

The Research for Equity and Power [REP] project invites youth and adults to participate in a series of eight in-person Community Conversations starting in February 2022. Conversations will focus on fostering civic engagement around equitable development in Hazelwood. Space is limited to 30 participants. Food will be served and participants will be paid for attending the Conversations and completing surveys.

Following the Community Conversations, REP will work with residents to create a Hazelwood Equitable Development Playbook that will be shared with the community, including holding a Citizen Training Academy. A virtual information session about the REP project and the Community Conversations will take place on January 19th, 2022 at 6:00 pm via Zoom.

Please scan the QR code to get more information and register for the virtual information session on January 19th.

The goal of the REP project is to increase civic engagement in Hazelwood around equitable development and aligns with the development goals of the Greater Hazelwood Neighborhood Plan to prevent displacement and promote revitalization that benefits current residents.

Interested in getting involved?

Please contact: Andre Green at Pitt at atg43@pitt.edu; Hazelwood Initiative (ask for Tiffany Taulton or Antonetta Avila) at 412-421-7234; or DaVonne Fuller at Center of Life at davonne.fuller@centeroflife.net

REP is a collaboration between Homewood Children’s Village, the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work, Hazelwood Initiative and Center of Life. This project is also supported by Pitt’s Community Engagement Center Initiative and is funded by AmeriCorps.

The project is informed by a Hazelwood Community Advisory Board made up of residents and key stakeholders who care about positive neighborhood change and want to play a pivotal role in guiding our project. The Community Advisory Board provides important guidance, including identifying Hazelwood-specific issues related to preventing displacement and promoting revitalization that benefits current residents.

---

Goal 1. Prioritization of accessible, fair mobility over corporate profit and private modes of transportation. Policy proposals include:
- A walking/transit/biking first approach to mobility
- Setting clear mobility goals
- A cabinet-level mobility position
- Full funding for the Departments of Mobility Infrastructure and City Planning

Goal 2. Legislation and zoning that supports transit use and affordable housing. Policy proposals include:
- Free bus passes for city employees and residents of city shelters
- A citywide inclusionary zoning ordinance
- Fewer or no parking minimums in the zoning code
- More affordability and density of development near main transit routes
- Auditing private companies’ access to and use of mobility data

Goal 3. Comfortable, accessible, and safe public transit connections. Policy proposals include:
- Compensating people with disabilities for participating in infrastructure planning
- Establishment of a sidewalk fund
- Making sidewalk access and maintenance a priority
- Moving unused bus shelters to priority stops
- Budget for snow removal equipment
- The creation of a sidewalk program at DOMI with a designated leader

Goal 4. Bus lanes and transit signal priority to ensure fast, effective public transit. This goal emphasizes giving buses priority over cars. This can happen through:
- Bus-only lanes, and peak-only bus lanes in some tight spaces such as Carson Street and Butler Street
- Transit signal priority
- Sheltered stops on sidewalk bump outs

Goal 3. Comfortable, accessible, and safe public transit connections. Policy proposals include:
- Placement of bus stops beyond traffic signals
- Enforcement of bus stop and bus lane traffic

---

A Port Authority Transit bus on Greenfield Avenue between Second and Irvine. Photo courtesy of Pittsburghers for Public Transit.
HEALTH

Forever chemicals: How to avoid them and why PA wants to limit them

By Juliet Martinez

It sounds like a teaser from the evening news, "Something invisible and odorless in your kitchen could be making you sick. Tune in at 10 for more information!"

But in truth, toxic substances nicknamed “forever chemicals” are in most kitchens. They may even be in our water. And yes, they can make us sick. These manufacturing chemicals belong to a group called PFAS (say pee-fahs). The full name for this group is perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

In November, the Wolf administration took steps toward limiting how much PFAS can be in public drinking water. The Environmental Protection Agency says 70 parts per trillion is a safe level. But scientists and states that regulate PFAS say the level should be much lower. Scientists who found PFAS harms children’s immune systems recommended no more than 0.03 parts per trillion.

PFAS do not break down. Period. They are in many products, including nonstick cookware, fast food wrappers, carpets and firefighting foam. While you can avoid the first three, if your house is on fire, you can’t avoid the fourth.

Exposure to PFAS may cause health problems, like cancer, thyroid disease, high cholesterol, ulcerative colitis and low birth weights. In essence, the more PFAS exposure people have, the more they suffer from these conditions.

Last June, the Department of Environmental Protection [DEP] tested drinking water in 400 places around the state. They found that about a third of the sites had PFAS contamination. Most of them were in the eastern part of the state near military bases. In these locations, firefighting foam had leached into groundwater. In July, firefighting foam contaminated the water supply in McKeesport. Residents had to stop using public water for drinking, cooking or bathing. It took a month to flush all the PFAS out of the system and restore safe public water to all residents.

The DEP has said it means to put limits on PFAS in place for Pennsylvania since 2017. The proposed rule limiting PFAS in drinking water may take months for full approval. The level may be up to 200 times higher than scientists recommend.

ADVERTORIAL

Thyroid Hormone: A Crucial Metabolic Player

By Susan Merenstein

The average person who can’t lose weight – despite eating right and exercising – is generally frustrated and frankly stumped. For many, diet and exercise have generally proven effective, and yet now – for some reason – they don’t. Sometimes just a little. Sometimes not at all.

Those who dig deeper often find that weight problems could be due to a sluggish thyroid. Feeling an inkling of hope, many ask their doctors to run a test, and lo’ and behold the results often come back normal. How can this be?

These results tend to stun – especially when weight gain continues to be an issue and/or we suffer from other hypothyroidism hallmarks – feeling cold, old, thinning hair, stressed and depressed.

Given that so many symptoms of low thyroid overlap with other hormone imbalances, we may not get the answers needed unless we find a healthcare provider who goes beyond the standard TSH test to address thyroid disorders in the broader context of hormone imbalance.

Our bodies produce more than one thyroid hormone. The most abundant is thyroxine (T4), which is an INACTIVE THYROID HORMONE converts to triiodothyronine (T3), the ACTIVE THYROID HORMONE in the body. We need our bodies to make plenty of these two hormones since we rely heavily on them for an active metabolism.

So, one clarifying answer to the original question about that so-called “normal” test result is that testing TSH alone is not going to give us the whole story because it fails to take active thyroid levels into account.

TSH was created as a SCREENING TOOL, NOT A THERAPY MONITORING TOOL! Nor can a single thyroid test identify imbalances of the steroid or adrenal hormones that serve to seriously inhibit thyroid function.

Discovering how well our thyroid is working requires a bigger-picture assessment of all the hormone levels that matter, not just TSH, T3, and T4, but estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, DHEA and cortisol.
31st Ward CAG Corner

Join the 31st Ward Community Action Group for community planning and events, discussion of current concerns and goals, as well as updates from Zone 4 police, the Office of Councilman O'Connor, and the mayor’s office.

Meeting location: Lincoln Presbyterian Church, 1202 Muldowney Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15207

*Monthly meetings every 2nd Tuesday at 7 PM

Social Hall of LP Presbyterian Church. Enter on Cooley Way

Contact us:

Email: executiveboard@31WardCag.org  Website: 31stwardcag.org  Find us on Facebook!

31st Ward Flag Fund

Your donation will help our volunteers to install and maintain American flags that line the streets of the 31st Ward. Please make checks payable to the 31st Ward Community Action Group and mail to 944 Sunglow St, Munhall, PA 15120. Include a return mailing address if you would like a receipt of your donation. Send a donation via Venmo to @Pgh31stWardCAG, www.venmo.com/Pgh31stWardCAG

Holiday fun in Lincoln Place brought out the kid in everyone

31st Ward Churches

Holy Angels Parish
408 Baldwin Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15207
412-461-6906
www.holyangelshays.org

Lincoln Place Church of the Nazarene
5604 Interboro Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15207
412-462-2524
www.ipnaz.org

Lincoln Place Presbyterian Church
1202 Muldowney Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15207
412-461-3377

Mt. Rise Baptist Church
80 Ingot Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15120
412-462-8333

Maoz Tzur - Rock of Ages Messianic Jewish Congregation at Lincoln Place Church of the Nazarene
5604 Interboro Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15207
412-609-1117

St. John the Baptist Byzantine Cathedral
210 Greentree Road
Munhall, PA 15120
412-461-0944

Warriors of Holiness in Power (W.H.I.P. Ministries)
1174 Mifflin Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15207
412-461-5571
Opposite page and below: All aboard the Christmas Trolley! On December 4, Santa and his elves visited Lincoln Place Presbyterian Church to pick up families and take them caroling. The basement buzzed with crafts, games, cookies and holiday fun. Photos by Juliet Martinez

Above and the right side of page: The First Annual Holiday Parade brought out young and old in spite of the rain. Santa and Mrs. Claus, Girl and Boy Scouts, mounted police and even a power ranger showed up! Photos by Ryan Herbinko
Clockwise from left: At Hazelwood Light Up Night on December 6, an image from Eternal Essence, by Mikael Owunna, sparkled in a window as part of Hazelwood Local’s light and art installation, Illumin-Ave. Another installation, Alysha Wormsley’s, There Are Black People in the Future, showed historic photos of Hazelwood in the upper windows of the Hazelwood Initiative [HI] offices (photo by Hank Malone). A magical child transformed into a bouquet of flowers, and a tyke into a tiger. The horses waited to pull the wagon of delighted kids and families. HI program assistant and Homepage staffer, Sarah Kanar, amazed with her balloon twisting skills. The Allderdice High School marching band made the event especially lively.

Photos by Juliet Martinez
These talented young neighbors amazed the community with their rapping and dancing skills at Hazelwood Light Up Night on December 6, performing in the Carnegie Library Hazelwood lot. The KRUNK Movement program of Center of Life is a youth production company for students in grades 9-12 focusing on the elements of hip-hop through dance, song production, and visual art. For more information, call (412)521-3468 or email luc.mickens@centeroflife.net to schedule an audition.

Photos by Bailey McGrady
FAMILIAR FACES

From tiny kids to teens and adults, everyone loved meeting Tiana, Elsa and Black Panther at Hazelwood Light Up Night on December 6. The three popular characters came to life, bringing excitement and delight to the indoor part of the festivities in the Hazelwood Initiative offices. To invite them to your special event, visit https://www.pittsburghprincess.com. Photos by Courtney Lynn, Fairytale Princess Visits, and Juliet Martinez
By TRVS Staff

As we say goodbye to 2021 and prepare to move into the former YMCA building on Chatsworth, Three Rivers Village School [TRVS] would like to reflect on our time at the Spartan Center.

TRVS moved here in 2015 before the Spartan Community Center of Hazelwood [SCCH] formed, back when Deacon Tom Berna was the de facto manager of the mostly empty former St. Stephens Catholic School building. We had planned to move to Millvale, but zoning exemptions and renovation challenges prevented that late in the summer. We were scrambling to find a suitable spot. It turned out that space at St. Stephens could fit our little school. We're so grateful that things turned out the way they did and we found ourselves in Hazelwood. With just a couple of weeks to plan and move, we settled into the space. We filled the big classrooms as best as we could with art supplies, a mini kitchen, computers, couches and tables for doing all kinds of activities. At first, every room served lots of purposes. Only the playroom and library had their own space.

Over the years of constantly shifting student interests, every room has been repurposed several times. Art, music, science and school meetings each eventually carved out their own dedicated spaces. Activities that require full use of a space or special equipment usually have to be democratically approved by our School Meeting. Other changes of furniture, purpose, or arrangement are open for students or staff to make as often as needs require.

Many of our favorite memories from 134 East Elizabeth Street happened in the ground floor hall. Every February, our families would convene there on a chilly evening and bring ingredients to make a whole slew of pizzas in the kitchen. We would eat pizza and play board games. One year, we hosted a marching band, clowns and were proud to bring Raising Free People Network co-founder, Akilah S. Richards, up from Atlanta to speak about Self Directed Education. Many of those events were student-initiated. It’s amazing to see the creative, fun, and interesting things students come up with for these events.

One of the special things about our school and the freedom our kids enjoy is that new traditions are created every year, by and for students. These traditions slowly evolve over the years as students remember and anticipate other groups and other times doing the same things, in the same way our school space and our school culture has evolved over the years. It is said that the only constant is change. Students and staff at TRVS embrace that adage.

Thanks to SCCH, St Stephen’s, Deacon Tom and everyone else in Hazelwood for your support here over the years. From all of us at TRVS, we hope you have a wonderful 2022!

Fond memories of good times at the Spartan Center. Above: The Family Circus, in 2017, included a marching band and clowns Photo by Maren Cooke.

Right: A Make A Pizza Party in 2019. Photo by Maggie Bogdanich

GET HELP KEEPING YOUR HOUSE WARM

Action Housing and Duquesne Light have partnered to help people weatherize their homes.

Who is eligible? Low- and fixed-income households

How do I apply? Call Action Housing at 412-281-2102 (ext.2101).

Note: Renters must get their landlord’s permission before making changes in their home.

NEED HELP FINDING A JOB?

Businesses desperately need workers. But how do you find the right job? PublicSource asked local experts on job searching for resources and advice.

Read more online at: https://tinyurl.com/pgh-job-search-tips

GREATER HAZELWOOD VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETING

TOPOICS & SPEAKERS

- Hazelwood Local Updates - Dana Wall, Street Plans
- Hazelwood Construction Projects, Workforce Training Opportunities - Speaker TBD
- What City Park designation means for the Hazelwood Greenway - Rebecca Kiernan, Senior Resilience Planner at the Dept. of City Planning
- Air Quality Monitors Update - Abhishek Viswanathan, PittSensing
- Hazelwood Initiative Updates
- Community Announcements

Drawing for $25 gift cards at the end of the meeting!

Register in advance for this meeting:
https://bit.ly/2SwPr9k

CALL IN TO LISTEN: (646) 558-8656
Meeting ID: 853 9182 9343   Passcode: 796212

Triumphs are best enjoyed in the company of those who share the struggle to achieve them.
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Industrial Arts Workshop afterschool welding program resumes February 1

By Juliet Martinez

The Industrial Arts Workshop free afterschool program last fall engaged teens in learning about design, metalworking and being part of a community. The spring program starts February 1. The students spoke with The Homepage about the class and described their experiences.

Sparks fly during a demonstration of plasma cutting, which uses compressed air and an electric arc to cut metal. Photo by Murphy Moschetta

Josiah Hartley, left, wearing a welding mask – age 14
"I did the summer program and I wanted to come back. I love the program and the community. It’s really fun helping out. It was first design, focusing on, like, the design process and how to come up with a basic design. And then we got into industrial skills like torch cutting and welding and... I really enjoyed it a lot. I make my own projects and I come here whenever I can help."

Gabriel Robinson, left, wearing a green cloth face mask – age 16
"This is like working with metal, seeing what you can make out of it. You can cut it and stuff, put things together. I thought it would be a good experience learning to do this type of thing, because it’s something new."
Photo by Juliet Martinez

For more information on Industrial Arts Workshop and to apply for the spring session, go to https://iawpgh.org/.

Elena Wurzel, age 16, holds their sketch for a welding project.
"The teachers are really great. They’re super nice and helpful. I had to miss a few days because I was out of town, and they let me come in... an hour early and caught me up on things. It’s all around really great and I have a lot of friends here."

Max Holby, age 14, talks with a fellow student.
"We’ve learned MIG welding and stick welding, and so I’ve welded a couple things together, like making projects. One of them was a small little rocket using the stuff that they give us, and then I was working on a sort of dragon thing. I could do it as a career choice because there’s this program that I’m doing and my school has a [vocational training] program."
January 2022
Page Fifteen
COMMUNITY NEWS
Community Kitchen Pittsburgh’s Bowls and Boards event was a success
By Bailyn Brink

On December 9, Community Kitchen Pittsburgh [CKPgh] joyfully welcomed community members back into our space. In collaboration with Contemporary Craft, CKPgh was honored to host Bowls and Boards, featuring the sale of ceramic prep bowls created by Texas artist George Bowes and 10 other nationally-recognized ceramicists.

At Bowls and Boards, beautiful, handmade prep bowls were on display and for sale to anyone who fell in love with them. All of the ceramics were created for a Contemporary Craft exhibit called Prepping Pittsburgh: Art Sustaining Community that debuted in August of 2021. Each of the 327 prep bowls represented a CKPgh graduate. George Bowes’ bowls became a favorite among our attendees, with a total of 12 of his pieces finding new homes. Overall, the community filled the space and purchased 56 of these bowls, generating over $3,000 that will benefit not only our students at CKPgh, but the artists that created these bowls, and other artists working with Contemporary Craft.

During the past year, with the worldwide pandemic and all of its challenges, CKPgh was unable to host events for those who we may not see in our community every day. Our entire team agrees it has been far too long and we were thrilled to once again have our first floor filled with laughter, celebration, and, of course, food.

There is only one thing that CKPgh can say, and that is thank you. Thank you to all of those who attended our event, joining us once again in our space to celebrate the work of CKP students. We cannot express how grateful we are that we get to be a part of such a generous community that is constantly working to support one another.

Photo courtesy of Erika Johnson

Ask E: Allow me to introduce myself
By Erika Johnson

We all have phases in life where we need advice. The young can surprise the old with wisdom that breathes a fresh perspective and the old can share jewels of knowledge far beyond the years of their younger counterparts.

Then there is me, Erika. A young woman somewhere in between. So, allow me to introduce myself before I go any further soliciting questions to give advice to.

I go by E, love exploring the world, have lived abroad in Spain as an English teacher & Sí, I’m always looking for someone to speak Spanish with. After receiving my bachelor’s degree in Biology from Cheyney University, I realized the medical field wasn’t the best fit for me & after doing some introspective work, I have since then found myself in the arena of youth development & have been working in various organizations like the SCA, Small Seeds & Gwen’s Girls. I own a company offering creative & motivational products for young girls & I love speaking, writing & creating music to encourage others. I’m also an avid jazz & poetry lover.

Ok, Let’s cut to the chase. Whether you are wondering what decision to make regarding a job, have a personal life question, need advice on property ownership - which I have recently experienced - or want to know how to create boundaries for a happier life, I’m your girl. Just send your questions to Editor@hazelwoodinitiative.org and I will answer them in the paper. All entries will be printed without using your name, so don’t worry. Your privacy is important.

I can’t promise a perfect answer, but I will do my best to help pull out the positive aspects & encourage you on your journey that is full of life’s questions whether big or small. If there is one thing that I’ve learned, it’s that all of our experiences are not just for ourselves. They are meant for sharing with the next person who may need a push or a reminder that there is someone else rooting for their growth & success. I’m here to share as much as I can and can’t wait to hear what you all will share with these questions.

The beautiful handcrafted bowls seen here each represent a CKPgh graduate. Photo by Heather Mull
HOUSING

Housing
- Continued from Front Page

individuals with a criminal record.

Sen. Saval proposed blocking landlords from running criminal background checks on prospective tenants. This would make it easier for ex-convicts to find housing and make a new start.

The Sentencing Project [TSP] data says as many as one in three adults in the United States has a criminal record. Black men are six times more likely to be arrested than white men. Hispanic or Latino men are two and a half times more likely to be arrested than white men. The TSP website says finding housing and employment can be near impossible for those with a criminal history.

Another barrier renters may face is a past eviction filing. Landlords routinely screen applicants for eviction filings, and deny leases to applicants who have one on their record. But filings do not always lead to eviction. This means that even if a renter was not evicted, the filing alone makes it harder for them to find housing.

The Fair Records for Renters bill would seal eviction filing records unless and until the landlord wins the case. EvictionLab.org data shows that in 2016 fully two thirds of Pennsylvania eviction filings did not end in eviction. But even without an eviction, the filing itself stained the tenant’s record. This law would make the records of litigation sealed to the public while the case is active. If the tenant is evicted, the records would become available to the public.

But most eviction filings do not end like that. The landlord may withdraw the complaint. The judge may rule for the tenant. Sometimes the two parties reach a settlement. In these cases, no record will remain to endanger the future housing prospects of the renter.

A third housing-related bill addresses home repairs for low-income renters and homeowners. Sen. Saval proposes creating a comprehensive home repair program for low-income households. This would enable people to stay in homes they can afford, reduce utility bills and stabilize communities.

Sen. Saval stated that 280,000 homes in Pennsylvania need significant repairs. Repairs to structural problems such as leaking roofs or windows are costly. Fixing systemic problems like exposed wiring, plumbing problems or lack of heat can also be expensive. Households that cannot repair and maintain their home may lose their housing. This harms families and can destabilize a neighborhood. Homeowners who lose their home lose the chance to pass their largest asset to their children.

Local programs like this have produced unexpected rewards for low-income communities. The Journal of the American Medical Association published a study in July showing how this works. In Philadelphia neighborhoods where home repair grants helped fix up 13,600 houses, crime dropped by almost 22%. Researchers said this came from fixing internal and structural problems, not the external appearance. And it was a long-lasting effect that continued more than 10 years after the study ended.

Victor J. Reina is associate professor at the University of Pennsylvania and a co-author of the study. He told Bloomberg CityLab these repairs relieved people’s fears of their roof collapsing on them or their home being condemned. “It’s protecting people from inside their house,” he said.

Another part of the bill would support people in workforce development programs. This would help train tradespeople to do the repairs. Workforce development programs also help people overcome barriers to employment.

DID YOU KNOW?

OVER 20,000 people in Pennsylvania are released from prison every year

375,000 are either incarcerated or under some form of supervision.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND HELP?

Download the Pennsylvania Fair Chance Housing Toolkit at:

Source:
https://www.rootandrebound.org/

BIZNIS DIRECTORY

Support Your Local businesses

Abriola’s Auto Parts.......................................................(412) 421-8100
Alien Demolition..........................................................(412) 361-7500
Automotive Medic.......................................................(412) 422-2886
Brad Rosen Landscaping.............................................(412) 421-4330
Carpets & Things..........................................................(412) 401-8049
Christian Cleaning Services...........................................(412) 781-5989
Colwell Automotive......................................................(412) 422-2658
Combo Mini Mart........................................................(412) 462-1568
Community Kitchen Pittsburgh......................................(412) 246-4736
Dylamato’s Market.......................................................(412) 521-1351
Easy Does it Lawn Care.................................................(412) 708-3586
Elevationz: MoNaé’s Hair Studio, Killa Kutz, New 2 You & The Diamond Room.......................................................(412) 235-7033
Elizabeth Pharmacy.....................................................(412) 421-0114
Elmer Herman Funeral Home.......................................(412) 521-2768
Floriated Interpretations................................................(412) 607-7886
General Contractor - Mike Lignini................................(412) 600-1969
Graphics 22 Signs, Inc..................................................(412) 422-1125
Gracey’s Tidy Up Services.............................................(412) 819-5597
Greenfield Jewelers.....................................................(412) 904-3589
Halbleib’s Auto Body....................................................(412) 422-4665
Hazelwood Family Health Center.................................(412) 422-9420
Inspirational Wear......................................................(412) 218-4782
Italian Village Pizza.....................................................(412) 521-1900
Mark’s Fantastic Photos................................................(412) 403-9247
MDT Home Remodeling & Repair................................(412) 467-9577
Negril Curbside Food Truck.........................................(412) 437-8474
Jimmy Cohen Plumbing, Heating and Mechanical (412) 421-2208
John D. O’Connor & Son Funeral Home.........................(412) 521-8116
Jozsa Corner Ukrainian Restaurant...............................(412) 422-1886
K & M Clean Fix LLC (Handyman Services).................(937) 369-8364
K & T Cleaning.............................................................(412) 337-7903
Key Bank.......................................................................(412) 422-7420
Kruszka’s Auto..............................................................(412) 521-8911
La Gourmandine..........................................................(412) 291-8146
Lylte Cafe.................................................................(412) 421-4881
Odell Minniefield Construction and Services.................(412) 421-6662
Phyl’s Cleaning and Décor............................................(412) 708-3586
The Pittsburgh Stop.....................................................(412) 967-7488
Reed’s Sweet Treats.....................................................(412) 449-9338
Reene’ Roma Personal Training.....................................(412) 443-6957
Rite Aid......................................................................(412) 421-6948
Smuts Brothers Debris Removal....................................(412) 512-7739
We Care Chiropractic................................................... (412) 521-8890
Webster Electric.........................................................(412) 290-1112
3C Signs.................................................................(412) 462-2455

Want your business listed for FREE?
Call 412-421-7234 or email skanar@hazelwoodinitiative.org
COMMUNITY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS
Plans for S&R Market site emphasize social connections and green space

By Juliet Martinez

A place where you can run into friends, a place for seniors and families, a green space you can walk to. These ideas emerged at the December 14 Hazelwood Initiative [HI] community meeting. Residents at the meeting gave more input on re-developing the former S&R Market lot. Architect Kate Tunney presented six concepts for the site.

At the November 9 meeting, participants offered several ideas. Some suggested developing the site as a recreational public space. Others, a grocery store, or retail and service provider space. Some suggested a mixed development with housing and a combination of the other uses.

Ms. Tunney and colleague Eli Gutierrez described how residents often met by chance at S&R Market. This created more social connections. The concepts they presented emphasized the importance of this dynamic. The architects also noted that they included extra parking into the designs to support the planned grocery store on the opposite side of the 4800 block of Second Avenue.

Many participants said they liked the focus on a public space where seniors, families, and children in the daycare center can relax and play. Hazelwood Towers is across from the former S&R Market site. People observed that creating a welcoming green space there would benefit Tower residents. The Greenway is too far and difficult of a walk for most neighborhood seniors.

Many of the meeting participants liked this concept. It shows a building set back from the street with parking in the rear. Trees and plants at the curb would shield neighbors coming in from all directions. The open area would have benches and allow space for pop-up pavilions and outdoor dining.

Image courtesy of Rothschild Doyno Collaborative

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION
Treasure hunt crossword

See SOLUTIONS Page 20
COMMUNITY VOICES

Disability Action Inadequate; MUST Be Strengthened by Wolf Administration and General Assembly

By Gary Blumenthal, Vice President of InVision Human Services

At a time when PA has billions of dollars in federal money plus state treasury receipts dramatically outperforming projections, the Wolf Administration is failing to fully address the collapse of the community system that provides critical services for people with intellectual disability and autism. The Administration’s actions may have tragic consequences for Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

Congress and the President have asked governors to rescue disability programs by increasing funding for the community system’s Direct Support Professionals. DSPs provide lifesaving, caring supports for persons with disabilities, and this goal was a key element of the passage of the American Rescue Plan. It is also a vital provision of the pending Build Back Better legislation. Our Commonwealth has received money to achieve this goal, but doing so requires leadership by our Governor to use both the federal dollars and PA’s increasing revenues for this purpose.

Instead of responding to the crisis, the Wolf Administration has presented a plan that fails on several fronts:
- Fails to strengthen community services as required by federal law.
- Fails to fund a wage that will hire enough skilled workers to operate community services.
- Fails to offer a pathway to reduce an up to 60% turnover in community program staffing.
- Fails to provide rates for sufficient staffing for programs serving people with medically and behaviorally complex issues.
- Fails to restore service to 6,500 people who have lost supports in the last 18 months.
- Fails to provide Equal Pay for Equal Work – 30% less than state workers.
- Fails to support the 5,000 people in crisis at this moment.

PA requires community programs to provide the gold standard of quality supports. Providers must hire people who can deliver mental health support; teach people how to obtain and hold jobs; administer medication; support people with severe behavioral challenges and medical fragility; be trained in first aid, CPR, and other life-saving procedures; and work with a state bureaucracy that requires reams of documentation each day for every daily activity as well as all medical and behavioral events.

Families of people with disabilities, service providers, and DSPs join in asking the Governor to fully fund the $541 million needed to begin salvaging this system.

Underfunding has resulted in a daily struggle to find qualified workers with prior training or understanding of people with disabilities. This challenge has a direct impact on the quality of services, and has resulted in significant additional training and education expenses for providers. In addition, 12,000+ people are now on endless waiting lists. 5,000+ people are in emergency status. 6,500+ people have lost services in the last 18 months.

Families of people with disabilities, service providers, and DSPs join in asking the Governor to fully fund the $541 million needed to begin salvaging this system.

This is not a difficult concept. It is within reach. But first Governor Wolf must lead by revising disability rates to stop the further collapse of this system.

The Governor has repeatedly promised service providers that he would protect people with disabilities and their DSPs. We remain deeply disappointed in the actions to date.

Our Governor can either rescue people or leave them exposed to significant risk. We implore Governor Wolf to avoid the collapse of the intellectual disability system on his watch. Thousands of Pennsylvanians with disabilities depend on his leadership.

Those signing below are leaders of intellectual disability and autism service providers:
Tony Beltran, President/CEO, Pittsburgh Mercy Health System, Pittsburgh
Terence G. Blackwell, Jr, President/CEO, Chimes International Limited, Baltimore, MD
Diane Conway, CEO, MAX Association, Conshohocken
Rita Gardner, President/CEO of Melmark of Pennsylvania, New England, and Carolinas
Tine Hansen-Turton, President and CEO of Woods Services, Langhorne, PA
William Harriger, President/CEO of Verland Foundation, Sewickley
Karen D. Jacobsen, CEO of Emmanus Community of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County
Dr. Susan Latenbacher, President/CEO of Lark Enterprises Inc., New Castle
Susan Leyburn, CEO of LifePath Inc., Bethlehem
Lorraine Livosky, Executive Director of Diversified Family Services, Hermitage
Christopher Shay, President/CEO of McGuire Memorial, New Brighton
Ruth Siegfried, Founder and President/CEO of InVision Human Services, Wexford/Reading/Harrisburg
Kim Sonafelt, CEO of Mainstay Life Services, Pittsburgh
Will Stennett, Chief Officer of Developmental Disabilities & HSCBS Policy, Voices of Independence, Pittsburgh
Stephen H. Suroviec, President/CEO, Achieva, Pittsburgh
Marisol Valentín, Executive Director, McAuley Ministries, Pittsburgh
Charles Walezak, CEO of Erie Homes for Children and Adults, Inc. (EHCA), Erie

HOME-GROWN BLUEBERRIES IN YOUR YARD

The Izaak Walton League of Allegheny County has free blueberry bushes to give away as part of The Pittsburgh Blueberry Project. These are for residents of Hazelwood and other environmental justice neighborhoods. Blueberries are:
- Nutrient rich and good for your brain, heart, skin, and muscle
- Fresh produce you can grow in your yard
- Good for native moths, butterflies and birds
Blueberry bushes are low-maintenance, don’t grow very tall and need little pruning. To receive blueberry bushes in the spring, sign up here: https://tinyurl.com/HZbluetrees (web address is case sensitive)
Email Matt Peters, Community Garden Manager for more information: gardens@hazelwoodinitiative.org
Learn more about planting blueberries: https://tinyurl.com/planting-blueberries

ARE WATER AND SEWER OUTAGES AFFECTING YOU?

Find out why online. Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority [PWSA] has improved its service outages page. The page shows where current and planned outages will happen. The map is easy to use and interactive:
https://www.pgh2o.com/projects-maintenance/service-outages
If you rent, PWSA can still notify you about service outages in your area. Call customer service at 412-255-2423 (press 5) to update your contact information. You can also fill out the web form at:
https://tinyurl.com/update-contact-info-pwsa
Some service outages affect more than one block and street in an area. When this happens, click on the green triangle on the map, then click the link in the window that pops up. This will show you more information, including a full list of affected blocks and streets.
COMMUNITY VOICES

There will be peace on earth someday

By Jim McCue

I’m convinced there will be peace on Earth someday, as difficult as that is to imagine.

The mainstream media has minimized how dire the situation is. A good number of reputable scientists think we’re going extinct soon, but this has been ignored.

Human society can become a thriving new world based on love rather than fear. The alternative is extinction. Every species of life eventually goes extinct, of course. Our decisions will affect when.

Where should we put our priorities? If we want a good future, we need to live simply. The saying, "Live simply so that others may simply live" is true, but incomplete. We OURSELVES won’t survive if we all don’t live simply. If we don’t stop manufacturing, buying and using things we don’t really need, this human-caused nightmare will continue. The increasing frequency of heat waves, droughts, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, diseases such as COVID-19, habitat destruction, and loss of biodiversity will continue. Destruction of the rainforests (often referred to as the "lungs of the planet" because of how much oxygen they produce), is increasing rather than being slowed down. Last year, deforestation of the Amazon increased more than 20% from the year before. We’re accelerating rather than putting on the brakes. This is why we need a nonviolent revolution.

From quantum to global

Like our global situation, quantum physics is full of contradictions and paradoxes. Light is both wave and particle. Separation is an illusion. One of the physicists of the early 1900’s said that if anybody tells you they understand quantum mechanics, you can be sure they don’t because nobody does.

In the same way, our world is huge, but getting smaller every day. It is complex, but we must live simply.

The present day seems unbelievable to those of us old enough to remember when it was assumed, for instance, that organ transplants were impossible. Every checkout counter uses holography, which is based on quantum physics. People 50 years ago would not have believed possible things we take for granted today. That’s why I say we have to start imagining – and creating – a better, more peaceful world. It can be done!

"Put on your thinking cap and get dreaming."

~Margaret Baco

Let your watchword for the new year be: “I am baptized!”

By Vicar Benjamin Janssen

As Holy Cross Evangelical-Lutheran Chapel and our greater Hazelwood community celebrates the coming of the new year, we do not know what it will bring. For some of us, this next year may be full of joy and promise but for others, the new year may not look so bright. No matter what this next year may have in store for you and your family, here are some comforting and joyful words from the great German-American Lutheran minister C.F.W. Walther (1811-1887). I pray that these words will bring you and your family the same comfort and joy they have given me.

In a New Year’s sermon for 1845, Walther wrote:

Should the Christian stand all day long at the grave of all joys which he enjoyed in past years? Through Holy Baptism a great stream of joy has been conducted in his heart, which does not drain away, but streams forward with his life until its waves carry him into a sea of a blessed eternity. Should the Christian be reminded all day long that the flowers of his youth fall more and more? He stands planted by God in the water of his Baptism as a palm tree which becomes greener and greener and whose leaves never wither. Yes, his baptism makes death for him like a short winter’s nap, out of which an eternal spring – an eternal youth – follows.

For Baptism is a bath that washed me not only once when I received it – washed me pure with Christ’s blood – but it continuously washes me clean even daily for as long as I hold it in faith. For just as the same water of the flood drowned the sinners, but Noah with his relatives were brought to salvation and carried to Mount Ararat, so also did the water of my baptism drown my sins, but my soul was brought to the eternal mountain of divine grace. And just as once those same waves of the Red Sea, which swallowed up Pharaoh and his army, were a protective wall for Israel, so also has my baptismal water swallowed up all of my damnation and is for me A sure wall before God’s wrath and punishment… Now then, all of you who believe in God’s Word, let your watchword for entering the new year be this: “I am baptized!”

Although the world may laugh at this comfort, nevertheless, abandon any other dearly held pledges and speak only throughout the entire year to come, in all terrors of conscience and necessity through sin and death: “I am baptized, I am baptized, I am baptized! Hallelujah!” And you shall prevail! In every time of need, you will find comfort in your Baptism; on account of it Satan will flee from your faith and confession; and in death you will see heaven opened and will finally come into the joy of your Lord to celebrate a great year of jubilee, a year of praise, with all the angels forever and ever. Amen!


God’s richest blessings from you to us here at Holy Cross Evangelical-Lutheran chapel! Come join us for worship on Sundays at 9:30 AM! We love you because Jesus Christ first loved us!

Photo: The stained glass window of Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church. Photo by Vicar Benjamin Janssen
Looking back at 2021 and forward to 2022
By Julie & Ted Block

2021 was another whirlwind year! As real estate agents, Ted and I frequently found ourselves rushing to close deals in a super-hot market. At the same time, we made some big, exciting steps as a family, and we’re thrilled that 2022 is upon us.

While we’re looking ahead with the utmost optimism, we’ve always found it useful to reflect on the previous year. And since many of you have followed our articles so closely, we thought we’d share some of our favorite 2021 moments here!

Looking Back on 2021
Professionally, 2021 was a great year. Ted and I moved to Compass Realty, which offers us an incredible toolkit for greater customer service. That timing was perfect because the market has seen significant shifts over the last two years. With less inventory and greater demand, we became more aggressive on behalf of our clients—and Compass helped us be that much bolder.

On a personal level, we switched to homeschooling our kids in 2021. The transition has been surprisingly smooth, and that’s likely because we spent so much time preparing! The kids have loved it so far, and we love the flexibility it affords us. Because we’re not following the rigid school calendar, the kids are ahead of schedule, and we’ve squeezed in even more extracurriculars—like weekly swim lessons and sewing lessons.

We also started traveling more, thanks to our van. While we still use it to transport furniture for home stagings, we perfected the art of traveling as a family on the road.

Hopes and Predictions for 2022
We can’t believe it, but 2022 will be our sixth year in the real estate business! As we look ahead, we expect Pittsburgh to continue its status as a strong market, with the same level of competition we saw in 2021. With that in mind, we’re thrilled to have the support of Compass Realty behind us, as it will empower us to continue providing excellent customer service to our clients.

At the same time, we’re planning to dig deeper into our own investing projects. We’ve even set an ambitious goal of renovating three properties in Pittsburgh this year.

On a personal note, Ted and I want to continue improving our homeschooling skills. It has gone smoothly so far, but 2022 will be an opportunity to refine our skills.

And with our van life strategies perfected, we’re looking forward to additional travels with the kids. We currently have our sights set on Yellowstone National Park!

Of course, we also plan to continue contributing to The Homepage through 2022, so look for our column each month.

Happy New Year!
Julie & Ted Block
You can reach us at theblocks@blocksintheburgh.com

GET HELP WITH YOUR HEATING BILL
Low-income home energy assistance program (LIHEAP) pays your utility company from $500 to $1,500 to keep your heat on in the winter. This money does NOT need repaid.

Who is eligible? Renters or homeowners who meet the income guidelines. You do not need to be on public assistance or have unpaid heating bills to qualify.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Income Limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$19,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$26,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$32,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$39,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$46,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$53,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$60,180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do I apply?
• Create an account and apply at http://www.compass.state.pa.us/
• Download an application at https://tinyurl.com/liheap-2021-2022-application and return it to the county public assistance office.

Where can I learn more?
https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/AssistancePages/LIHEAP.aspx

SIX-WORD STORIES
The concept of distilling a story or poem down to a mere six words has existed for several decades, with the first well-known example being attributed to Ernest Hemingway in the 1920’s (though there is no official record of him writing any six-word stories).

Stories based on last month’s prompts:

By Darlene Batko
Today is my son, Richard Bumford’s, birthday - December 4th, 1969. We tragically lost him in September, 2017. I would like to submit two six-word stories.
A child in your life
Losing a child NEVER gets easier.
Parents who lose children die inside.

By Jason White-Weidow
About a sweet and painful memory:
Green velvet pillow magic needed Gramma.
About a child in my life:
Timorously withholding infinities behind effervescent eyes.

Puzzle solutions