

GAZEBO EXPRESS

YOUR LOCAL SOURCE FOR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • MARCH 2017

BOUTIQUE HOTEL TO ANCHOR PREMIER HIGHLAND DEVELOPMENT

Entrepreneur hopes 10-acre business park, boutique hotel attract other high-end developments to Highland

Seven months after Veterinary Surgeon Claude Gendreau unveiled plans for nearly 10 acres along Main Street, the project is poised to advance.

Gendreau and members of his team will appear before the Plan Commission March 15 to discuss combining a series of adjacent residential parcels into a Planned Unit Development near Prairie Avenue.

PUD designation is necessary as a first step toward creating a professional office park that will come with its own 30-room boutique hotel.

"When I look at properties, I look to see if my project can be a catalyst for others," Gendreau said. "I believe the plan for Highland will attract other high-end development."



The Plan Commission is eager to learn more about Gendreau's vision.

"This is unique for Highland and our surrounding communities," Building Commissioner Ken Mika said. "It's a premier development with architecturally significant buildings and ample green space."

For Gendreau, it's all about positive change. "Northwest Indiana is developing rapidly," he said. "I want something very positive for the area: something that makes a difference."

BUSINESS IS BOOMING

Cecile Petro has been fielding inquiries for commercial space, particularly downtown. With more than 90 percent of all downtown storefronts already taken, the Redevelopment Director is working to accommodate requests.

"We have many businesses that want to come in," she said. "Right now, though, we just don't have many vacant shops to offer."

Happily, it isn't just downtown businesses that are booming. It's nearly the same case along Highland's other retail hubs:

FIRST MIDWEST BUILDING:

Petro expects demand to be strong for the First Midwest Bank building at Highway and Fourth Street. First Midwest bought Standard Bank and Trust and moved to the branch at Ridge Road and Fifth Street.

HYDRANT STOREFRONT:

The Hydrant storefront, 2849 Highway Ave., will become available when the business moves to a larger downtown location.

"It's important for interested businesses to come to us when they are just thinking about retail or light industrial space," she said. "We do everything we can to match spaces as they become available."





TREE INVENTORY PROJECT:

Crews are identifying and counting trees in the parks and public areas. Parks Superintendent Alex Brown said the workers are cloaked in green vests. Data will be used to develop a tree management plan to increase canopy and filter/reduce storm water runoff.

CRIME WATCH MEETING

Learn about recent crime trends at Highland's monthly neighborhood watch meeting.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. **MARCH 8**

WHERE: HPD Community Room

INFO: Please call Sgt. Shawn Anderson at (219) 838-3184 or email sanderson@highland.in.gov.



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NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

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SANITARY RATE STUDY TO DETERMINE HIGHLAND'S SEWAGE TREATMENT FEES

Years after they began negotiating, Highland and Hammond have come to an agreement regarding sanitary and stormwater treatment.

The accord requires additional study to determine the rate the town will be assessed by Hammond, which will eventually impact residential sewage treatment fees.

"The agreement with Hammond settles some of the outstanding issues between the communities that go back several years," Bach said. "It also opens the door to moving forward and working together to solve issues both communities have with the federal Environmental Protection Agency and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management."

Highland will pay Hammond about \$4.6 million to resolve outstanding monthly service fees and the town's share of capital projects that have been completed at the Hammond Sanitary District wastewater treatment plant.

In addition, an interim rate of \$1.20 per 1,000 gallons has been established until the rate study is completed and adopted, a process that is expected to be completed by summer.

The rate is a formula that takes into account the volume as a percentage of wastewater that flows from the town's industrial base, homes and businesses. Industrial flows are charged differently because of so-called loadings that cost more to treat.

Once the rate study is complete, the Highland Board of Sanitary Commissioners will establish a cost for residential, business and industrial customers.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ON COUNCIL TO-DO LIST

The Highland Town Council is tasking itself with redevelopment.

President Dan Vassar, Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin, Councilmen Bernie Zemen, Steve Wagner and Mark Herak have become the Redevelopment Commission. Councilmen Konnie Kuiper asked not be appointed.

"This was a collective decision by the council," Vassar said. "Our goal is to be more fast-acting, more strategic. To do that, we need to eliminate barriers and work directly with our

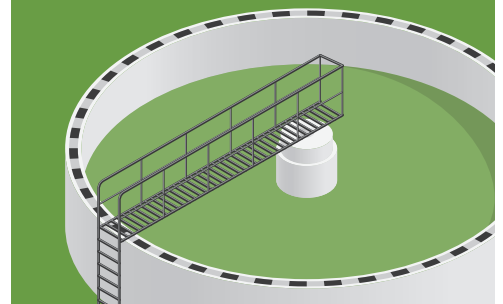
INFLOW & INFILTRATION

For Highland Public Works, summer construction season means underground pipe lining and replacement to reduce the amount of groundwater making its way into the sanitary system.

Inflow and infiltration — or more often referred to as "I and I" in sanitary jargon — is the amount of water that leaks into sanitary sewers over and above the flows that are transported from residences, businesses and churches.

It is an issue that can overwhelm sewers during heavy storms and costs the town tens of thousands of dollars each year.

QUESTIONS? Please call Highland Public Works at (219) 972-5083.



Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin said once the Sanitary District is informed about the conclusions of the rate study and its impact, the town will schedule a meeting to inform the public.

"Even before the rate study is complete, the Sanitary District has plans to modify the monthly bills to provide greater transparency and detail on costs," Griffin said.

Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro."

Other local communities — Griffith, Munster and Schererville — have made similar moves. Vassar said taking on the additional responsibility makes sense.

"Ultimately, the Town Council is charged with voting on economic/redevelopment issues," Vassar said. "We are simply streamlining the process. I want to thank the most recent members of the Redevelopment Commission for their service."

**“The sooner child sexual abuse is identified,
the sooner the nightmare can end and healing begin.”**

AMEE LIPTAK, Fair Haven Crisis Intervention Coordinator

NO MORE SECRETS

North Township trustee, state senator galvanizing support to end child sex abuse throughout Indiana

Highland's Fair Haven Center for Women is partnering with North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan to shine a light on child sexual abuse.

Known as “No More Secrets,” the initiative is endorsed by the township's five school districts and a host of supporters, including the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Indiana and Lake County Prosecutor.

Meanwhile, state Sen. Frank Mrvan is shepherding a bill he introduced that requires the Indiana Department of Education to provide model policies and reporting procedures for child sexual abuse.

The bill passed the state Senate Feb. 13 and must pass the House before it becomes law.

The impetus for both initiatives was a report by the Global Health Communication Center at Indiana University, which found Indiana has the second-highest rate in the nation of forced sexual intercourse among high school females.

“One act causes an enormous wave of family destruction and, more than likely, emotional and physical abuse,” Mrvan said.

Highland Schools Superintendent Brian Smith said “No More Secrets” will augment the district's “Darkness to Light” training.

“Every Highland school employee is trained to identify students who may have been victimized and assist them in getting help,” Smith said. “Frank has been wonderful in providing additional resources, which will assist us in doing more to protect our kids.”

PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM

Meet Erin Merryn, survivor and advocate for Erin's Law. The free event includes workshops on sex abuse and human trafficking.

WHEN: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 18

WHERE: Purdue University Northwest, Alumni Hall

REGISTER ONLINE:

nomoresecretsnwi.eventbrite.com.

START BY BELIEVING

Join Fair Haven Center for Women's free rally as the center kicks off sexual assault awareness month.

WHEN: 6 p.m. April 6

WHERE: Main Square Park Gazebo

WALK IN THE PARK

Join Fair Haven Center for Women for the 14th Annual Walk in the Park, a 3-mile trail at Wicker Park.

WHEN: April 22. Registration is 9:30 a.m. Walk begins at 10 a.m.

WHERE: Wicker Memorial Park

ST. PATRICK'S DINNERS

AMERICAN LEGION POST 180

Join the American Legion for a family-friendly St. Patrick's buffet dinner featuring hearty portions of corned-beef, cabbage, buttery red potatoes, glazed carrots, bread, coffee, pop and water. A 50/50 raffle, cash bar and \$2 drafts will also be available.

WHEN: 1 to 5 p.m. **MARCH 18**

WHERE: American Legion Post 180, 2703 Jewett Ave.

COST: \$11 includes free drink. Kids under 5 eat free.

INFO: (219) 972-3948

GARFIELD MASONIC LODGE 569

Garfield Masonic Lodge invites all lads and lasses for a corned beef and cabbage dinner, which includes dessert, soft drinks and entertainment. Be sure to bring out the wee ones, too!

WHEN: 4 p.m. **MARCH 11**

WHERE: Garfield Masonic Lodge No. 569, 2234 Martha St.

COST: \$10 adults, \$5 children

INFO: Chris Hejmej at (219) 743-3421, Brad Neal at (219) 644-9943 or Jim Slagle at (219) 628-6797

ST. JAMES RUMMAGE SALE

Hunt for gently-used gems at the spring rummage sale, hosted by St. James the Less Parish. Clothes are \$2 a bag on Saturday!

WHEN: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, **MARCH 31** and from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, **APRIL 1**.

WHERE: St James the Less Church Hall, 9640 Kennedy

INFO: (219) 924-4220

POET LAUREATE DEADLINE

Whether it's a love of sonnets or alliteration in the written word; if poetry is your love, Highland Main Street is looking for you. Nominations are due **MARCH 15**. Details about the program and the application process are available online at highland.in.gov.

QUESTIONS? (219) 972-7598 or lryskamp@highland.in.gov

COMMUNITY BAND CONCERT

Sound the trumpets and celebrate spring at this month's Highland Community Band performance. Admission is free.

WHEN: 7 p.m. **MARCH 23**

WHERE: Highland High Monbeck Auditorium

WANT TO JOIN? Open to anyone high school age or older. Rehearsals are at 7 p.m. Wednesdays in the Highland High School band room. Email Greg Jasek at maestroflute@att.net.

BEGINNER PIANO LESSONS

This beginner piano course will teach budding musicians - ages 8 and older - how to play an electronic keyboard as well as read music, play songs and tackle basic chording.

WHEN: Thursdays, **MARCH 9 - APRIL 27**

BEGINNERS: 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

BEGINNERS: 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

FEE: \$80 residents / \$85 nonresidents

MATERIALS: \$10 for music book and \$3 per week for keyboard rental.

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

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

KICKAROO KARATE KIDS

A fun, non-contact program that inspires self-esteem, builds character and prepares young children - ages 3-5 - to face life's challenges. There are no elements of sparring or practicing against one another. Dress comfortably.

WHEN: 3:15 to 3:50 p.m. or 4 to 4:35 p.m.

Mondays, **MARCH 14 - APRIL 17**

FEE: \$47 residents / \$52 nonresidents

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

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

COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE

Enjoy shopping for comic books, sports cards, autographs and other memorabilia in conjunction with the Community Garage Sale, featuring household items, books and more!

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. **MARCH 11**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

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

JUNIOR PAINT WORKSHOPS

Our trained Instructor will show junior artists - ages 7 to 12 - how to paint a 12" x 12" canvas. No experience is required.

WHEN: noon Saturdays, **MARCH 11** (fluffy chick) and **APRIL 8** (spring snail).

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

FEE: \$15 residents / \$18 nonresidents

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

BABE RUTH REGISTRATION

Registration for the Highland Babe Ruth and Travel League has been extended through March. Limited space remains.

BABE RUTH: Ages 13 to 15

SENIOR LEAGUE: Ages 16 to 19

REGISTRATION: Call Dan Vassar at (219) 924-1945 or email highlandbaberuth@yahoo.com.



hAPPY eASTER

BUNNY BREAKFAST

Join the Easter Bunny and his furry friends for a continental breakfast. The event features a bike drawing, basket raffles and photos with the bunny. Continental breakfast includes: donuts, granola bar or rice krispie treat, bananas, grapes, milk, juice, coffee. Children receive a McDonalds coupon and pinwheel.

WHEN: Saturday, **APRIL 8**
SEATINGS: 8:30 and 10 a.m.
WHERE: Highland High cafeteria
TICKETS: \$6 and must be purchased in advanced at Lincoln Center, the chamber office, Centier or First Financial banks. Or order tickets online at highlandgriffithchamber.com.
INFO: Call (219) 923-3666 or visit highlandchamber.com.

EASTER EGG HUNT

Grab your basket and head to Wicker Park for the 11th annual North Township Easter Egg Hunt. Children ages 1 to 10 are invited to hunt for filled eggs until the last egg is found! DJ music and a visit from the Easter Bunny will be part of the day's activities.

WHEN: 9 a.m. **APRIL 8**
WHERE: Wicker Park Pavilion
INFO: Call Kelly Bridges at (219) 932-2530, ext. 331.

ADULT SOFTBALL LEAGUE

Registration begins this month for the adult softball season. Men's and co-ed team fees due by **MARCH 31**. Rosters are limited to 20 players. Single-game division begins April 18. Double-header division begins May 7. Manager/seed meeting is 6 p.m. April 5 at LCC.

TEAM FEE: \$700 for minimum 16-games. League structure dependent on teams registered.

WHERE: Register at LCC, play at SAC.

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

MEN'S BASKETBALL LEAGUE

Register now for this 18 and older league. Teams are guaranteed at least 10 games and must provide shirts/jerseys that are the same color with numbers on the back. Provide jersey color when registering to avoid duplicates.

WHEN: 6 p.m. Tuesdays, **MARCH 21 - MAY 23**
 Lincoln Community Center

TEAM FEE: \$480

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: March 14

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