

## NEW FACES. NEW LEADERS.



### FIRE DEPARTMENT



Highland welcomes new Fire Chief Glenn Schlesser (left) to the town's firefighting team. Volunteer Firefighter Ken Mika (center) is retiring after nearly 43 years while Acting Fire Chief Mike Pipta (right) will remain on the force. [ photos provided ]

### NEW FIRE CHIEF TO LEAD HIGHLAND FIREFIGHTERS

The Town Council has named Glenn Schlesser the new chief of the Highland Fire Department.

Born and raised in nearby Lansing, Ill., Schlesser is leaving his position as Storm Lake Iowa Fire Chief to move to Highland.

"Highland has a reputation as being a stellar fire department," said the married father of three – soon to be four – children. "I see opportunities to advance training and grow the organization."

At the same time as the council and the fire department welcomed the new chief, they bid a fond farewell with deep gratitude to Acting Chief Mike Pipta, who will remain on the department, and Ken Mika, who after being a member of HFD for nearly 43 years, has decided to retire."



### PARKS & RECREATION



Outgoing Parks and Recreation Superintendent Alex Brown, who is retiring after 28 years, shows new Superintendent Tim Diamond (left) the ropes during his final two weeks. Diamond is eager to build on Brown's legacy. [ photo provided ]

### NEW PARK SUPERINTENDENT JOINS RECREATION TEAM

Alex Brown spent the last two weeks of his 28-year career as Highland Parks and Recreation Superintendent training his replacement.

The Parks and Recreation Board has named Tim Diamond, who has spent the last 10 years helping lead the Griffith Park Board, as the new superintendent.

Diamond knows he has big shoes to fill.

"Highland has a great parks and recreation program that has been built over the last 28 years by Alex Brown," he said. "I'm looking forward to picking up where he left off. I'm planning on spending the first few months assessing what is here, finding efficiencies and creating a blueprint for where we want to grow."

[ TRADITIONS UPDATE ]

Nearly two years after Traditions Restaurant burned down, Highland Building Commissioner Ken Mika said the owner has decided against rebuilding based – in part – on tariffs that have dramatically increased the cost of construction materials.

Owner Ruben Ibarra invested in detailed plans for reconstruction and expansion, which were delayed when the building's foundation was determined to have structural issues.

By the end of June, the foundation was removed and backfilled making way to seed the lot with grass. "Ibarra will be responsible for maintaining the lot until he decides to build there or sell the property," Mika said.

# HIGHLAND POLICE HIRE SOCIAL WORKER TO JOIN LAW ENFORCEMENT TEAM

The Highland Police Commission has approved the hiring of the town's first-ever social worker. As part of the police department, Halie Gonlag will be working with Highland officers, the School Town and Lake County's newly formed Crisis Intervention Team.

"Law enforcement has long battled the negative stigma surrounding officers experiencing mental health crises," HPD Administrative Cmdr. Shawn Anderson said. "The focus of Lake County's Crisis Intervention Team is not only dealing with an individual in crisis, but also the officer's own mental health and wellness."

Anderson, who serves as the Crisis Intervention Team Coordinator for the HPD, and Gonlag will be working

with more than 50 members of law enforcement, mental health professionals, individuals with lived experience and community partners. The group has a goal to provide support, de-escalation and connection to appropriate mental health resources during a crisis.

Gonlag, who joins the HPD after 2.5 years as a social worker at the Griffith Police Department, will be value-added to Highland and the CIT initiative, Anderson said.

"Halie will definitely be an asset to our officers, students and residents," he said. "Highland Police will get a bonus: Halie is bringing her dog Murphee. The pup is training for certification as a comfort dog."

# EVENTS RAISES MORE THAN \$5,000 FOR NEW HIGHLAND-MUNSTER ANIMAL SHELTER

The first fundraiser for the new Highland-Munster Animal Shelter attracted homeowners and pet lovers from around Northwest Indiana.

The pasta dinner – donated by Amici's Grill and Langel's Pizza – raised more than \$5,000 in donations needed to replace the 52-year-old facility that has outlived its useful life.

HPD Administrative Cmdr. Shawn Anderson said other individuals and businesses have stepped up with offers of assistance since the fundraiser.

"The Emergency Veterinary Care Center has become our first kennel sponsor and an electric company is offering to donate labor and materials for electrical installation," Anderson said. "We still need your help to make this worthwhile project a reality."



[ HOW TO DONATE ]



The Highland Police Department still has a way to go to meet it's \$300,000 fundraising goal. You can help by donating directly at Centier Bank, 9102 Indianapolis Blvd., or the Highland Police Department, 3315 Ridge Road. Make checks payable to the Highland FOP Lodge #122 with "Animal Shelter" in the memo. Or simply click the QR code or visit [highland.in.gov](http://highland.in.gov) to donate online.



**WARD 1**  
**GEORGE GORGEFF**  
g.georgeff@highland.in.gov  
(219) 545-8530



**WARD 2**  
**DOUG TURICH**  
dturich@highland.in.gov  
(219) 516-9649



**WARD 3**  
**ALEX ROBERTSON**  
arobertson@highland.in.gov  
(219) 230-6116



**WARD 4**  
**TOM BLACK**  
tblack@highland.in.gov  
(219) 301-2077



**WARD 5**  
**PHILIP SCHEERINGA**  
pscheeringa@highland.in.gov  
(219) 741-2841



**CLERK-TREASURER**  
**MARK HERAK**  
mherak@highland.in.gov  
(219) 838-1080

HIGHLAND MAIN STREET PRESENTS ...

# big crawl

**3-9 PM TUESDAY**  
**AUGUST 26**

Join us as we shut down Highway Avenue for a special Downtown Restaurant Crawl featuring live entertainment, shopping specials – and, of course – soul-satisfying eats.

The concept is simple: 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. Dine in or enjoy your meal alfresco at one of our many picnic tables.

## ENTERTAINMENT LINEUP

**4-6 PM:** Strings Beyond Description

**6:30-8:30 PM:** Nomad Planets



Visit [highland.in.gov](http://highland.in.gov) or Highland Main Street on Facebook for updates.

## [ HAZARDOUS WASTE ]

Make your environment safer by bringing your batteries, cleaners, oils, solvents, poisons, gasoline, pesticides, antifreeze, mercury thermometers, thermostats and fluorescent bulbs to the town garage from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, **July 26**. **Items not accepted:** tires, appliances, asbestos, ammunition, explosives, medical/radioactive wastes, 30-gallon or larger containers. **Please note:** Paper shredding will also be available with a limit of four paper grocery bags per car.

**INFO:** Call (219) 972-5083.



## [ ROTARY CORN ROAST ]

Join Highland Rotary from 4:30-7:30 p.m. **August 1** at Main Square Park for all the corn you can eat plus two hot dogs or one sausage, chips, drink and dessert. Proceeds benefit Highland scholarships and park, fire and police departments. Tickets are \$8 in advance at Cakes by Karen and Lincoln Center or \$10 at the park.



## [ TOWNWIDE YARD SALE ]

Find the latest bargain or the ultimate treasure at our Townwide Yard Sale from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday, **August 22** and Saturday, **August 23**. Visit [highland.in.gov](http://highland.in.gov) or Highland Council of Community Events on Facebook to register.



## [ ANNUAL BACKYARD BBQ ]

Save the date! You're not going to want to miss this year's Backyard BBQ Festival **September 26-28** at Main Square Park. Come for the live music, beer garden, food and crafts. Stay for fan-favorite carnival rides.

**[ SUMMER CONCERT SERIES ]**

Grab a comfy lawn chair and head to Main Square Park for live music. All shows are 7-9 p.m. Here's the lineup:

**July 16:** Pawnz (Motown)

**August 6:** Stingrays  
(Swing and 20s-50s)

**August 13:** Oscar & The Majestics  
(Rock)

**WHERE:** Main Square Park

**NOTE:** If inclement weather, concert may be moved to Lincoln Center.

**INFO:** highlandparks.org

**[ MOVIES IN THE PARK ]**

Join us at dusk (around 8:30 p.m.) for an evening in the park to watch family-friendly movies on the big screen. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and snack under the stars.

**July 11:** Dog Man

**August 22:** The Wild Robot

**WHERE:** Main Square Park

**NOTE:** If inclement weather, concert may be moved to Lincoln Center.

**INFO:** highlandparks.org

**[ WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE! ]**

New Life Christian Reformed Church, 3010 Ridge Road, invites the community to attend its free family picnic from 5-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, **August 6**. Games and activities from 5-7 p.m.

**INFO:** (219) 838-0506 | newlifecrc.com

**[ COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE ]**

Join the community garage sale from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, **August 16** at Lincoln Community Center!

**VENDOR FEE:** \$40 for 10' x 10' interior space or \$65 wall space. Tables, chairs and extension cords are not provided.

**INFO:** highlandparks.org.

**BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE**

Join the Highland Community Theatre players for its first-ever performance of "Bringing Down the House," which tracks Jules, Sydney and Elliot as they encounter every possible obstacle as they work to bring down the house with only two hours to pull off the theater production of a lifetime.

**SHOW DATES:** 8 p.m. **July 24-26** and **July 31-August 2** at Main Square Park Gazebo. VIP front row seating is \$3 a ticket in advance at Lincoln Community Center or \$5 a ticket at "door" – if available. All other seating is free.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Bring your lawn chairs, blankets and bug spray. Programs are \$2 and T-shirts are \$15 – while supplies last. All proceeds support the production.

**INFO:** highlandparks.org

**[ NERF WAR ]**

Players – ages 8-12 – will compete in teams of four in a capture-the-flag tournament. Prizes awarded to top teams. Please bring one NERF gun and NERF N Strike foam darts. Required protective eye wear provided. Foam darts only!

**WHEN:** 6-8 p.m. Friday, **July 18**

**WHERE:** Lincoln Center Banquet Hall

**FEE:** \$25 residents | \$27 nonresidents

**INFO:** highlandparks.org

**[ FISHING DERBY ]**

Boys and girls – ages 6-13 – are invited for a morning of fishing activities and a catch-and-release tournament. Please bring your own pole, hooks and bobbers. Parks and Recreation will provide a limited supply of bait. Register by July 11.

**WHEN:** 8-10 a.m. Saturday, **July 19**

**WHERE:** Meadows Park Pond

**FEE:** \$10 residents | \$13 nonresidents

**INFO:** highlandparks.org