



December 2023

QUARTERLY

A Publication of the Borough of Highland Park

GREETINGS FROM THE MAYOR



Hello fellow residents,

I have the privilege of sharing three very encouraging news announcements with you. Since I took over as Mayor, I've told everyone who asks that my #1 priority was finding a new grocery store for our town. We're so happy to share that a well regarded chain of supermarkets, Super Fresh, will be taking over the property on Raritan Ave. between N. 4th and N. 5th Ave. We will have more information shortly on the timeline for the grocery store opening, its product lines, and employment opportunities.

We are humbled by the generosity of long-time resident, retired HPPD police officer Leonard Kushner, who left a substantial estate that will benefit first responders and educational providers in Highland Park. This bequest is in loving memory of Leonard's mother, Ida Kushner, and all projects receiving support will be named in her honor. Beneficiaries are the HP Police Dept, the HP Fire Dept, the HP First Aid Squad, the HP Education Foundation, the HP Public Library, the HP Community Food Pantry, HP

Gives a Hoot, the HP Special Education Parents Advisory Committee, HP Parents of Athletes, the Central Jersey Diaper Bank (in New Brunswick), and The Oscar and Ella Wilf Campus for Senior Living (in Somerset). We will be sharing more information about the services that will benefit from this bequest soon.

Last, while we are sad to see the closing in late November of Sushiana restaurant on N 4th Ave, a beloved fixture in our town for 11 years, we are happy that a new restaurant will be taking over the same site. Giddy's is a well-regarded Kosher restaurant, with an expansive menu, that has operated for nine years on Rt. 18 in East Brunswick. We welcome them to our town!

Wishing you a holiday season with blessings of joy, friends, and family.

Elsie

UPDATES *from the* BOROUGH COUNCIL



Water Meter Replacement Program: Property owners that have not yet had their water meter replaced should contact National Metering Services to book their appointment for a meter replacement as soon as possible. NMS has both traditional and 'Sabbath-compliant' water meters available now. NMS can be reached by phone

COVID Vaccinations: The Borough Council reminds residents of the importance of staying current with the COVID-19 vaccine in advance of the upcoming winter season. Nearly everyone over 6 months of age is eligible for a vaccine, covered at no cost for most individuals living in the U.S. through their private health insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid. If you are uninsured or if your plan does not cover the cost of the updated vaccine, visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find healthcare providers, federally supported health centers, and retail pharmacy chains participating in the Bridge Access Program to get a COVID-19 vaccine at no cost.

at 1-888-448-0009. Visit the Borough's website for more information. The Borough is more than halfway through the replacements at this point and are targeting completion by the end of the year; we need your help and cooperation to achieve this goal.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES at the Highland Park Community Center

Department of Aging

Lunch with Friends

Kosher Meal Program at the HP Community Center with JFS of Middlesex County. Mondays and Wednesdays 11:30 am - 1:00 pm. Ordering Deadline is Friday morning "before" for Monday's Lunch, Monday morning "before" Wednesday's Lunch. Suggested Donation: \$5.00

Breakfast with Friends, Kosher Breakfast Program at the HP Community Center with JFS of Middlesex County. Friday 9:00 am – 11:00 am. Suggested Donation: \$5.00

Special Programs:

AARP Presentations

Monday, December 11th 1:30 pm

Topic: Social Security - Do you understand how Social Security works? Have you wondered what the difference between full, early, and delayed benefits are? Join AARP's free Social Security workshop. The Social Security workshop focuses on building an understanding of the implications of Social Security claiming decisions. You will discover what Social Security is and you will also learn how to secure your benefits, as well as explore the future of Social Security. Build confidence in making a decision that is right for you! Please call (732) 819- 0052 for more details.

Wednesday, December 7th, 1:30 pm

Topic: Downsizing & Decluttering - Having too much stuff can impede people from relocating or getting health care into their homes. This engaging presentation explores why stuff is so important for some people and teaches practical, easy-to-follow tips on downsizing and decluttering. Learn how to get started! Please call (732) 819- 0052 for more details.

Holiday Luncheon - Tuesday, December 12th at 12:00pm. Lunch will take place at Pithari Taverna. Flavian. Zia Lisa will cater lunch. Kosher option is available upon request.

Lions Club Holiday Party - Saturday, December 16th at 12:00pm.

Holiday Show & Dance Performance - Tuesday, December 19th 11:30am

Winter Concert Performance - Friday, December 29th at 11:00am.

January Luncheon - Tuesday, January 23rd at 12:00pm.

Lunar New Year Dragon and Lion Dance - Tuesday, February 6th at 12:00pm.

Valentine's Day Luncheon - Tuesday, February 13th at 12:00pm.

Please join us and like us on Facebook @ Highland Park Department of Aging. We post virtual offerings, workshops, and resources available on our Facebook page. Please stay tuned as we post additional programming for the fall.

Community Services Outreach and Assistance/Reminders:

You can meet with our Social Worker, Nicole Huff, by calling (732) 819-0052 or sending an email to nhuff@hpboro.com to schedule an appointment.

Distributions from the Highland Park Community Food Pantry are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month 9:00am – 10:45am and 6:00pm – 7:00pm and on Saturdays from 9:30am – 10:30am on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month. For more information or for food emergencies when food pantry is not open, please reach out to (732) 819-0052 for assistance.



NEWS from the Teen Center/Zone 6

In early November, leaders in the Outreach and Community Relations office of the New Jersey State Division of Civil Rights met with Borough teens at the Teen Center/Zone 6. The Division of Civil Rights staff shared a presentation of case studies of acts of discriminations and outlined how NJ State law regards different incidents. They also spoke with the teens about careers in the justice system and law enforcement.

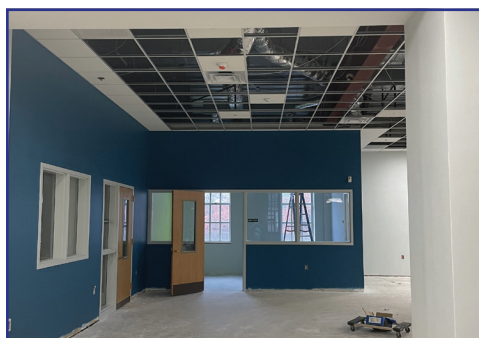
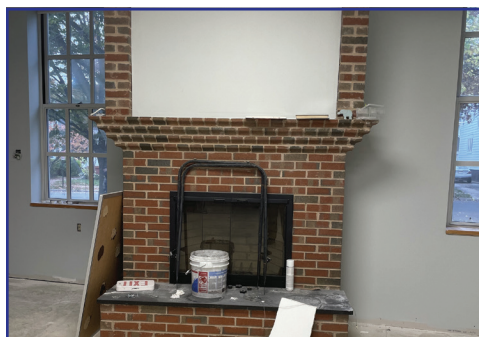
at the Highland Park Public Library



Highland Park Public Library

Some people say that winter symbolizes an ending. But, at the Highland Park Library, we are cozying up to our fireplace and planning for our reawakening. Everyone is waiting for us to reopen in our redesigned space at 31 North 5th Avenue. So, here is a sneak peak of what to expect when we reopen our doors sometime this winter. Our Children's room is being reimagined into a bright happy place where children and parents can meet up to play and learn. New play options and rearranged bookshelves await our littlest customers. Our teens will have a bigger space to spread their wings, where comfortable furniture and a space for group projects and meetings await them. You will also see new service desks, comfortable chairs and improved lighting throughout the library. The building has also been rewired to keep up to date with ever-changing technology. Come visit us at our temporary location at 901 Raritan Avenue and keep an ear out for our grand reopening in 2024.

Monday January 22 at 6:30: Join us for a discussion of **In the Land of the Postscript: Short Stories by Chava Rosenfarb**, translated by Goldie Morgentaler. Advance registration is appreciated, though not required. See our website for registration or to place a hold on a copy, or borrow it at HPPL Express! This program will take place at the Highland Park Community Center (220 S. 6th Ave., Highland Park).



Highland Park Recreation

The Highland Park Department of Recreation has wrapped up a great fall season of Soccer and NFL Flag Football. Congratulations to all players on a job well done! Winter Youth Basketball is just around the corner and registration is open through November. Other winter programming will include Recreation Dance, Winter Track, Rovers Indoor Soccer, Adult Fitness and indoor Adult Pick-Up sports.

HPYTC participants have been hard at work with Fresh Theatre Arts on their production of Matilda Jr, The Musical. Save the dates for their performances on Thursday,

January 11th at 6:30pm and Sunday, January 14th at 3:00pm in the Highland Park High School Auditorium!



NEWS from the Highland Park Police Department

Congratulations to Ptl. Bryant Fitzgerald and Ptl. Mark Reefeer who each received an award from the Knights of Columbus Council 6306T this fall.



Ptl. Fitzgerald and Ptl. Reefeer were recognized for their continued commitment to the Highland Park community. Both officers volunteer to coach football and basketball for Highland Park's children, for which they have won several championships! They have also been instrumental in various Youth and Community Outreach programs throughout the year.

This accomplishment is a testament to their dedication, hard work, and commitment to serving the Highland Park community.

Congratulations to both officers on this well-deserved recognition of their hard work and achievements.

We thank the Knights of Columbus for their support and for recognizing our outstanding officers.



NEWS

from the Woodbridge Ave Neighborhood Preservation Program

More than \$150,000 was infused into the Woodbridge Avenue Neighborhood Preservation Program (NPP) District over the past year to support business growth and community building.

Some tangible improvements you may have noticed include:

- Five new street murals near Molimock-Graff Park painted by talented local artists, depicting themes like Highland Park's former apple orchard and community unity.
- The installation of new street furniture along Woodbridge Avenue to brighten up the public space and make the corridor more inviting.
- New paint, windows & doors, lighting, landscaping, and signage at nine businesses who received more than \$60,000 in façade improvement grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

Other initiatives undertaken by the NPP Stakeholder Team over the past year include a parking study and a review and update to the Borough's existing signage regulations to make them more easily navigable for business and property owners. The Stakeholder Team driving these improvements is comprised of resident and property owners from the District, representatives from Main Street Highland Park, the Arts Commission, the Historical Commission, and the Planning Board, and Councilman Matt Hale. If you are interested in learning more about the NPP program or becoming involved in 2024, please reach out to Emma Von Thun, NPP Coordinator, at evonthun@hpboro.com or (732) 287-5801.



NEWS

of Note

Developing a Highland Park River Greenway

For years, the Borough has contemplated a greenway that would run along the Raritan River in Highland Park. Thanks to a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, the Borough was able to contract with ETM Associates, a landscape architectural firm based in Highland Park, to conduct a feasibility study and develop a concept design for the greenway.

The current vision for the greenway is a fully ADA accessible, multi-use greenway that would link Donaldson and Johnson Parks and connect residents and visitors to the Raritan River. Residents are invited to attend a community meeting on Wednesday, December 13th at 6:30 PM in the Community Center to learn more about the exciting project and the steps that are needed to make it a reality.

Highland Park receives Silver Certification Award from Sustainable NJ

For the 8th year in a row the Borough of Highland Park has achieved Silver-level certification from Sustainable Jersey, an accomplishment reached by only 70 out of nearly 450 participating communities. Sustainable Jersey is a statewide nonprofit that offers technical and financial resources to municipalities and school districts to better incorporate sustainability in their policies and practices. The Borough amassed a total of 420 points by exceeding benchmarks in 34 action items ranging from hosting an Earth Day Fair to tracking and analyzing energy usage in Borough buildings to purchasing electric vehicles. A number of volunteer boards & commissions assisted in this round of certification including Sustainable Highland Park, the Environmental Commission, the Arts Commission, and the Shade Tree Advisory Committee. Every year the Borough endeavors to complete a handful of new action items and has already begun the recertification process for 2024.

NEWS

from



FARMERS MARKET

Join us downtown at Market Square next to 212 Raritan Avenue for our weekly Farmers Market. Two more markets this year, December 8 and December 15, from 11:00 am - 4:30 pm

NIGHT OWL MARKETS

Highland Park's holiday arts, crafts, and artisan markets are back in October, November, and December to help you do all your holiday shopping downtown!

Remaining market dates are: Saturday December 9, 4-8 pm Sunday December 10, 12-4 pm Interested vendors should sign up here:

<https://tinyurl.com/32swnz57>

DOWNTOWN MENORAH LIGHTING

Join us on the first night of Hanukkah, Thursday, December 7 at 4pm, to light our downtown menorah, spin some dreidels, and eat some sufganiyot from Mordy's!

Check out mainstreethp.org for details, or follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/mainstreethp, or on Instagram at instagram.com/mainstreethp.