



EARTH DAY SPECIAL ISSUE: Community Changemakers



“Hazelwood has been suffering a long economic decline. There’s an opportunity to ask, ‘What can we do here to bring it back and to bring it back in a way that is sustainable and climate-resilient?’”

-TIFFANY TAULTON, HAZELWOOD INITIATIVE
[DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES]



They’re finding ways to adapt to climate change, heal the earth, and build resilience in their communities. Carnegie Museum of Natural History joins them in asking: What role will you play?

By Julie Hannon

In October of 2012, Pittsburgh native Tiffany Taulton was living in New York City as it was ravaged by Superstorm Sandy. Seawater surged over Lower Manhattan’s seawalls and highways, inundating tunnels, subway stations, and the electrical system that powers Wall Street. A large tanker ship ran aground on

the city’s Staten Island. Over two days, relentless rain, wind, and water destroyed some 300 homes, left hundreds of thousands of people without power, and stranded many vulnerable New Yorkers with limited access to food, drinking water, and health care services.

“That was really when my life changed because I began to realize that climate change wasn’t a prob-

lem for 50 years from now,” says Taulton, who at the time was working in the public information office of the United Nations. “It wasn’t a problem for people somewhere else. It’s a problem for all of us, no matter where we live, and there’s no escaping it.” With urgency, Taulton got to

See EARTH DAY on Page 10

Advocates: Medical care bundled with wraparound support can make pregnancy and birth safer for Black parents

By Juliet Martinez

As Black Maternal Health Week, April 11-17, approaches, advocates for the health of Black parents and babies are raising an alarm. Data the Centers for Disease Control released earlier this year showed Black people died within six weeks of giving birth at three times the rate of white people who had recently been pregnant. Before the pandemic, a gender equity report showed that Black infants and birthing parents in Pittsburgh were already at higher risk of death than their white counterparts.

The organization Black Mamas Matter Alliance said in a statement this comes from unequal access to care, conflicting policies and outright negligence.

The Atlanta-based nonprofit promotes policy changes, research and reframing of the conversation around Black maternal health, as well as holistic care for Black birthing people. The statement calls for policymakers to commit to equitable health policies at all levels, guided by input from those most invested in the health of Black parents and babies, saying:

“As always, we must look and listen to the many Black women doctors, nurses, midwives, doulas, scholars, researchers, and organizers who are working to rebuild trust and provide quality care for Black Mamas within their communities.”

Brandy Gentry works on that every day. Ms. Gentry is a doula, which means she is a trained support person during pregnancy, childbirth and the first months with a new baby.

Ms. Gentry became a doula to give others the support she needed

See MATERNAL on Page 8

Remembering Alex Bodnar

By Ziggy Edwards

Family, friends, and neighbors gathered on March 11 and 12 to say goodbye and celebrate the life of Alexander Jozsa Bodnar, 79. Mr. Bodnar, who died on February 26 after a yearlong battle with cancer, was a beloved fixture in his adopted



Alex Bodnar bringing food to Rick Sebak when he was in the hospital.

Photo by Rick Sebak

See BODNAR on Page 5

Table of Contents

Publisher’s corner.....	p. 2
Community resources.....	p. 3
Elected officials.....	p. 6
Development roundup.....	p. 7
Health.....	p. 8
Environment.....	p. 9
Special issue.....	p. 10
Community news.....	p. 12
School updates.....	p. 14
Local character.....	p. 15
Garden and sustainability.....	p. 16
Meeting highlights.....	p. 17
Audience participation.....	p. 18
Business directory.....	p. 18
Community voices.....	p. 20

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The mission of Hazelwood Initiative, as a community-based development corporation, is to build a stronger Hazelwood through inclusive community development.

The Homepage is delivered monthly for free to residents of Hazelwood, Glen Hazel, Greenfield, Hays, New Homestead, and Lincoln Place. All readers, and those who have an interest in these communities, are encouraged to use this paper as a platform to promote resources, events, services, and community initiatives to further connect and strengthen their neighborhoods.

Send letters and story ideas to:
editor@hazelwoodinitiative.org
DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS THE
SECOND FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH.

The Homepage reserves the right to decide what content is appropriate for publication and may edit submissions for length or form. The opinions expressed, whether by paid advertising or editorial content, do not necessarily reflect the views of this newspaper, the Hazelwood Initiative, Inc., the Greenfield Community Association, nor the 31st Ward Community Action Group.

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PUBLISHER'S PAGE

Investing in our urban forests creates a healthier, safer, more vibrant community

By Tiffany Taulton

I am so excited to share this special April edition of Earth Day news coverage! The year 2020 marked the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, and the start of a new series of community initiatives focused on the environment and sustainability here at Hazelwood Initiative.

In the spring of 2020, TreeVitalize awarded Hazelwood Initiative 25 trees to plant on the former YMCA site on Chatsworth Avenue, and the Lytle Land playground. That fall, we began a partnership with the City of Pittsburgh, thanks to support from the Trust for Public Land, to rehabilitate the Hazelwood Greenway. That partnership grew in 2021 to include Landforce - which hoped to train and hire residents from the community to do the work - as well as Allegheny Goatscape, Tree Pittsburgh, and Councilman Corey O'Connor.

2021 was a big year! We completed two community surveys using the internet, phone calls, and volunteers who went door-to-door and tabled at events. We heard from more than 300 residents who told us which parks you visit, how often, what you like to do there, and what you would like to see in Greater Hazelwood's green spaces. Dozens of you showed up for hikes, cleanup events, and our monthly environmental development meetings to voice your concerns about the environmental impact of proposed developments and to give input on how our community should look in the future. Together, we planted over 200 trees in our community last year. And your energy inspired other communities, from Turtle Creek to Churchill to Aliquippa and beyond!

By late 2021, we were named a finalist in the Climate Challenge Cup, with Greater Hazelwood being featured in a video presentation at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in our sister city of Glasgow, Scotland. What's more, the National Recreation & Parks Association awarded the City of Pittsburgh's OnePGH Fund a \$433,000 grant to continue improving the city's greenways as a tool for social and climate justice. Lastly, Mayor Bill Peduto requested that our Hazelwood Greenway, along with five others, be designated official city parks as one of his final acts in office.



Photo by Ray Gerard

Hazelwood has shown the world how investing in the health of our urban forests can create a healthier, safer and more vibrant community. Community development isn't just about housing, or education, or jobs, or health or public safety. It's about all those things. IT'S ABOUT ECOSYSTEMS.

The Greater Hazelwood community plan emphasizes preserving affordable housing and protecting it from floods. It prioritizes improving public safety and health. It expresses our concerns about mental health and preparing for the jobs of the future. These issues are related and must be addressed together.

Join us Saturday, April 23, to celebrate Earth Day and our recent successes. Join us to learn how we plan to build community health and community wealth even further this year through our greenspace and new Healthy Homes initiatives. **HAPPY EARTH MONTH!**

Meetings every 2nd Tuesday of the month!

GREATER HAZELWOOD

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETING

TOPICS & SPEAKERS

- **Stabilizing hillsides in the Hazelwood Greenway, a Research Project** - Chatham University
- **Affordable housing on Hazelwood Green** - Austin Gelbard, Tishman Speyer
- **Development update on 4800 Block west and former Good Shepard Church site** - POORLAW & GH-CARED
- **Hazelwood Initiative updates**
- **Community announcements**

Register in advance for this meeting:
<https://bit.ly/2SwPr9k>
CALL IN TO LISTEN: (646) 558-8656
Meeting ID: 853 9182 9343 Passcode: 796212

Tuesday April 12th 6pm - 8pm

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

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

HOUSING AND UTILITY AID

HELP FOR HOMEOWNERS

The Pennsylvania Homeowner's Assistance Fund helps keep homeowners from falling behind or losing their home through foreclosure.

Learn more and apply for aid at <https://pahaf.org/>, or call 888-987-2423.

HOUSING LEGAL AID FOR RENTERS AND HOMEOWNERS

Tenant Services: Mediation, limited legal consultation, full legal representation

Homeowner Services: Tangled title, foreclosure prevention.

For a Legal Assistance Program referral, call: (412) 534-6600

Non-English speakers, please call: (412)-530-5244

PWSA BILL ASSISTANCE

Apply at <https://www.pgh2o.com/residential-commercial-customers/customer-assistance-programs>

Or call: Dollar Energy Fund, (866) 762-2348

HEATING BILL ASSISTANCE

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.

Low-income renters or homeowners do not need to be on public assistance or have unpaid heating bills to qualify.

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.

Learn more:

<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/LIHEAP.aspx>

RESOURCES FOR FINDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

<https://www.publicsource.org/pittsburgh-allegheny-county-affordable-housing-service-guide/>

EMERGENCY BROADBAND AID

The Emergency Broadband Benefit offers a discount of up to \$50 per month towards broadband service for eligible households. Also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer or tablet. Restrictions apply.

Apply online: <https://getemergency-broadband.org/>

For help applying or more information, call (833) 511-0311 between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.

ARE YOU CLOSE TO HAVING YOUR WATER SHUT OFF?

Apply for up to \$5000 of water or sewer bill aid through the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program.

If you are behind on your water or sewer bills, at risk of having service cut off or have already had service shut off, you can apply for free aid. Up to \$2,500 each for water and sewer is available to low-income applicants.

Go to www.dhs.pa.gov/waterhelp for information on how to apply.

WATER AND SEWER OUTAGES

Find out where current and planned water and sewer outages will happen.

<https://www.pgh2o.com/projects-maintenance/service-outages>

PWSA can notify renters about service outages in your area.

Call customer service at (412) 255-2423 (press 5) to update your contact information to receive notifications. Or fill out the web form at:

<https://tinyurl.com/update-contact-info-pwsa>

MEDIATION FOR RENTERS AND LANDLORDS

If a dispute with your landlord is putting your housing at risk, you need help with a housing conflict or communication with your landlord or tenant has broken down, contact Just Mediation for free mediation services that work with your schedule.

Email: info@justmediationpgh.org

Call: (412) 228-0730

Web: www.justmediationpgh.org

DISCOUNT HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

Low- to moderate-income homeowners living in Greater Hazelwood: Get help maintaining and improving your home. Hazelwood Initiative will help you identify needed repairs, find a contractor and could cover up to 90% of the cost or up to \$12,000.

Call (412)-421-7234 and ask for Dave, Herc or Ray

Email hpappas@hazelwoodinitiative.org

HEALTHY HOMES

LEAD TESTING & REMOVAL

There is no safe level of lead exposure! Allegheny County homeowners and renters can get FREE lead-paint testing in their homes and yards. The program covers up to \$12,000 of removal costs, including for repair and repainting of chipping and peeling lead-painted surfaces, window and door repair or replacement, and enclosing exterior trim and components.

For more information, call Hazelwood Initiative at (412) 421-7234 x 409 Or email ttaulton@hazelwoodinitiative.org

ROOFTOP SOLAR PANELS

Rooftop solar panels reduce your utility bills and keep them low as prices rise. They also protect your health by lowering air pollution, and keeping your lights on during blackouts when paired with a storage battery. Sign up to find out if you can receive free rooftop solar panels or purchase them at a discount. Visit www.solarunitedneighbors.org/alleggheny and register for a Solar 101 webinar, or watch a pre-recorded webinar at the website. Email pateam@solarunitedneighbors.org with questions.

WEATHER-PROOF YOUR HOME

Action Housing and Duquesne Light have partnered to help low- and fixed-income households weatherize their homes. This program runs all year. Call Action Housing at (412) 281-2102 (ext.2101).

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

AIR QUALITY MONITORS

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced last year that air pollution causes nearly 7 million deaths each year. Pittsburgh ranks fourth nationally in air pollution deaths. Take our survey about air quality in Hazelwood and you may qualify to receive a FREE Purple Air monitor !<https://tinyurl.com/HZAQSURVEY>

FOOD & CLOTHING ASSISTANCE

HOLY CROSS EVANGELICAL-LUTHERAN CHAPEL OF HAZELWOOD

Food & clothing distribution:

First and third Saturday of each month from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Community dinners: First and third Sundays from 4-6 p.m.

Phone: (412) 521-0844

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

COOPERATIVE MINISTRIES

Meals on Wheels: Monday through Friday home meal delivery, free to anyone who needs food in Hazelwood, The Run, Greenfield and Glen Hazel

Congregate lunch: Eat in or take home

lunch, Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Emergency food boxes - pick up at Spartan Center from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. M-F or home delivery in a 15-mile radius of office. Call to arrange something for the weekends.

Grocery buying assistance

Phone: (412) 499-4313 - ask for Dylan Knapp-Scott, 15207

131 E. Elizabeth St, Pittsburgh, PA, 15207

HEALTH MEDICAL AND COVID-19 RESOURCES

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

Rite-Aid

4934 Second Ave,

Pittsburgh, PA, 15207

Phone: (412) 421-6948

Monday - Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Book an appointment online if possible at <https://www.riteaid.com/locations/pa/pittsburgh/4934-second-avenue.html>.

COVID-19 TESTING AND VACCINATION

Hazelwood Family Health Center

4918 Second Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15207

Phone: (641) 715-3900

Extension: 301402

Call for appointment

THE CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE

1405 Shady Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Rehabilitation and educational services for children with a range of needs. Behavioral therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy are available.

Autism services include applied behavior analysis and social skills groups. The approved and licensed private academic day school serves autistic children and children with multiple disabilities ages five through 21. Transition services for children aged 14-21 to help prepare them for independent living. For more information, call (412) 420.2400 or visit <https://amazingkids.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.

Contact Rabbi Mark Asher Goodman at mgoodman@bethshalompgh.org or (412) 421-2288.

See www.bethshalompgh.org/medicaldevices/ for more information.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

FAMILY AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

RESOLVE CRISIS SERVICES

(888) 796-8226
24-hour mental health crisis support

JUST FOR TODAY NAR-ANON FAMILY GROUP

For anyone who has a loved one suffering from addiction, meetings are the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m.
First Hungarian Church – Calvin Hall
217 Johnston Avenue,
Pittsburgh, PA, 15207
Contact Cindy at (412) 421-7076

AUTISM URBAN CONNECTIONS

Parents and caregivers for children with autism and related disorders can meet in a safe space. Meetings are online every second Thursday of the month. Register at tinyurl.com/SupportGroupRegistration.
Join Circles of Care, a 6-week program teaching parents and caregivers skills and techniques to improve your family’s quality of life. Complete the course to be certified as a volunteer family engagement peer support.
Contact info@aucopfgh.org for more information.

GREATER HAZELWOOD FAMILY CENTER

Home visits, assessments, services, family goal-setting and support for parents and families.
Contact Danielle Gill:
dgill@cotraic.org
5006 Second Avenue,
Pittsburgh, PA 15207
Phone: (412) 904-2005
<https://www.cotraic.org/greater-hazelwood-family-center>

CHURCHES

FIRST HUNGARIAN 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.fountainoflifepgh.co

HOLY ANGELS CHURCH

408 Baldwin Road Pittsburgh, 15207,
(412) 461-6906
<https://www.facebook.com/holyangelshays/>

HOLY CROSS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHAPEL

5319 Second Avenue Pittsburgh, 15207
(412) 521-0844
www.holycrosspgh.info

KEYSTONE CHURCH OF HAZELWOOD

161 Hazelwood Avenue Pittsburgh, 15207, (412) 521-3468
<https://www.centeroflife.net/>

MARY S. BROWN-AMES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Temporarily meeting at
515 West 8th Avenue Homestead, 15120
(412) 421-4431
info@brightredfence.org
www.brightredfence.org

MORNINGSTAR BAPTIST CHURCH

5524 Second Avenue
Pittsburgh, 15207
(412) 421-6269

PRAISE TEMPLE DELIVERANCE CHURCH

Pastor Lutual M. Love, Sr.
5400 Glenwood Avenue, Pittsburgh, 15207, (412) 277-0113

ST. JOHN CHRYSTOSTOM BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

506 Saline St. 15207
Pastor@sjcbcc.com
<https://sjcbcc.com>
(412) 421-0243

SQUIRREL HILL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

290 Bigelow Street
Pittsburgh, 15207
(412) 521-2447

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST BAPTIST

4537 Chatsworth Avenue
Pittsburgh, 15207
(412) 626-3232
info@stjohnpgh.org
www.stjohnpgh.org

ST. ROSALIA CATHOLIC CHURCH

411 Greenfield Avenue
Pittsburgh, 15207
(412) 421-5766
info@saintpaulcathedral.org
www.ghocatholics.org

ST. STEPHEN CATHOLIC CHURCH

5115 Second Avenue
Pittsburgh, 15207
(412) 621-4951
info@saintpaulcathedral.org
www.ghocatholics.org

STEEL CITY CHURCH

290 Bigelow Street
Pittsburgh, 15207
(412) 342-8387
info@thesteelcitychurch.com
www.thesteelcitychurch.com

WARRIORS OF HOLINESS IN POWER

(W.H.I.P. Ministries)
1174 Mifflin Road
Pittsburgh, 15207
(412) 461-5572
whipwarriors@gmail.com
www.whipministries.org

HOTLINES, ALERTS & INFORMATION

ALLEGHENY COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.

24/7 hotline: (888) 856-2774
Text alerts:
www.alleghenycounty.us/alerts
General info and help: Call 2-1-1
OR text your ZIP code to 898-211

HAZELWOOD INITIATIVE COMMUNITY UPDATES

facebook.com/hazelwoodinitiative

PRAISE TEMPLE COMMUNITY HOTLINE

*Answering M-F, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
(412) 422-1983

CENTER OF LIFE

Covid-19 Online Resource Guide
Centeroflifeonline.net/covid

CAREER RESOURCES

JOB SEARCHING?

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>

TRANSIT RESOURCES

ACCESS PARA-TRANSIT

ACCESS is a coordinated, shared-ride paratransit service providing door-to-door, advanced reservation transportation in Allegheny County. Visit <https://myaccessride.com/> for more information.

HOMEPAGE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Community members, nonprofit organizations, business owners and anyone who wishes to submit writing to The Homepage, please be aware that:

- The **deadline for all submissions is the second Friday of each month** for publication the following month.
- Letters to the editor, requests for advice from our advice columnist, op-ed pieces, personal essays and explorations of various topics are all welcome.
- School updates and event announcements from nonprofit organizations and other neighborhood-based entities are welcome.
- The Homepage offers affordable advertising rates to promote small businesses and the health of our neighborhood economy. Ads must be submitted by the second Friday of each month.
- Contact Sarah Kanar for information on buying ad space. Email: skanar@hazelwoodinitiative.org
- The Homepage reserves the right to decide what will appear in print.
- Submissions may be edited for length, grammar, punctuation and clarity.
- Submissions received after deadline may be declined or held for a future issue at the discretion of the editor.
- Please direct your questions, suggestions and story ideas to Juliet Martinez, managing editor. Email: jmartinez@hazelwoodinitiative.org
Or call (412) 421-7234, x406



Bodnar

- Continued from Front Page



Alex Bodnar in his element, serving food to customers in his restaurant, Jozsa's Corner. Photo by Heather Mull

hometown of Pittsburgh - especially in Hazelwood, where he lived and worked over four decades.

“In my mind, Alex and Hazelwood are inextricably linked,” said Heather Mull, whom I spoke with by phone on March 12. Ms. Mull credits Mr. Bodnar with introducing her to the neighborhood. The two met at his Jozsa Corner Hungarian Restaurant in the 1990s when Ms. Mull was a customer and food photographer. They soon became friends - then neighbors, after Mr. Bodnar gave Ms. Mull a tour of available houses and she chose one just up the hill from his.

Mr. Bodnar arrived in Pittsburgh with his parents in 1957, having fled Budapest, Hungary after participating in the 1956 Hungarian revolution. He bought the Jozsa Corner building in 1982 to use as a center for the preservation of Hungarian language, dance, art and, of course, food. In a 1989 Pittsburgh Press article, he called himself “a crazy Hungarian with a big dream.”

Over the years, Mr. Bodnar served as a member and past president of the Hungarian Ethnic Group of Western Pennsylvania; a past president of the 15th Ward Chamber of Commerce; a member, council member, and trustee of the First Hungarian Reformed Church; and a member of the Hazelwood Greenway Committee. Mr. Bodnar’s wife, Jennifer Vickers-Bodnar, shared a story about their 1992 wedding reception on the third floor of the Jozsa Corner building.

“We put in chandeliers, sanded the floors,” Ms. Vickers-Bodnar said when we spoke by phone on March 13. “When he said he wanted to cater the reception I asked, ‘Are you sure?’ But it was important to him. He wanted people to have his food



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at his wedding. We didn’t have an elevator, and people had to run up and down the stairs with enough food for 150 guests. Everyone who could pitched in. It was so crazy, but he did it - he made it work, and everyone had a good time.”

Producer and writer Rick Sebak liked Jozsa Corner so much, he decided to include a story about it in his television program “What Makes Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh.” Like many of Mr. Bodnar’s friends, Mr. Sebak remembers being nurtured with delicious home-cooked food. I spoke with him by phone on the day of Mr. Bodnar’s funeral.

“Three years ago, I fell and was stuck at [UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital] for seven weeks. One day Alex and our mutual friend David Bennett brought me food - enough for all the nurses, too. It was like we were having dinner at Jozsa’s Corner, but in the hospital.” Two weeks later, Mr. Bodnar returned with another meal.

“It’s weird thinking about Hazelwood without Alex and his restaurant on that corner,” Ms. Mull said. “That landmark can’t be replicated, ever. I feel lucky to have had the time I did with Alex.”

As part of his legacy in the neigh-

borhood, Mr. Bodnar sold his building to Hazelwood Initiative two days before he died. He agreed to the sale in February. At that time, Dave Brewton, the organization’s senior director of real estate, told The Homepage that, “We bought it so the community, rather than outside developers, will get to decide what happens with the building.”

Mr. Bodnar is survived by his wife, Jennifer Vickers-Bodnar, his mother, Ari Bodnar, his brother, Dr. Peter (Suzanne) Bodnar, and three children: Geneva Wentz, Peter Kenneth Darcy, and Alexis Bodnar.

YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

City Council redistricting is under way

From the office of Councilman
Corey O'Connor

Pittsburgh residents elect their City Council members based on nine districts that are apportioned every 10 years in response to the United States census. That process is currently under way, with the City Council Reapportionment Advisory Committee using the 2020 census population data.

The reapportionment committee provides guidance to City Council on how to draw and apportion its legislative districts. While there are many state and federal laws that govern how legislative districts are drawn, the Pennsylvania State Legislature mandates four essential elements:

"Districts shall be composed of (1) compact and (2) contiguous territory as (3) nearly equal in population as practicable, (4) as officially and finally reported in the most recent federal census."

The committee strives to draft an equitable map of legislative districts that represents the people of the City of Pittsburgh. Its intent is to keep neighborhoods intact and in the same district wherever possible. The committee also tries to join neighborhoods that are currently split between two or more council districts into one, using the neighborhood boundaries as defined by the City Planning Department.

To ensure that community voices are heard, the reapportionment committee will host a series of public meetings across Pittsburgh to gather input from residents. Those meetings will happen in late March and April, with an official schedule of dates, times, and locations to be



Source: pittsburghpa.gov/council/d5

released soon. The committee will factor the results of these public meetings into its considerations and proposals to City Council.

Each City Council Member appoints one member of the reapportionment committee. The membership of the committee is: Schuyler Sheaffer, representing District 1; Jonathan Alexander, representing District 2; Robert Charland, representing District 3; Blake Plavchak, representing District 4; Matt Singer, representing District 5; Dan Wood (Committee Chair), representing District 6; James Murray, representing District 7; Emilie Yonan (Committee Vice Chair), representing District 8; and Shawn Carter, representing District 9.

Residents are welcome to submit their feedback and learn more about the redistricting process at <https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/city-council-rac>.

State Sen. Costa pushes anti-hate legislation

From the office of Senator Costa

According to an annual report by the Anti-Defamation League, Pennsylvania led the nation in 2021 in acts of extremist and anti-Semitic incidents. There were 488 reported in the Commonwealth last year. These include white supremacist events, dissemination of white supremacist propaganda, and anti-Semitic incidents involving violence or property damage.

This is appalling, and something must be done.

For several years now, I have introduced a package of legislation that would provide law enforcement more tools to monitor, prevent and punish hate crimes. There are many shortcomings in our state law as it relates to hate crimes and ethnic intimidation and my bills would seek to protect folks that may become the victim of a crime simply because of their race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, age or disability of the victim.

The bills will:

- Require further training for police officers
- Empower individuals to file civil lawsuits in response to ethnic intimidation or violence
- Increase reporting requirements



Photo courtesy of <https://www.senatorcosta.com/>

for hate crimes on college campuses

- Institute a database of hate groups. In 2019, there were 940 hate groups in this country. We need to know more about their activity before it is too late.

I truly believe these bills can prevent the next mass casualty event. I am hopeful that this session - given the increase in hate crimes - the bills will be moved in committee, the first step in passing a bill in the General Assembly. Keep posted at senatorcosta.com.

BARK AND BRUNCH

HAZELWOOD LOCAL

Saturday, April 30th
11am - 2pm
Hazelwood Green Plaza
Lytle St. & Eliza St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15207

Join Hazelwood Local for our first outdoor event of the year: Bark & Brunch!

This FREE event features tons of fun for local pups and pup loving humans!

- More than 20 Pet-Centric Vendors
- Live Music Performance by DJ Femi
- Food & Adult Beverage Trucks
- Doggie Costume Contest with Prizes*
- Dog Caricature Artist
- Bubble Machines and Play Area
- Giveaways
- AND MORE!!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: WWW.HAZELWOODLOCAL.EVENTBRITE.COM
*REGISTER FOR THE DOGGIE COSTUME CONTEST BY APRIL 28TH.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND...

Hazelwood Initiative's

Discount Home Repair Program

Low- to moderate-income homeowners in Hazelwood and Glen Hazel:
Would you like help to maintain and improve your home?

Hazelwood Initiative will:

- Work with you to identify what work you most want and need to be done
- Help you find a qualified contractor. Depending on your income, HI will
- Cover 50-90% of the cost of the work, up to \$12,000 total

APPLY TODAY
Call (412) 421-7234 and ask for Dave, Herc, or Ray. Or email hpappasehazelwoodinitiative.org.

Down payment required. Pay off the balance in three monthly payments. Applications will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis as long as funds last.

DEVELOPMENT ROUNDUP

Hazelwood Green owner signs master developer and promises rapid development

18

AVENUES OF HOPE – DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Second Avenue – 4800 Block, City of Bridges Community Land Trust (CLT)

PROJECT LOCATION

PITTSBURGH, PA

HAZELWOOD

Action(s)

- Authorization to enter into a For-Sale Development Program grant agreement with City of Bridges in the amount of up to \$620,000
- Authorization to waive For-Sale Development Program guidelines to exceed the per unit grant amount of \$100,000
- Final drawings, final evidence of financing, and authorization to execute a deed for the sale of 5 publicly-owned parcels along Chatsworth and Hazelwood Avenues in Hazelwood.

The City of Bridges Community Land Trust project proposal for phase one of the Chatsworth Avenue project. Screenshot from the URA meeting on March 10

By Juliet Martinez

This month, The Homepage is launching this section of updates on development projects in and near our circulation area. What development issues and projects would you like to see covered?

Email jmartinez@hazelwoodinitiative.org with questions and suggestions.

Hazelwood Green

Hazelwood Green has a new master developer in Tishman Speyer, a New York real estate firm. Readers may recall the November meeting when Tishman Speyer invited community members to meet and discuss proposed zoning changes for Hazelwood Green. The firm has been consulting on work at the 178-acre site, but the arrangement is now more formal.

The deal was announced on February 25 by the Almono Partners, who own Hazelwood Green. The company is composed of the Richard King Mellon Foundation, the Heinz Endowments and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

Sam Reiman, director of the Richard King Mellon Foundation, told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette that Tishman will move quickly on developing about 2 million square feet of land alongside of Mill 19 with research and commercial spaces, new parks, shops, restaurants, and affordable and market-rate apartments. Plans include roads and infrastructure to support these spaces. Tishman Speyer has also agreed to help with the design, construction and programming of the Robotics

Innovation Center Carnegie Mellon University plans to build on Hazelwood Green.

URA

At the Urban Redevelopment Authority March 10 meeting, Mayor Gainey's chief economic development officer, Kyle Chintalapalli, was voted in as the new chairman. He replaced Sam Williamson, the district leader of the Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ, who held the seat for three years and remains on the board.

Mr. Chintalapalli said in accepting the office, "We stand to gain so much more by working together to advance an inclusive growth platform and achieving a Pittsburgh for all," he said.

The URA board approved a \$15.1 million operating budget, a significant increase from last year's \$12.6 million spending plan. Federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act are expected to cover the increase. They also voted to approve \$5 million towards four investment programs intended to boost minority- and women-owned business enterprises, and more than \$2.5 million towards the renovation or creation of 144 units of new affordable housing, including phase 1 of the City of Bridges Community Land Trust project on Chatsworth.

Oakland Crossings

On March 7, Mayor Ed Gainey's office issued a statement saying it had reached an agreement with Walnut Capital, developer of the Oakland Crossings project in Oakland. The deal shrinks the project from 18 to 13 acres, and adds a public ben-

efit agreement creating 250 union construction jobs and covering affordable housing, food access, and women- and minority-owned business contracting.

Community groups objected to the zoning changes Walnut Capital proposed last fall. When Mayor Gainey took office, he pulled the Oakland Crossings project from the Planning Commission agenda, delaying hearing on the proposal for two months. During that time, he met with Walnut Capital and community groups.

The Oakland Planning and Development Corporation greeted the mayor's announcement with appreciation for his responsiveness to community concerns. But they said in a statement they were concerned that members would not have enough time to study the agreement before the hearing.

The commission met the day after the announcement and heard the proposal from Walnut. The commission voted to study the proposal and continue the hearing at the meeting on March 22.

At that time, the commission heard from the public and voted to refer the new zoning rules to City Council with conditions including the removal of "college campus" as an approved use and the recommendation that council further review the proposed increased height limits. The public will have additional opportunities to comment when the proposal is before City Council.

Gladstone

Hazelwood Initiative executive director, Sonya Tilghman, said the Gladstone Residences project is ex-

pected to begin construction in mid-spring, renovating the larger of the two buildings on the former Gladstone Middle School campus.

With its partner, The Community Builders, the organization is finalizing the primary piece of the funding puzzle, the construction budget, with the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency. The agency manages the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program. Also in final planning stages is a pre-apprenticeship training program with Associated Builders & Contractors. Up to 15 trainees will be able to enroll free of charge. A groundbreaking celebration for Gladstone Residences will be announced soon.

City of Bridges Community Land Trust

The Urban Redevelopment Authority awarded \$620,000 to City of Bridges Community Land Trust for this project at the March 10 URA meeting. The total cost for this project, building homes that will be guaranteed affordable to buy and maintain for 99 years, will be around \$2.1 million.

This first phase involves building four single-family, three-bedroom, 1.5-bathroom modular duplex homes on Chatsworth Avenue. Construction is set to begin in May and end in November.

When complete, they will sell to low- to moderate-income homebuyers for \$120,000-\$135,000. In total the project will build 12 homes. To apply to purchase, go to www.cityofbridgesclt.org/apply.

Hazelwood Affordable Rental Preservation Program

Hazelwood Initiative bought the final 19 rental units for this program in March, bringing the total number of units to 63, according to senior director of real estate, David Brewton. These units will remain affordable for low-income families for the next 30 years, in line with the organization's commitment to development without displacement.

The program has had a few setbacks recently because of rising costs, pandemic-related construction delays and the need to engage a new property manager. But a third of the units are now renovated. The next step is connecting tenants with social service providers who can help them meet their non-housing needs and goals.

HEALTH

Maternal

- Continued from Front Page



Photo courtesy of Brandy Gentry

and lacked during pregnancy and after her son was stillborn in 2010. She became a certified birth and bereavement doula and founded Oli’s Angels, a nonprofit offering free wraparound services to low-in-

come and at-risk families before, during and after birth. She also runs the doula program at the Allegheny County Jail.

She says interdisciplinary care for all pregnant people would help address the disparities between Black and white maternal health. In this model, community support like doulas, social workers, dieticians and therapists would be bundled with medical care.

Ms. Gentry said during a phone call in March that doctors simply can’t do it all. Pregnant people need community support to stay healthy.

And they need to communicate well with doctors who sometimes have implicit biases.

Ms. Gentry said she teaches her clients to ask questions and take their time to think things over in prenatal appointments. To interact, she says, in a way that keeps patients safe.

“They should never leave an appointment without asking at least one question,” she said. “It creates a more informed experience which keeps them so much safer.”

ADVERTORIAL

Be aware of symptoms, get educated and be proactive

Hello, I am Susan Merenstein, Clinical Holistic Pharmacist with over 41 years of practice and owner of Murray Avenue Apothecary, a Compounding and Wellness Pharmacy, as well as LabNaturals, Inc. (CBD, Non-Toxic Skincare, and Glutathione, the master antioxidant) in Pittsburgh.

I have been studying hormones and consulting with women and men to help them discover an increased quality of life and health for over 21 years.

My mantra is to be aware of symptoms, get educated and take a proactive role in your health.

My holistic philosophy is to act like a detective to find out why a person is sick. We never have a deficiency of a pharmaceutical drug - but we can have vitamin, mineral and hormone deficiencies that impact our lives and lead to degeneration as we age.

I start at the foundation of health, giving back important nutrients at the cellular level like Vitamin D, Probiotics, Fatty Acids, Glutathione, and Vitamins, and combine them with proper food, drink, rest, play, stress management, and sleep.

I look at this as a life pyramid with love, purpose, and discipline at the base.

I attended the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy and graduated in 1981. I worked in several independent pharmacies before I began compounding and consulting in 2001. Since then, I keep learning new holistic ways to balance hormones, detoxify the body, and lead hundreds of clients to a better quality of life.

Twenty-one years ago, I entered

my own peri-menopause kicking and screaming. I had horrible PMS, was overweight, and had just had a tubal ligation which deeply affected my hormonal balance.

At the same time, I did a 180 in my pharmacy profession from retail counter pharmacy to a local compounding lab and began my study of the hormones of the adrenals, thyroid, and sex glands.

In 2007 I bought that pharmacy compounding lab, renamed it and moved to a bright new space of healing called Murray Avenue Apothecary. In 2015 I began studying CBD and its amazing impact on health and started LabNaturalsCBD.com in 2018.

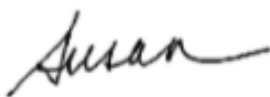
As a sister company to Murray Avenue Apothecary, LabNaturals Inc. now incorporates CBD, Glutathione, Non-Toxic Skincare and now Vital Health Pharmacist a place for Hormones, Consultation, and Functional Health.

In the last year I lost 37 pounds and I love sharing my own journey with clients.

I am blessed and grateful to practice pharmacy this way...I have met incredible people who have all touched my life is some way.

Let’s get healthy together!

Yours in Health,


Susan Merenstein, Pharmacist and Owner Susan@maapgh.com

www.MAApgh.com and
www.LabNaturals.com

31ST WARD ANNUAL SPRING CLEANUP, APRIL 23

In observance of Earth Day, the 31st Ward Community Action Group will hold their annual spring cleanup on Saturday, April 23. We will meet at **McBride Bark at 10:00 a.m. rain or shine.**

Volunteers will be provided with gloves and bags. They can then head out on their own or join a group.

If you know of a certain area that needs attention, please call Diane Ketter at 412-462-3440.

Lunch will be provided for all volunteers at McBride Park at 12 noon.



Welcome to Vital Health Pharmacist
A Place for Consultation, Hormone Balance,
and Functional Health!



Hello, I am Susan Merenstein, Clinical Holistic Pharmacist with over 41 years of practice and owner of Murray Avenue Apothecary, a compounding and wellness pharmacy, as well as LabNaturals, Inc..

I have been studying hormones and consulting with women and men to help them discover an increased quality of life and health for over 21 years.

My mantra is to be aware of symptoms, get educated and take a proactive role in your health!

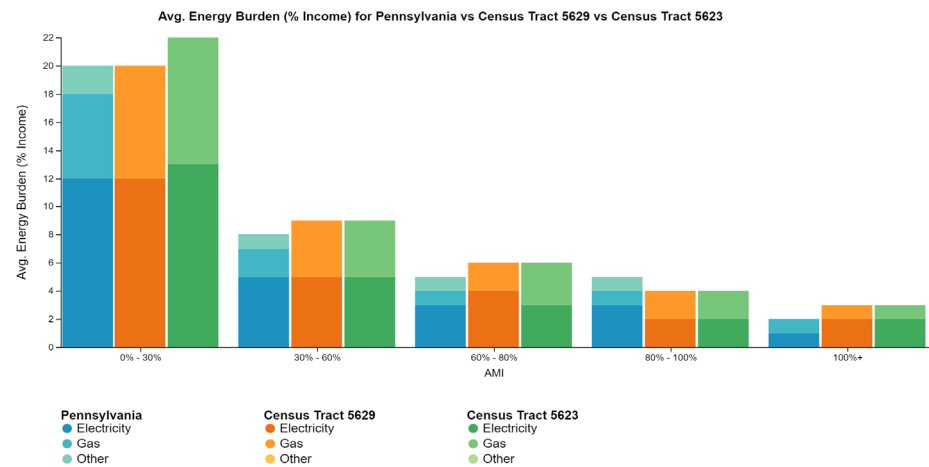


Learn more and shop test kits and hormones on
www.VitalHealthPharmacist.com

ENVIRONMENT

Solar can be a good solution for energy burdened households

By Juliet Martinez



Caption: Households with the lowest incomes in and around Hazelwood are paying about 20% of their income toward energy bills. Census tracts 5629 and 5623 encompass Greater Hazelwood, Lincoln Place and Hays Woods. Source: <https://www.energy.gov/eere/slsc/maps/lead-tool>

When you are in the lowest 30% for income and pay up to 1/5 of your household income on energy, keeping the light and heat on becomes a real challenge. The Allegheny County solar co-op could change that.

The national average energy burden - that is, percent of total income going to energy bills - for households that are not low-income is around 3%. Low-income households' energy burden averages 8.6% nationwide. But Department of Energy data shows that low-income residents in and around Hazelwood are paying up to 20% of their income on energy.

Solar co-ops lower energy costs for less

Solar power is clean and renewable, but can be too expensive for low-income households. The cooperative buying approach cuts those costs significantly so that low- and moderate-income homeowners can go solar.

Solar United Neighbors, City of Bridges Community Land Trust and Hazelwood Initiative have joined forces to make solar more accessible. Henry McKay of Solar United Neighbors told a recent community meeting about Allegheny County solar cooperative. Low-income families in Hazelwood could even get their solar panels for free (see page 17 for more information).

Mr. McKay said when families go solar, they do not have to hope energy prices will be low enough for them to pay. Solar energy gives them control over their energy bills.

A solar power system connected to the electric grid is called grid-tied, he explained. When you generate electricity from solar panels with a grid-tied system, you draw energy from the grid only when you need it. And when your panels are baking in the summer sun, cranking out more power than you need, your electric utility buys what you don't use. In exchange, you get credits that offset the charges for electricity you use during less sunny times.

Solar power reduces pollution and creates local green-economy jobs. And it keeps homeowners' utility bills low as energy prices rise.

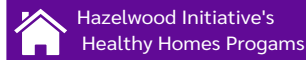
Energy prices are rising

Natural gas prices are going up, and so are extreme weather events.

About 40% of electricity is generated by burning natural gas. The Energy Information Administration's most recent Short Term Energy Outlook predicts that natural gas prices will continue to rise this year and next, reaching an eight-year high in 2023. Most families' light bills will reflect this cost increase.

But those who have rooftop solar panels will feel this a lot less because the majority of their electricity comes from sunlight.

And after extreme weather events, which are becoming more and more frequent due to climate change, solar power gets the lights on much faster. Last June, severe storms left 10,000 Duquesne Light customers without power, some for days. Households that go solar keep the lights on when power lines go down.



GARDEN FOR FUN, FOOD, & COMMUNITY

They say that "growing food is like growing money," and with the way prices at the store are going up, now is a good time to start gardening!



JOIN THE HAZELWOOD COMMUNITY GARDEN!

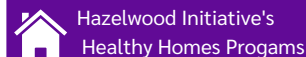
Membership is FREE, with a \$10 refundable deposit to secure your bed for the season. Garden beds are located behind Three Rivers Village School, at the intersection of Monongahela St. and Minden St.

Contact our Garden Manager, Matt Peters, to sign up:

gardens@hazelwoodinitiative.org

Contact Us For More Information :

O: 412-421-7234 C: 412-392-7427
ttaulton@hazelwoodinitiative.org
<https://hazelwoodinitiative.org>



PROTECT YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH

People today spend more time than ever before inside of buildings. These grants can help your home be healthy.



AIR QUALITY MONITORS

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced last year that air pollution causes nearly 7 million deaths each year. Pittsburgh ranks 4th nationally in air pollution deaths.

Take our survey about air quality in Hazelwood and you may qualify to receive a FREE Purple Air monitor!
<https://tinyurl.com/HZAQSURVEY>

Contact Us For More Information :

O: 412-421-7234 C: 412-392-7427
ttaulton@hazelwoodinitiative.org
<https://hazelwoodinitiative.org>



SOLAR CO-OP BULK BUY!

In partnership with Solar United Neighbors, City of Bridges Community Land Trust and others, we have started a solar co-op!

- ✓ LOWER YOUR ENERGY BILL
- ✓ BE RESILIENT AGAINST BLACKOUTS
- ✓ REDUCE AIR POLLUTION
- ✓ INCREASE THE VALUE OF YOUR HOME

Join us with **no obligation** to purchase. Low-income homeowners can apply for a **FREE installation**. Informational webinars on 3/6, 3/11, and 3/24.

Learn more or Donate:

<https://tinyurl.com/HZSOLAR>



LEAD TESTING & REMOVAL

There is NO SAFE LEVEL of lead. Even small amounts can cause permanent damage to your child's health and ability to learn.

- ✓ WINDOWS
- ✓ DOORS
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Call us to find out if you are eligible for a **\$12,000 grant** to have your home remediated. Homeowners and tenants with landlord approval can call us at (412) 421-7234 to apply.

Learn more:

<https://tinyurl.com/HZLEADSAFE>



SPECIAL ISSUE: EARTH DAY

- Continued from Front Page



work, determined to be part of a solution. She trained in permaculture, a sustainable land management practice, and even became a doula, knowing that, during the storm, many pregnant people couldn't make it to a hospital to give birth. Then she made a major life change: She moved to Pittsburgh to be closer to family after being away from the city for most of her life.

"When you have a disaster of such high magnitude like we had with Sandy, you can't rely on government to help you at that point," she says. "It's really about your community, the people you know, and people taking

care of each other."

Today, Taulton is the director of [community initiatives] for Hazelwood Initiative, a community development organization that works to balance commercial development with the needs of residents of one of Pittsburgh's "sacrifice zones," a neighborhood where community health was sacrificed for profit. In Hazelwood's case, it was home to one of the region's most productive steel mills, employing more than 5,000 workers during its heyday. Hazelwood Initiative is one of nine regional community changemakers spotlighted in We Are Nature: A New Natural History, Carnegie Museum of Natural History's new museum-wide experience that weaves fresh stories into existing dis-

plays to more clearly connect humans and the rest of nature.

"It's really about your community, the people you know, and people taking care of each other."

-Tiffany Taulton, Director of Community Initiatives, Hazelwood Initiative

"I thought, how much closer can you get to community and impacting their preparation for climate change than to work on community development?" says Taulton, who also teaches environmental justice at Duquesne University and is a member of Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey's transition committee on infrastructure and environment. "Hazelwood has been suffering a long economic decline. There's an opportunity to ask, 'What can we do here to bring it

back and to bring it back in a way that is sustainable and climate-resilient?'"

Among Hazelwood Initiative's priorities: Make the neighborhood more food-secure and reduce its carbon footprint by expanding community gardens; plant trees and protect the 183-acre Hazelwood greenway, contributing to better air quality, the prevention of landslides, and curbing the urban heat island effect; incorporate community solar power to make its energy grid more resilient; and strengthen partnerships with surrounding communities.

"When you're looking to make a difference on climate change, it's not just about your one community," says Taulton. "It's about the region as a whole."

In the We Are Nature interactive gallery spaces at the Museum of Natural History, Taulton and Hazelwood Initiative are featured among regional organizations who have a vision for a more positive climate future, with a focus on one of three areas: food and agriculture, outdoor recreation and green spaces, and energy and justice.

"We wanted to show visitors that other people care deeply about climate change, and that there are lots of ways to contribute and make a difference," says Taiji Nelson, senior program manager for the museum's Climate and Rural Systems Partnership (CRSP), a network of regional educators, scientists, and community leaders that fosters relationships and serves as a resource for rural communities coming to grips with the effects of climate change.

"Climate change is not just an ecological issue - it's tied to jobs, the economy, our health," Nelson notes. "It directly impacts people's lives, and there is something you can do today, right here in our region, to fight it."

Putting faith in each other

AJ Monsma, the community engagement coordinator at Garfield Community Farm, found her calling while in the Peace Corps in Rwanda, where she worked with street children to build kitchen gardens.

The experience drew her to the farm, another community changemaker visitors will learn about in the We Are Nature experience. Garfield Community Farm began a decade ago as three acres of abandoned and degraded land, and today is one of Pittsburgh's most productive urban farms. Part of its mission: to grow and learn about food and the earth, alongside its neighbors, particularly its youngest residents.

"The land was torn-down housing, and it was very desolate," explains Monsma. "It was an intentional choice to show folks what can happen if you steward a place faithfully over the years. I love that that's our beginning because that's what we try and do with people, with land, with our relationship with food, with each other, and with the Earth - restore and heal."

"It was an intentional choice to show folks what can happen if you steward a place faithfully over the years."

-AJ Monsma, Community Engagement Coordinator, Garfield Community Farm

The farm's permaculture practice focuses on three core ethics: people care, Earth care, and "fair share," says Monsma, which means equitably sharing resources.

"We're not here to just grow food and hand it out, we're not here just to have fun events" Monsma says. "We're here for that healing and restoration in a very ho-

SPECIAL ISSUE: EARTH DAY

listic way. Part of the faith side of it is just having this place where everyone feels safe no matter where they're coming from - whether that's physically, mentally, spiritually. But they know they can be here and find sanctuary, whatever sanctuary means to them."

Affiliated with the Open Door Presbyterian Church, the farm serves as a sustainable, organic produce source and community green space for local residents as well as a valuable educational tool about urban garden care, harvesting, and accessibility. It gets its produce into the hands of its neighbors in three key ways: a weekly farm stand, donations to a local food pantry, and a local community-supported agriculture (CSA) program.

"When COVID hit, the folks who seemed to be the most resilient were those who had strong relationships with a community that was local, and that will be the same with climate change. Your community will help you if you need a place to stay, if you need food. Caring for the Earth and for people is bound up together," she says.

Protect, preserve, restore

Among those regional organizations making a measurable difference in the climate fight are three groups that have been partnering with the museum for several years through its CRSP initiative: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Walnut Hill Farm in Mercer County, and the Mountain Watershed Association located in the Laurel Highlands.

Ashley Funk, the executive director of the Mountain Watershed Association, grew up playing in an ash dump near her backyard and exploring the abandoned coke and coal mine operations nearby.

As the seventh generation in her family to live in the Laurel Highlands, a moun-

tainous region about an hour east of Pittsburgh, she was aware of the influence the coal industry - a major resource for Pittsburgh steel - had on her community.

As she got older, she started to recognize its environmental impacts, both on the local environment and on the climate. At 14, she organized litter pickups and recycling events. At 17, she joined efforts to file a lawsuit against the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for failing to protect residents' rights to a livable environment by not taking action to mitigate climate change.

Today, while mining is no longer the main industry in the area and the creeks no longer run orange, people in the community are still losing their homes and their drinking water to the deep coal mines.

Funk and the small staff of the community-based nonprofit are laser-focused on the protection, preservation, and restoration of the Indian Creek and greater Yougheny River watersheds.

"Caring for the Earth and for people is bound up together."

-Stacey Magda

"The majority of residents rely on well and spring water," says Stacey Magda, a community organizer with the Mountain Watershed Association. "And if we lose that, what do we have? We wait the years and years and years and increased tax dollars to be tapped into municipal water, which we don't want."

"If we don't fight these impacts, what will be left of the people of the Laurel Highlands," she asks.

From remediating abandoned mine discharges to advocating for increased stream protections and tighter regulations on shale gas development, the Mountain Watershed team promotes cooperative community

stewardship and sound environmental management.

"When communities come together, enormous things happen," says Magda, noting that volunteers are always needed. "Not only are we better connected to each other, but we get things done. So, remember - the independent things that you do on your own are real and respected. But take it the next level and get involved in your community to grow your efforts as a unit."

"If we don't fight these impacts, what will be left of the people of the Laurel Highlands?"

-Stacey Magda, Community Organizer with the Mountain Watershed Association

There's no doubt that Tiffany Taulton is thinking about the health of the entire Pittsburgh region, too. Having attended city planning meetings in New York

post-Sandy, she heard a lot about "building back better." But when she looked around rooms of 500 or so attendees, she saw only a handful of people of color.

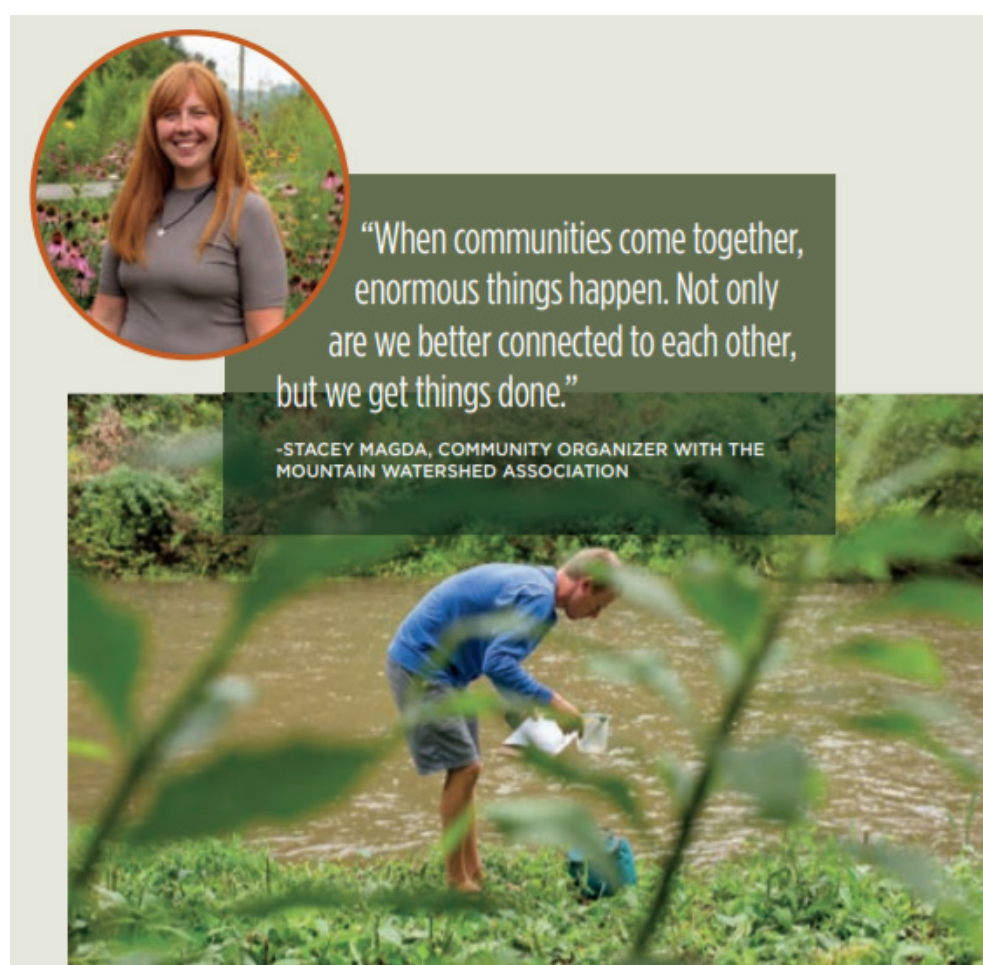
"Climate change is affecting communities of color, but communities of color are not in on the decisions about how we're planning and preparing for climate change, how we're mitigating and adapting, and it really got to me," Taulton says. It motivated her to join Hazelwood Initiative with boots on the ground. "I decided I was going to be that person to be involved and communicate to people who look like me and make sure they are part of these decisions."

"We have an opportunity to do something special, not just for Hazelwood but for the city as a whole - to invest in climate resistance, to invest in clean air for the city, to reduce asthma and flooding and landslides. As we saw with the terrible flood-

ing in 2017 and 2018, Pittsburgh's infrastructure is not ready, and the government budget is not ready to help that many people repair and save their homes from landslides. We need to prepare the tree cover for the entire city."

There are many people and groups working in our region to transform human relationships with nature and build a more just future for everyone. To share their stories, Carnegie Museum of Natural History partnered with local documentarians Michael Pisano, David Kelley, Jamen Thurmond, and Di-ay Battad, who captured the images and quotes of community members for the We Are Nature exhibit.

This article first appeared in Carnegie Magazine and is reprinted here with permission.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Squonk Opera brings a sense of wonder and play to Earth Day

By Juliet Martinez



Photo by John Altdorfer for Squonk Opera

From their first show with cranes and earthmovers in a Pittsburgh junkyard, to their current project where music pairs with giant purple puppet hands, Squonk Opera has been focused on big, bold shows.

The ensemble will be bringing their show, Hand to Hand, to Hazelwood for the Earth Day festival on April 23. In March, I video-chatted with two members of the group about the upcoming performance.

“What we try to do with our art is kind of empower the audience because it requires them to make their own through-line through the show. It can mean many things to many different people.”

- Steven O’Hearn, Squonk co-founder, artistic co-director

Steve O’Hearn and his partner Jackie Dempsey are co-artistic directors. They have been the heart of Squonk Opera for the last 30 years. She writes the music and he designs the shows. They have received 10 National Endowment for the Arts grants, and have performed at the Lincoln and Kennedy centers. Their show will tour from Calgary, Alberta, to Fort Worth and Providence

this summer, .

“We’ve always been proudly Pittsburghers,” Mr. O’Hearn said. “Our notion with this particular effort with the Pittsburgh shows is that every neighborhood is its own cultural district. In fact, the pretense that the cultural district defines Pittsburgh is ludicrous, to our minds.”

The group used to do one or two shows a year in Pittsburgh, but now they perform locally from spring to fall throughout the city. Their first show for 2022 will be in Hazelwood.

Kelsey Robinson is in her second

season as the outreach director for Squonk. She also helps set up the shows and is one of the puppeteers operating the giant hands.

I asked them how a show like Squonk can help people think differently about the environment.

“We don’t preach,” Mr. O’Hearn said. “What we try to do with our art,” he said, “is kind of empower the audience because it requires them to make their own through-line through the show. It can mean many things to many different people.”

Ms. Robinson added that the group

includes certain environmentally-friendly practices in their rider, like not using plastic water bottles. But the performance offers audiences a space to be hopeful instead of trying to make them change.

“Our way of doing it isn’t beating people over the head with a message,” she said, “but to invite them into something that’s playful, into a world of wonder, where they can start to connect with other people, start to imagine a different future.”

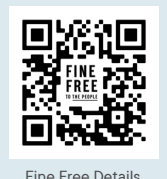
IT’S OFFICIAL

WE ARE NOW FINE FREE!

If you have... err, um “had” any fines on your account, you may want to look again. It may have taken 125 years (better late than never), but Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh is officially FINE FREE and we could not be more excited about it!

If fines have been keeping you away we want to see you back in our Libraries. We miss you and we know you miss us. We promise, it is as easy as it sounds. Judgment free, guilt free and hassle free. Oh yeah... and, of course, FINE FREE.

carnegielibrary.org



Fine Free Details

(FINE) FREE TO THE PEOPLE



COMMUNITY NEWS

CKPgh: Guest Chef dinners are back!

By Bailyn Brink

Guest Chef dinners are returning to Community Kitchen Pittsburgh!

Here at CKPgh, we use food as the foundation to change lives and strengthen communities. In pursuit of this mission, we invite the pioneers of Pittsburgh's food industry into our kitchen to team up with our students and create beautiful and delicious meals. Guest Chef events support our culinary training program, giving our students the opportunity to work with leading chefs from around the city. They also give chefs the opportunity to find their

next hire. These dinners may last a few hours, but the connections they make can create long-term careers.

Join us in our intimate kitchen space to enjoy a three- or four-course dinner with notable chefs from Pittsburgh's restaurant scene working with our students. We hope to return to holding these events once a month. All revenues and donations from Guest Chef dinners go back into our paid job training and placement programming.

Seating is limited and tickets will sell out fast. Check out ckpgh.org or call (412) 246-4736 for more information. Dates are forthcoming.



Pittsburgh Chef Scott Walton with CKPgh students at a pre-pandemic Guest Chef dinner. Photo courtesy of Community Kitchen Pittsburgh

Six-word stories and poems

Each month, Homepage readers send in six-word stories and poems. Some imaginative readers also submit ideas for the following month's prompts. Please send your six-word poems and stories, and ideas for May's prompts, to jmartinez@hazelwoodinitiative.org by **April 8**.

There are no wrong answers, just wrong word counts! Here we go...

Favorite Pastime with a Loved One

Walk, converse,
laugh, love.
Miss him.
- Audrey N. Glickman

You and me
Enjoying High Tea
- MaryAnn Majcher

Earth Day

Fire, ice, irreparability, death:
our failure.
- Audrey N. Glickman

Plant a tree
Pick up debris
- MaryAnn Majcher

Planning a vegetable garden

Roil the soil
Seed and weed
- MaryAnn Majcher

Planning a summer vacation

Wildwood Crest
Going there's the best
- MaryAnn Majcher

Prompts for May:

Springtime delights
Mother's love
Wedding planning



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SCHOOL UPDATES

Propel Hazelwood celebrates scholars' talent, creativity and confidence

By Propel Hazelwood

Propel Schools are known for having a fully-valued arts program. Here at Propel Hazelwood, this philosophy is made a reality through art, music, gym and sessions with visiting artists.

Arts are woven into our core curriculum at Propel Hazelwood in order to develop creative problem-solving skills, boost critical thinking, and increase verbal skills.

This trimester, Propel Hazelwood scholars worked with Attack Theatre teaching artists Tricia Kohler and Ethan Gwynn to prepare dances for our school's Celebration of Learning on March 4.

Each homeroom danced to popular music, including "Control" by Janet Jackson, "Faith" by Stevie Wonder featuring Ariana Grande, and "What's My Name" by China Anne McClain.

Creative Arts Advisor, Brittany Tague, recognized the second grade for "dancing confidently and inde-

pendently." The scholars literally lit up the stage with a new rainbow lightboard.

On March 16, visiting artists from Hip-Hop on L.O.C.K. began working with scholars to create songs and music videos.

Propel Hazelwood Middle School scholars performed for Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey and other city officials earlier in February at a Greater Hazelwood Community Council meeting. The group of scholars introduced themselves and the historic figure they were studying, and performed an acapella rendition of "Lift Every Voice and Sing," also known as "The Black National Anthem."

Their performance was met with a standing ovation and handshakes from Mayor Gainey and Councilman Corey O'Connor. Assistant Principal Darnell Bonner said, "It was a joy watching and listening to our scholars celebrate Black history through song."



Highlights of Propel Hazelwood's Celebration of Learning on March 4. Photos courtesy of Propel Hazelwood

TRVS students clean up, care for and learn about the environment

By Samara Gibson,
TRVS Student



Masoud Sayles of Grounded Pittsburgh in the garden with Three Rivers Village School students. Photo by Lauren McNulty

Students at Three Rivers Village School are concerned about environmental issues and are trying to find ways we can help the environment, as members of both our school and the greater Hazelwood community.

Each Friday, TRVS students volunteer to pick up trash in the neighborhood surrounding our school. Trash collection is a small way we can help protect the environment and keep our Hazelwood green spaces clean.

In March, students were excited to receive a garden plot in the Hazelwood Community Garden to tend and manage for the upcoming season. Students will continue to meet with Matt Peters, manager of the garden, to learn about the garden and ways our school can be good stewards to the land. Being able to grow food to cook with our Kitch-

en Co-Op is something students are really looking forward to this year.

The Garden Co-Op recently met with Ashley Seiler and Masoud Sayles from Grounded Pittsburgh to learn more about the rain garden their organization planted on our school's front lawn. The rain garden helps collect rainwater runoff and prevent soil erosion, as well as being a food source for birds, insects and animals. We learned that mint, wild sage, horseradish, echinacea, yarrow and other plants, trees and shrubs are growing in the Rain Garden. TRVS students will manage the Rain Garden so that it will continue to thrive for many years to come.

TRVS will be taking part in the Hazelwood Earth Day events. If you're there, please stop over to our table to learn more about our school!



Highlights of Propel Hazelwood's Celebration of Learning on March 4. Photos courtesy of Propel Hazelwood



Schools in our circulation area are invited to share their news with the community through The Homepage every month. If you would like to update the community about a school, email jmartinez@hazelwoodinitiative.org.

LOCAL CHARACTER

Ask E: What is the point of Earth Day?



Photo courtesy of Erika Johnson

Dear E,

I feel dumb asking this, but what is the point of Earth Day? How am I supposed to make a difference on this one day that goes just as quickly as it comes?

Signed,
Eco-curious

Dear Eco-curious,

As my middle school teachers used to say, “No question is a dumb question.” We are all in the process of learning how to exist on this planet with the current pandemic. Many of us are navigating how to exist and live in a way that benefits the health and well-being of ourselves and others amidst our ever-changing environments.

Earth day is somewhat the same. The purpose is to spread awareness to shift your consciousness on how to navigate living your life while also benefiting the health and well-being of the planet.

In 1970 a senator named Gaylord Nelson created and founded ‘Earth Day’ so that environmental issues would be seen as an urgent matter and get put on the national agenda. Back then it wasn’t an important issue to Congress, but his efforts helped to create a sector called the Environmental Protection Agency that regulates laws like the Clean Air and Water Acts to help protect our ecosystem and the effects of technological and industrial advancements.

In 2020, when Covid was in full force and the whole world was ba-

sically shut down, CNN reported that air quality improved in 84% of countries around the world. It was a substantial decrease and was proof that such drastic global environmental change can happen in a short period of time when there is a collective effort.

Since nobody wants to be in lock down again, here are some things I have found that you can do and share with your family, friends and close networks to raise the level of urgency around keeping our earth as healthy as possible. The more that you share what you’re doing with others, the more you can contribute to Earth Day and its purpose of spreading awareness so that every small effort will eventually make a big impact.

If your destination is less than a mile away, walk or bike in style and reduce idle time with the car running. This lowers your carbon footprint, or how much you contribute to climate change.

Don’t forget the 3 R’s: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. You can also compost to reduce methane coming out of landfills.

Volunteer or donate to organizations like the Student Conservation Association and sign up for newsletters to get involved and educated about what they’re doing.

Editor’s notes: To ask E for advice, email your confidential question to jmartinez@hazelwoodinitiative.org. To have your food and yard waste collected for composting, go to <http://tinyurl.com/HazelwoodFRS>. See Page 9 to learn about reducing utility bills through solar power.

Straight out of Hazelwood: Tiffany C. Fuller

By Andrea Coleman

Tiffany C. Fuller, also known as Tibba, was born and raised in Hazelwood by Vernessa and Durwin Fuller Sr. Her family also consists of her siblings Danielle Fuller-Outlaw and Durwin Fuller Jr.

She attended the former Burgwin Elementary School (now Propel-Charter School), and then Sterrett Classical Academy Middle School, and graduated from Taylor Allder-dice High School, all in Pittsburgh.

Her employment with the original Hazelwood Branch of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh as a young-woman still in high school, and during the summer while attending college, influenced her highly. She helped the neighborhood children with their homework assignments and research papers. She also attributes her love of literacy to helping patrons with resources they needed. She created programs for the children in the community, offering classes in Microsoft Word, Excel, and the electronic catalog. She loved her work at the library and helping people from her community.

Tiffany went on to pursue formal education at Edinboro University in Pennsylvania, earning her Bachelor of Science degree in business administration. She also ventured on to receive her Master of Arts degree in management and leadership from Liberty University.

In 2013, after being employed with BNY Mellon, her job led her to relocate to Florida, where she currently resides. She has been with the



Photo courtesy of Tiffany Fuller

company for 15 years, and holds the title of Lead Analyst.

Tiffany also holds a license as a life insurance agent, and had her first book, “Breathe God: A Seven Day Journey To Experience God,” published in 2021.

She is now working on her second book. She says for the future, “I would like to help more people achieve their financial goals, and encourage others that they can write a book too.”

In conclusion, she says, “I would like to be a positive role model to my younger family members, and to show them that there is no limit to what they can do.”

Her motto is, “Dream big, and do not forget where you came from.” Straight OUTTA Hazelwood...

Straight Out of Hazelwood is a new series of profiles written by Andrea Coleman, a lifelong Hazelwood resident and founder of the Garden of Different Abilities.



Veterans of Foreign Wars Memorial Day Parade

May 30th, 2022 10:00 A.M.

BEGIN: Intersection of Plaport and Interboro Avenues
CLOSING: Solemn memorial service on the Mifflin School lawn

Want to participate? Call Jim Takacs, **412-464-1917**, by May 18, 2022. Please call after 4:00 P.M.

We invite and encourage all veterans to come and participate in the parade in honor of our fallen comrades

Veterans of Foreign Wars Catherine Eckert Post 5312 Lincoln Place, Pittsburgh, PA

GARDEN AND SUSTAINABILITY

Plant native pawpaws to bring the butterflies back

By Gabrielle Marsden

In the early 20th century, the zebra swallowtail disappeared from Pittsburgh. The zebra swallowtail is a lovely butterfly that depends upon the pawpaw tree as its host plant. It lays its eggs on pawpaw leaves, and the caterpillars that hatch eat nothing but pawpaw leaves. They molt several times until they pupate, forming a chrysalis from which a butterfly emerges.

Wild pawpaws still exist in and around Pittsburgh, but are quite rare. The pawpaw tree is famous for its large green fruit. The pawpaw and the zebra swallowtail evolved together with the mastodon who helped spread pawpaws by devouring the fruit whole and distributing seeds as herds cavorted through the valleys and hollows. Mastodons are no more, but Native Americans took a liking to pawpaws and cultivated them. After colonization, settlers enjoyed them as well.

From what little information there is, the pawpaws and zebra swallowtails were doing fine in Pittsburgh until the 1870s, despite the industries that already thrived here. Then, a handful of industrialists, most famously Andrew Carnegie, and Jones and Laughlin here in Hazelwood, used vertical integration to consolidate all aspects of the steel industry, from the coal mines, railroads, coke ovens, and every step needed to produce steel. Pawpaw patches were destroyed en masse.

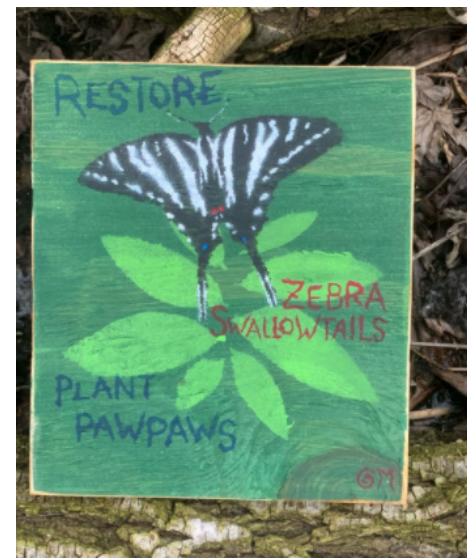
In Hazelwood, there is a short street called Pawpaw Way. It replaced a small, unnamed run shown on the 1882 map. The 1890 map shows the short street and new houses built as the railroad yard and the J & L steel mill were being built in 1886. That probably is when the zebra swallowtail disappeared from Hazelwood and surrounding areas.

Pawpaws and butterflies were definitely not a concern for any industrialist. So when pawpaws, butterflies

and other living plants and creatures disappeared, it didn't matter to them. My research on when the zebra swallowtail disappeared has very scant documentation. Based on what little I could find, the zebra swallowtail disappeared entirely from Pittsburgh by 1930, possibly decades earlier.

Because pawpaws are what is called an anachronistic tree, it is harder for them to return. Other plants have returned to areas where they were absent because they spread via birds, the wind, and other passive ways that do not require mastodons or human intervention. Because there are no mastodons, human intervention is the only way to restore them.

As far as zebra swallowtails are concerned, if you drive an hour south or west of the city, you can find them. They will find their way back to Pittsburgh – and Hazelwood – if we go to the limits of their range and restore the pawpaw patches that used to line the waterways. The but-



Painting by Gabrielle Marsden

terflies then can follow these pawpaw trails. This will take a while, but let's start by planting a few pawpaws in Hazelwood. It will be so nice to welcome the zebra swallowtail home.

Gabrielle Marsden is a butterfly ambassador and archaeological field technician who is always looking for a reason to be outside walking or paddling around.

BIG BLUE EARTH DAY FESTIVAL

**SATURDAY
APRIL 23**

**On Second Ave.
Hazelwood**

10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.



Featuring
SQUONK OPERA
LIVE MUSIC & GIANT PUPPETS

PLUS:

- Food trucks
- Kids' activities



Events

10:00 a.m. Flower planting at the Gazebo (Second Avenue and Johnston)

Side Stage - 4900 Block of Second Avenue

11:30 a.m. Athens County Carload with Square

Dance led by Allison Burd

1:00 p.m. Larry and Friend

(Larry Estes and Arnold Stagger)

3:00 p.m. 4th River Music Collective

Main Stage - 4900 Block of Second Avenue

5:00 Squonk Opera

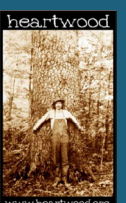
For more information, go to

<https://www.facebook.com/hazelwoodinitiative>

Thank you Earth Day sponsors!



grounded



COMMUNITY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Solar co-op brings power to the people

By Juliet Martinez

Hazelwood Initiative, City of Bridges Community Land Trust and Solar United Neighbors have teamed up to help homeowners in Greater Hazelwood lower their energy costs through a new affordable model of going solar. At Hazelwood Initiative's March community meeting, Henry McKay of Solar United Neighbors explained that lower-income households in Allegheny County have the sixth highest energy burden in the country. They spend an average of 6% of their household income on heat and light, while the national average is 3.5%.

And anyone in Allegheny County can join the co-op to get cheaper rooftop solar panels. The more people who join, the lower the cost will be for each household. This will make cooperative buying, a much cheaper way to go solar, available to residents of Hazelwood. Low-income families in Hazelwood can even apply to get free rooftop solar panels and installation.

If you receive LIHEAP, your electric bill may not go down with solar panels. And if your roof is more than 10 years old, you run the risk of having to have solar panels removed and reinstalled when you replace your roof.

To learn more about the solar co-op, sign up for an info session, or join, visit www.solarunitedneighbors.org/allegheny

Join the Allegheny County SUN Volunteer Meeting
Tuesday April 5 from 7-8 p.m.

To donate or help raise money to support more free solar installations, visit www.solarunitedneighbors.org/hazelwood

Any questions? Email PAteam@solarunitedneighbors.org
See page 9 for more on how solar can reduce your energy burden.

PWSA Hazelwood Avenue water main replacement

PWSA representatives laid out the plan for water main replacement on Hazelwood Avenue between Bigelow and Sylvan avenues. In addition to installing a new, larger diameter main water service line, they will replace old public lead service lines as well as private lead service lines.

Lead can leach from pipes into the water and cause lead poisoning. Installing non-lead pipes will improve water quality.

Preparation for the replacement began on March 14. The work is expected to last about 16 weeks, ending in mid-July. Once trenching begins, Hazelwood Avenue will be restricted to one lane from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and some Saturdays. Flaggers will manage traffic during the work day.

If your private water service line is lead, PWSA will replace it at no cost to you. PWSA sent out information packets to the affected residents; if you have not received yours, please contact Mora McLaughlin, Construction Communications Project Manager at Mmclaughlin@pgh2o.com or (412) 689-4137.

Important note: If you do not sign the agreement to have your line replaced, YOUR WATER WILL BE SHUT OFF. Partial line replacement temporarily raises the lead levels in your water. This is a health hazard.

The contractors will disrupt your property as little as possible and do a trenchless pipe replacement if at all possible. However, the homeowner or a representative must be present for the work. If they must dig a trench, they will backfill it, but not replace landscaping, retaining walls or other ground they disturbed.

PWSA enhanced customer assistance programs

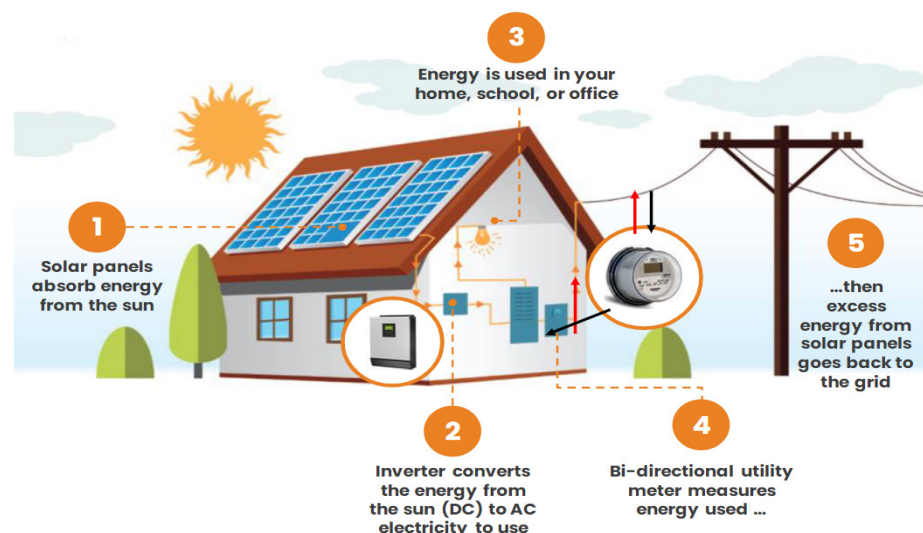
Go to <https://pgh2o.com/residential-commercial-customers/customer-assistance-programs> for full information.

Bill discount program

- Eligible households are at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- Eliminates all fixed charges and 85% of the stormwater fee from your bill
- Half off your water usage rates
- \$30 monthly credit to reduce past due balances
- Your water will never be shut off in the winter

Hardship grant

Provides cash grants up to \$300 per year for customers at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. Grants are now available to PWSA's sewage-only customers to apply to past due wastewater charges.



Net metering means households use electricity from the grid when they need to and sell energy back to the grid when they have extra. Image courtesy of Solar United Neighbors

Go to <https://pgh2o.com/residential-commercial-customers/customer-assistance-programs/hardship-grant-program> for more information.

ALCOSAN clean water

Grant of \$40 every three months towards your water bill. For more information, visit <https://www.alcosan.org/our-customers/bill-pay-assistance>. Apply at <https://www.dollarenergy.org/>.

Find more assistance programs in the RESOURCES section on Pages 3-4.

Redistricting update

Khalif Ali, executive director of

Pennsylvania Common Cause, addressed the community meeting about the redistricting process and the current status of redistricting.

Mr. Ali said the purpose of redistricting is to adjust district boundaries so their populations are about even after each census. The Voting Rights Act requires districts to be drawn in such a way that minority communities are together so their voices can be heard. Contact kali@commoncause.org with questions.

Editor's note: The state supreme court ruled in favor of the new redistricting map for Pennsylvania on March 16.

DONATE TO THE HAZELWOOD FLEA MARKET

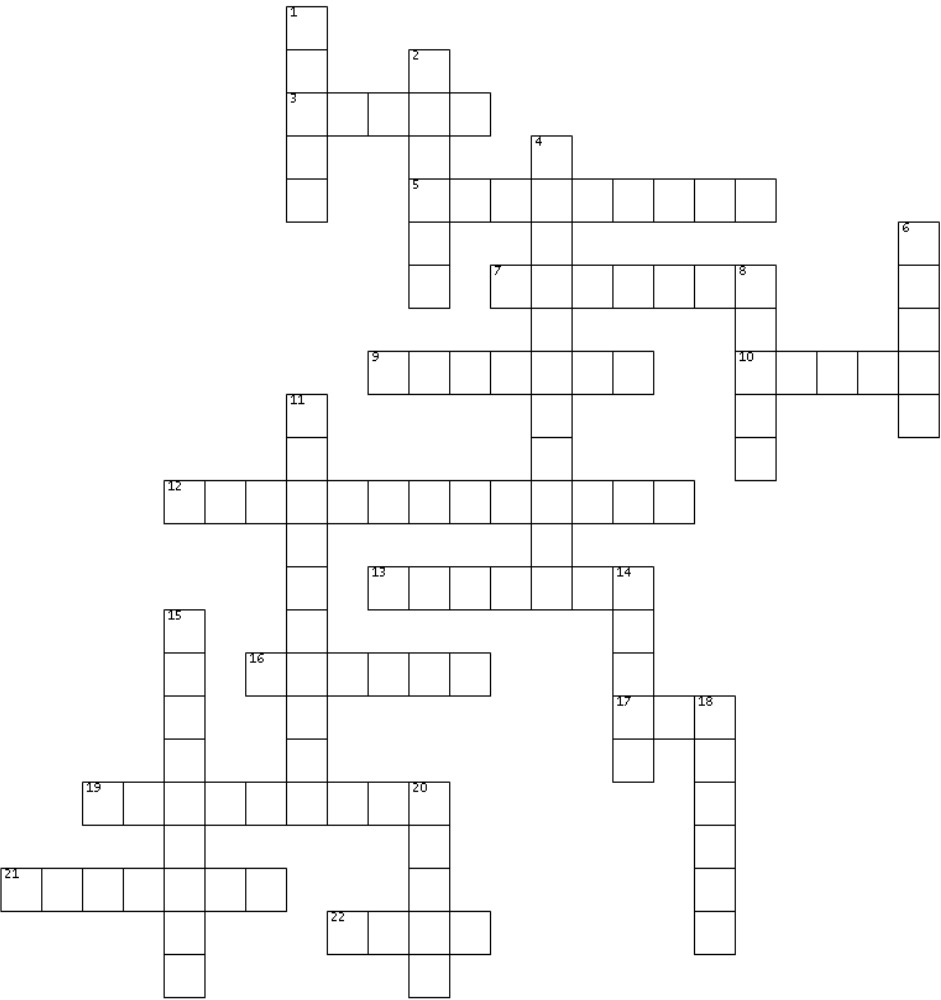
PLEASE TAKE DONATIONS TO THE SPARTAN CENTER!

134 E Elizabeth St, Pittsburgh, PA 15207

Questions? Call Joe Hepner at (412) 910-5452

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Crossword puzzle



ACROSS

3. We all have the right to breathe air that is this

5. Contamination that makes air and water unsafe for humans and wild-life

7. What to do with cans, glass jars, paper and cardboard after use

9. April showers bring May _____.

10. Using something again instead of throwing it away

12. Bad air quality can cause these for pregnant people

13. Wild places whose trees cool our neighborhood and give us oxygen

16. Air pollution can trigger symptoms of this illness and cause breathing problems

17. What we all breathe

19. Growing your own food

21. A word that means fairness

DOWN

1. Also known as killer whales

2. A native fruit tree that zebra swallowtail butterflies depend on.

4. Many people in Hazelwood signed up to receive a free bush to grow these fruits

6. 60% of our bodies and 70% of the Earth is this

8. The planet we all share

11. Bad air quality can cause this and other mental illnesses

14. Using the sun to generate electricity

15. Having a lot of kinds of people or organisms, often seen alongside the word “equity”

18. Creating less waste by using fewer disposable items

20. Environmentally friendly, or the color of trees in spring

22. Something you can plant to help our urban forest canopy thrive

STR8TS

Medium

		2						
		9		7				1
					4	6		3
9		7			3			
					9			
	5	6	7					
	4			1			6	
2					5			

SUDOKU

Very Hard

9					4	2		6
	6	2			9		5	3
8						7		
	2	1		5		3	8	
		9						1
6	5		7			9	3	
1		3	8					7

How to beat **Str8ts** – Like Sudoku, no single number 1 to 9 can repeat in any row or column. But... rows and columns are divided by black squares into **compartments**. Each compartment must form a **straight** - a set of numbers with **no gaps** but it can be in any order, eg [7,6,9,8]. Clues in black cells remove that number as an option in that row and column, and are not part of any straight. Glance at the solution to see how 'straights' are formed.

2	1		4	5
6	4	5	3	2
4	5		2	1
4	3	6	2	1
3	5	2	1	4
2	1	3		

For many strategies, hints and tips, visit www.sudokuwiki.org for Sudoku and www.str8ts.com for Str8ts.

If you like Str8ts and other puzzles, check out our books, iPhone/iPad Apps and much more on our store.

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- Colwell Automotive.....(412) 422-2658
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- Jimmy Cohen Plumbing,Heating and Mechanical.....(412) 421-2208
- John D. O'Connor & Son Funeral Home.....(412) 521-8116
- 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
- Lytle Cafe.....(412) 421-4881
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- Phyl's Cleaning and De'cor.....(412) 708-3586
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- Reed's Sweet Treats.....(412) 449-9338
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COMMUNITY VOICES

Largest predation event in history reveals orcas’ terrifying intelligence

By Colton Hutchins,
TRVS student

This past month marked an incredible discovery in marine biology. The public now has footage of the largest known predation event, not just in human history, but in the history of our world. The implications are incredibly far-reaching. This not only reveals fallibility in creatures scientists once thought to be living juggernauts, the blue whale, but also shows the cunning and, quite honestly, terrifying intelligence of one of the largest predators that we know of, the orca.

The most important part of this discovery isn’t the sheer power of the killer whales, it is what has been revealed about their intelligence.

Media such as Free Willy and the awe-inspiring shows at locations like Sea World have created a sense of wonderment around orcas, and humanized them as well, due to the public's increasing awareness of how mistreated they were in captivity. While this sense of humanization is a great step forward for animal rights activists, it has a two-pronged effect because it inherently removes the sense of danger around these animals. These majestic creatures don’t typically attack humans, as pointed out by marine biologist Sergio Diniz: “They do not recognize humans as regular sources of food... there are too few humans diving where they live... They are [also] very intelligent... They [know] we do not have the fat proportion to make us a good meal.”

Yet it now seems that they are the apex predators.

On February 3, groundbreaking footage was released on the Science News YouTube channel. This video soon spread across the world, with marine biologists aghast at the implications. For the first time on record, the blue whale had been bested. The largest animal ever to have lived, one once thought to be unkillable, had finally become another creature's prey. Of course,

orcas, also known as killer whales, had been seen harassing blue whales before, but never, on record, have they been thought to kill and eat such large prey. The minimum known mass for an adult blue whale, 290,000 pounds, is still 32-33 times larger than the largest orca, which weighs in at around 8,800 pounds. That's equivalent to a human hunting squad taking down a white rhino, which weighs about two tons.

But the most important part of this discovery isn’t the sheer power of the killer whale, it is what has been revealed about their intelligence. For a long time, humanity has known how intelligent oceanic mammals such as the orca really are, helping lead to further animal rights advocacy. There is no question that many whales (and whale subsets like dolphins) have primate-level knowledge. But time and time again, orcas have proven themselves to be as, if not more, intelligent than humans. Orcas have been documented dissecting Great Whites, specifically aiming for the liver, a largely nutritious organ, knocking seals off the ice with water, and communicating intellectually, developing and enacting specific hunting plans. This, however, takes it to a new level. They knew that they could not overpower the whale simply by biting at it like most other predators. Instead, they grappled the whale's fins, collectively driving it further down into the water, until it drowned. Not only did this tactic work, but it also gave them direct access to pure, nutritious muscle, in the form of the tongue. As a blue whale drowns, it opens its mouth.

The largest animal ever to have lived, one once thought to be unkillable, had finally become another creature's prey.

So why does this matter? This predation event has reinforced the idea that we are not the only intelligent species on this planet. No doubt, this event will continue to be cited in textbooks for years to come, and hopefully, it will inspire tomorrow's marine biologists.



Two killer whales photographed off of Unimak Island, eastern Aleutian Islands, Alaska. Photo by Robert Pitman for NOAA. Image source: <https://apps-afsc.fisheries.noaa.gov/Quarterly/amj2005/images/killerwhales.jpg>

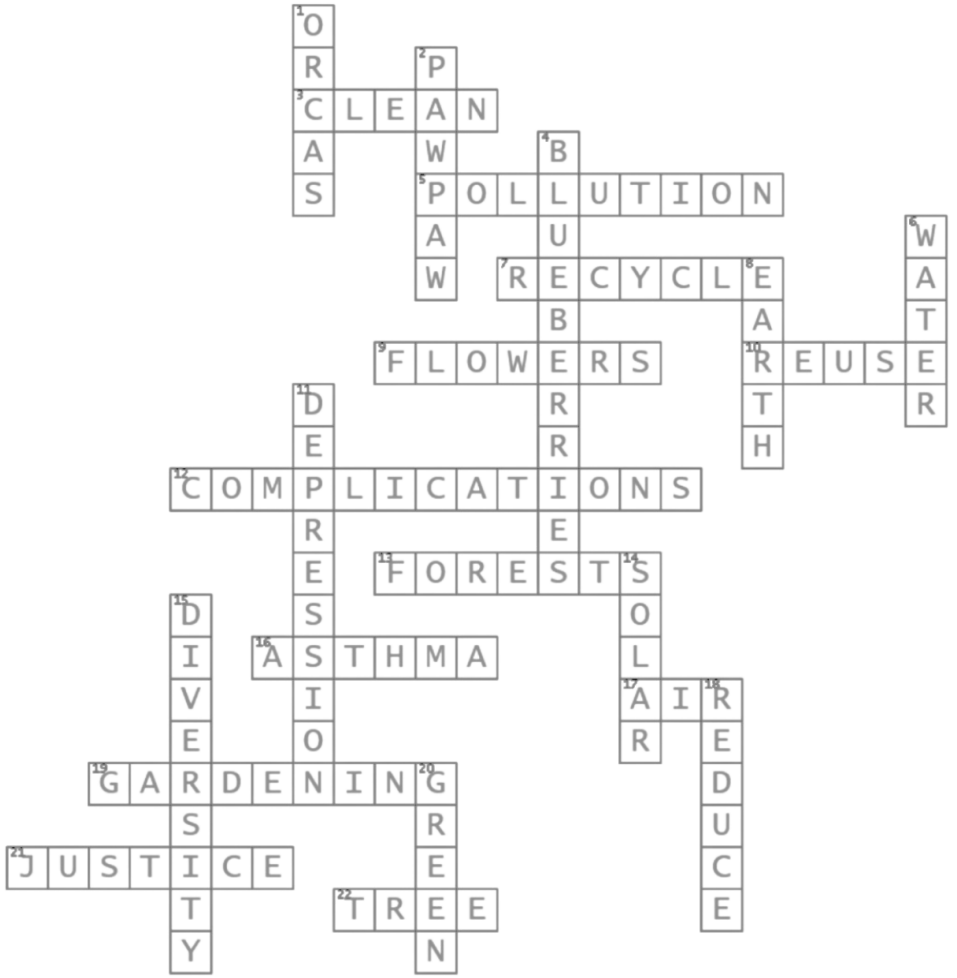
Puzzle keys

Str8ts Solution

3	2			6	7		8	9
4	3	2	9	8	6	5	7	
	6	9	8	7		4	5	1
7	9	8		5	4	6	2	3
9	8	7	6		3	2	1	4
8	7		5	4	9	1	3	2
	5	6	7	2	1	3	4	
	4	5	3	1	2		6	7
2	1		4	3	5		9	8

Sudoku Solution

9	8	7	5	3	4	2	1	6
4	6	2	1	7	9	8	5	3
3	1	5	6	2	8	4	7	9
8	4	6	2	1	3	7	9	5
7	2	1	9	5	6	3	8	4
5	3	9	4	8	7	6	2	1
2	7	4	3	9	5	1	6	8
6	5	8	7	4	1	9	3	2
1	9	3	8	6	2	5	4	7



The Community Voices section of The Homepage showcases readers’ diverse perspectives and experiences. The opinions expressed here are the author’s alone and do not reflect the views or policies of The Homepage or its publisher, Hazelwood Initiative, Inc.