RISE UP!

“There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right.” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In response to the recent deaths of black people at the hands of police, including Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd and Manuel Ellis, thousands of Tacomans have taken to the streets to protest police brutality and institutional racism that continues to prevail in this country.

Over the past two weeks, protests at Wright Park, the University of Puget Sound, Wapato Park, Downtown Tacoma and others have brought people together to declare that Black Lives Matter. An important message here and around the country.

Peaceful protests and other activities continue here in Tacoma. You can see pictures from the protest at Wright Park (above and on page 9) and read about 6 Feet Under at People’s Park on page 3. You’ll also hear voices speaking against injustices (“I Can’t Breathe”, page 3) and sharing experiences (Kaleidoscope, page 9) in this edition of the Hilltop Action Journal.

Peaceful Protest in Tacoma

“You’re not to be so blind with patriotism that you can’t face reality. Wrong is wrong, no matter who does it or says it.” Malcolm X

Wright Park Protest photograph courtesy of Saven Hoff.

6 Feet in the Street at People’s Park,
Community Praying Together,
By Harlan Shoop, page 3

“I Can’t Breathe,”A poem dedicated to George Floyd and his family, By Bethany ‘B.Lyte’ Montgomery, page 3

Kaleidoscope,
Community Praying Together,
By Zydeco Queen, page 9
Hilltop Action Coalition
Monthly Community Meetings

Meet your neighbors and become part of the Hilltop Community. Each month, we have presentations and information about community events, activities, policy, and important news. Light refreshments and kid’s activities provided!

President’s Message

By Brendan Nelson

Hilltop Community,

The impacts of global health developments related to COVID-19 and the unraveling presence of racism, resulting in the senseless deaths of black men and women in our community, and the wide world around us weighs heavily on our minds. Before saying anything else, I want to extend my gratitude to the many front-line workers, protesters, activists, and leaders of all ages who are making tremendous sacrifices to support response efforts, converse rallies, and hold our elected officials accountable by demanding justice. My thoughts are also with all who are experiencing illness and loss, near and far. This time has brought unprecedented challenges to many of our doorsteps. Our entire community has had to change its ways of working, collaborating, and learning given the evolving circumstances. We—and many of our partner organizations—find ourselves navigating uncharted territory, while also considering what more we all might do to help our community strengthen and heal. We at the Hilltop Action Coalition are deeply committed to supporting members of our extended community in navigating this difficult and rapidly evolving climate.

As an organization that focuses so much on the future for us all.

In partnership, and on behalf of HAC,

Brendan Nelson
President, Hilltop Action Coalition
#BlackLivesMatter
On Saturday, May 31st, as part of a national movement for a call to prayer, the Tacoma Ministerial Alliance took the opportunity to invite people to come together to pray for all people affected by the coronavirus but especially people of color who have been affected in greater proportions than the rest of the population.

A recent CDC MMWR report included that 45% of individuals for whom race or ethnicity data was available were white, compared to 59% of racial minorities in the community. However, 33% of hospitalized patients were black compared to 18% in the community and 8% were Hispanic, compared to 14% in the community. These data suggest an over representation of blacks among hospitalized patients.

The Tacoma Ministerial Alliance asked the city to gather to pray for 14 minutes in the street. It started at noon on every corner of MLK from Division to South 27th. Several hundred gathered and were hosted by a pastor representative from the African American community. The Tacoma Ministerial Alliance represented many faith communities in Tacoma.

The murder of George Floyd took place in Minneapolis, Minnesota after the event was planned and to add another reason to gather and pray to make resources more available, Deputy Mayor Keith Blocker also provided community resources to share with the Hilltop.

John Gaines shared actions TPU has taken to support the community along with several government leaders, Mayor Victoria Woodards, Deputy Mayor Keith Blocker, Washington State House leader, Laurie Jenkins, US Representative Derek Kilmer, to name a few.

It was like a church service as those gathered were welcomed by several speakers, mostly African American faith leaders in Tacoma that we all God’s children and change has to happen, now, enough is enough. Reverend Annie Jones-Barnes, read the names of people who have been killed by police over the last few years interjecting from time to time: “I can’t breathe” as she read the names.

What Dr. King said—beginning with the event was planned and added an additional reason to gather and pray to make resources more available, Deputy Mayor Keith Blocker also provided community resources to share with the Hilltop.

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On May 18th at 6PM, Brendan Nelson, HAC Board President and Virtually Host, facilitated the HAC Monthly Community Meeting via Facebook Live. We were excited to have Washington State Representative Derek Kilmer and John Gaines with City of Tacoma Public Utilities.

Deputy Blocker shared actions the City is taking during the Stay Home Order to make resources more available, such as access to City Council Meetings remotely and small business resources, and answered community questions typed in by attendees. Deputy Mayor Blocker also provided community resource links to share with the Hilltop. John Gaines shared actions TPU has taken to make paying our electric bills a little bit easier during the Stay Home Order, such as the Emergency Assistance Program, TPU expanded for these customers - read the full press release here.

- To find out more, check out HAC Facebook Video and listen to what our special guests, Deputy Mayor Blocker and John Gaines with City of Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) as our special guests.

- Pierce County Supporting Partnerships in Anti-Racist Communities Report: https://www.piercecountywa.gov/5853/2020-Census
- Pierce County Health Department: https://www.pierceco.org/
- Pierce County COVID-19 Response: https://www.piercecountywa.gov/5853/2020-Census
- Power Up Pierce 98004, Homeless Prevention Project, and Homeless Intervention Program.

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In 2019, THA partnered with Mithun, an integrated design firm, and Fab-5, a community arts organization, to facilitate the #DesignTheHill community engagement process. This initiative included stakeholder Homeworx Groups, community-wide Design Labs, and Creative Engagement projects. These events explored how to reflect the community’s cultural knowledge, experience, history, and hope for the future in the design. Members of Fab-5 served as ‘Community Engagement Specialists’, using their roots in the Hilltop community to guide the outreach and assist the professionals at THA and Mithun in developing accessible and culturally relevant events. THA had two overall guiding questions that shaped the outreach:

1. How can we empower the Hilltop community to design itself?
2. How can we reflect the history, vision and culture of the neighborhood in these buildings?

We invited nonprofits, businesses, housing providers, and city officials to four Homeworx Groups to discuss how to align the project with their shared values and goals. We also invited THA’s community and business leaders to discuss specific issues, including Hilltop history, community needs and economic empowerment. The focused discussion topics at these events informed agendas for the larger Design Labs and allowed the development team to develop thoughtful responses to community priorities before these meetings.

Three ‘Design Labs’ were held to catalyze community involvement in the design process. Design Labs were energized and accessible community events with music, food and collaboration. They were organized to give equal weight to participants no matter what their background or experience with design and development. Creative activities inspired conversation between the project team and residents. The design and development professionals sought to describe the complex technical issues of building planning and construction in everyday language, to put their professional expertise in service to community vision. We received enthusiastic engagement and an enormous amount of feedback from this approach.

Five ‘Creative Engagement projects’ were targeted specifically to youth, neighbors, elders, people who do not speak English as their first language, and local entrepreneurs to find out how these groups want to be represented in design. These groups were selected to ensure their voices were heard as they are often overlooked in community process.

The Community Engagement process has been vital in educating the development team on local history and the trauma of those who have been displaced. The plan will provide approximately 250 units of new affordable housing and affordable commercial/retail office space. This will include studio, 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units. One parcel, Site D, will be dedicated to permanent supportive housing for single adults experiencing homelessness. THA will be partnering with Horizon Housing Alliance to develop that parcel. Construction on that site is scheduled to begin in late 2020 (see adjoining article). The current plan is for the construction of the balance of the units to begin in early 2021 if financing once financing has been secured. All units will be affordable for households up to 60% of area median income.

THA has larger plans and other ideas to help local resident build assets, develop capacity and have a voice in the development of the Hilltop. If you would like to get involved, please contact Roberta Schur (Rschur@tacomahousing.org or 253-207-4454).

The full Hilltop Community Framework Plan can be found here: https://tacomahousing.net/housing/hilltop

Once we started to see evidence of gentrification and displacement taking place in a substantial way, we knew we had to get involved. The Community Engagement process has been vital in educating the development team on local history and the trauma of those who have been displaced.
By Patrick Tippy, Director of Housing Development at Horizon Housing Alliance

Over the past several years, Tacoma Housing Authority has engaged community members and organizations about the redevelopment of its property in the Hilltop neighborhood. At the conclusion of the “Housing Hilltop” (2016) and #DesigntheHilltop (2019) community conversations, THA created the Community Development Framework Plan capturing the collective vision for the development opportunities. The Tacoma Housing Authority’s (THA) Hilltop Parcels Development represents an unprecedented opportunity to positively impact the City of Tacoma’s historic African-American neighborhood through the development of four related buildings and improvements to the connecting streetscape. Additionally, the Community Development Framework Plan identified housing for people experiencing homelessness as a priority for redevelopment activities.

Tacoma Housing Authority and Horizon Housing Alliance (HHA) partnered together to fulfill the vision to create permanent supportive housing for individuals experiencing homelessness on the site that is financially feasible by bringing in experienced design and construction partners as well as experienced service partners. Horizon is excited to join these efforts and active in wanting to bring these visions to life. Today, THA and HHA are planning a 57-unit development for individuals exiting homelessness called Hilltop Lofts.

Watch the April 27th HAC Weekly Update and meet HAC special guests, Roberta Schur (THA) & Patrick Tippy (HHA), as they share their goal “to produce exceptional housing—resulting in a community with top quality physical surroundings and the best available supportive services for residents. Together, THA and HHA are planning a 57-unit development for individuals exiting homelessness called Hilltop Lofts.”

The Tacoma Housing Authority’s Hilltop Parcels Development represents an unprecedented opportunity to positively impact the City of Tacoma’s historic African-American neighborhood through the development of four related buildings and improvements to the connecting streetscape.

A mission bigger than anyone can achieve and yet compelling. A mission bigger than themselves.

By Harlan Shoop

As in most churches, leadership is key. Leadership that is authentic, consistent, relevant and radical attracts people who want to be a part of something bigger than themselves. A mission bigger that anyone can achieve and yet compelling.

Pastor Pana and his wife Tai, share in a ministry on the hilltop that has all the above ingredients. While attending Northwest University, God began giving Pana a burden for the Hilltop area of Tacoma, Washington. In 1988 he began walking the streets of the Hilltop talking to drug addicts, drug dealers, and gang members. After graduating from Northwest University in 1990 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Biblical Studies, he relocated to Tacoma with the hope of starting a church in the Hilltop area. After a time of ministry and teaching in Hawaii, in October of 1995 he began meeting with friends and colleagues concerning the planning of a church in the Hilltop area. After months of collective prayer and fasting, he moved back to Tacoma in January of 1996 and started Hilltop Christian Center, located at 1016 S. 10th (front entrance on MLK).

Pastor Pana married his wife Maleija and Keilani and a son named Micah.

They have been present on the Hilltop for almost 25 years and serve a wide range of individuals coming from homeless/addicted to the parent family and everyone else they come in contact with.

Here are some examples of their ministry—according to Pastor Pana our “worship pastor began as a

pregnant teen in our youth group that went on to raise her daughter, who is currently a sophomore in college, and earned her B.A. & Master degree. The gentleman that leads our Men’s ministry was a crack addict and homeless. There are several people who have overcome drug and alcohol addiction and serve in various parts of the church including single moms being reunited with their children after losing them to CPS due to drug addiction and prostitution.”

These examples matches their Jesus to produce men and women who are equipped by God and sent out to reach this generation with the good news of Jesus and who are focused and alert for service. Hilltop Christian Center worships on line during the pandemic and social distancing at 10:15 every Sunday. The goal of HCC’s ministry effort is to draw people closer to God.

They reflect values of Christian faith and the work of Christ’s kingdom in worshipping together, annual community outreach such as an Easter egg hunt, Community block party, and school supply giveaway during; scholarships for high school seniors, annual mission trips, and long term transitional housing.

As you can tell, Hilltop Christian Center is a vibrant community that always invites people to join in and be cared for, encouraged, challenged, and transformed by the love of God. And then asked to give back to the community.

For more information, visit Hilltop Christian Center’s at 2016 S. 10th St. Tacoma, email at Hilltop@comcast.net, call (253) 722-3250; or, check out their website www.hilltopchristiancenter.org and Facebook page.
Helping our Street Neighbors

**Service for those in need.**

Greydon Sheldon from New Tacoma Neighborhood passed along this story.

Monday morning when I got back into town from working at the homeless shelter, I drove by First United Methodist Church on S 7th and Tacoma Ave and saw Rachel Ahrens passing out goodie to our Street Neighbors. I pulled my car over and out and passed her the coolers.

Rachel took me to the back of the church and introduced me to a gentle soul, Kaylene Nelson, who operates their food pantry for the homeless and those in need. She showed me the recently acquired outdoor portable toilet with inside hand sanitizer the church got for our Street Neighbors. The toilet costs $540.00 a month through 1-800-TOL-LETS, which is the same company that was used at People's Park.

Rachel attended a HAC Monthly Meeting with me just before COVID-19 hit; she is in Rachel one morning while I was outside picking up garbage and debris from our Street Neighbors and she was passing out hot coca to them. Rachel is one of the Lead- ers at First United Methodist Church and she and the Church are very involved with our “out- door neighbors.” Rachel Ahrens and her work with First United Methodist Church deserves a special Hilltop Honors! Services provided by First United Methodist Church can be found on their website, Facebook page, or call (253) 627-0129.

Kaylene Nelson at thenelsons253@outlook.com introduced me to the Church of the Living God, please visit their website for more information about Church of the Living God.

Rachel followed up the previous week's discussion with me on First United Methodist Church's Neighborhood group, she was a sparkplug for that group and that spark has not dimmed over the intervening years. It’s not surprising that she is now the point and pivot for the “Hommade Masks for Professional Medical Workers and Other Essential Workers” a grass roots group that grew from her conviction that folks who have to go to work should feel safe while they are there. Kaylene said “I think that safety is a right. In addition to medical personnel, there are the healthcare workers, delivery folks, grocery delivery people and others who make it possible for life to go on. These are folks who deserve to be safe, and they should not have to provide masks at their own expense.”

So, on March 31, she created a Facebook group calling it “Hommade Masks for Professional Medical Professionals and Other Essential Workers.” Now there are more than fifty volunteers actively involved in the mask-making brigade. Most of the volunteers discovered the group through social media such as Facebook, Next Door, and Buy Nothing, and the word spread quickly (but not face-to-face).

Original group members included Robert, Billie, Cheryl, Jessica and Diane. They find sources for materials, cut and iron fabric and sew masks in their spare time. They are making donations large and small, they have donated/ loans of sewing machines and some have even bought machines so they could help. The guidelines are simple and rely on common sense, courtesy, and consideration: the masks are not to be sold, group members are reminded to hide one another and not to block group administrators, moderators, and most importantly, have fun! Kaylene emphasizes this last point: “this is not a competition or a swap shop operation, we expect that volunteers will work on the masks as they have time in their regular lives.”

This undertaking has not been without its challenges. In the beginning the difficulty was finding mask and filter fabric, and elastic. After some trial and error, Kaylene’s uncle suggested the olyfibre cloth from JoAnn’s, and anywhere else it can be found. According to Kaylene, they currently have enough supplies to make 4000 masks.

She continued, “Never in my wildest dreams did I think there would be this level of response from folks wanting to help. We’ll be making about 2000 masks to 2500 masks until no one needs them. That’s about 10,000 masks of the Living God...call if you need anything.”

During the first few weeks, Don was isolated in his apartment and missing his daily trip to “Ivar’s” and the ability to pick up a few groceries from Fred Meyer’s. Several weeks ago, Don had a BIG SURPRISE, Cathy, along with her daughter, showed up at his home. They brought a take-out meal from Ivar’s, and told Don they were worried about him. Don said: “I couldn’t believe it, it was a huge surprise for me and gave me such a good feeling that they wanted to see how I was.”

On her next day off, Cathy and her daughter returned to Don grocery shopping. She left her phone # with Don, saying, “...call if you need anything.”

Don said: “These are good friends who have when we’re stuck like I am!! THEY ARE MY HEROES!!”

Jennifer Schaad passed along this story.

Bishop Lawrence White and the Church of the Living God, please visit their website for more information about Church of the Living God.

Come, answering the call to help neighbors in need. For the past many years, and in partnership with Emergency Food Network, Tacoma Public Schools, and World Vision, the Church of the Living God distributes food and essential supplies to help community members stay safe and healthy.

Each Monday at their distribution site (212 S. M. St.), from 1:00pm to 3:00pm, the Church of the Living God operates The Blessing, a local food bank in conjunction with Emergency Food Network. Anyone may access the food bank. Volunteers record the number of people being served and provide one box of food and one bag of fresh produce. Volunteers wear masks and maintain social distancing.

Each Wednesday, at the same site, Church of the Living God, Tacoma Public Schools, and World Vision operate a drive-through distribution point from Noon to 2:00pm. Families sign up through Tacoma Public Schools at (253) 571-0000 and not to block group administrators, moderators, and other essential workers can request masks through the Facebook messenger page “Hommade Masks for Professional Medical Professionals and Other Essential Workers.” Folks who want to participate as volunteers can make contact through the Facebook page as well.

As with any grass roots group, there are always room for more: more volunteers and more contributions to cover expenses for supplies. Donations can be made by check to Church of the Living God, 212 S. M. St., or through FB Messenger to PayPal, or Venmo. When asked how long they will continue with mask making, Kaylene replied : “We’ll be making masks until no one needs them. That’s our job.”

For more information, contact Kaylene Nelson at thenelsons253@outlook.com for more information about Mask Makers of the Homemade Masks for Medical Professionals and Other Essential Workers Facebook.

**They are my heroes!!**

Good friends check up on good friends.

Judy Quackenbush from the 8th & I Neighborhood shared this story.

Don Highy is one of the Hilltop elders. Eighty eight years old, he’s retired from the U.S. Army and has lived in the 8th and I Neighborhood for over 40 years. Don contends more than 8 hours of labor and support in the early development of Neighborhood’s Park and other expenses. He now lives in an apartment overlooking the Park.

Every day, rain or shine, for the past 35 years, Don has walked to and from the corner of 7th and Washington, and gone to the Ivar’s at 19th and Millard for his main meal and communication go-to. Over the years, there were many familiar friends with whom he’s never met in person, providing critical administrative help. Melissa picks up the pieces and delivers them, kits, and finished masks, and Amber manages the requests, donations, and communication.

This effort really is a brigade facilitated by porch pickups. Fabric and elastic are delivered to the porches of volunteers who cut to specifications, then Melissa picks up the pieces and delivers them to Kaylene’s porch and she assembles kits containing fabric, thread, elastic, and more. Volunteers will work on the masks as they have time in their regular lives.

The turnaround is about five days. Hommade Masks distributed about 600 masks by mid-May. They continue to make: one side is the polypropyl fabric that does not need a filter and the other side is 100% cotton. The masks are washable in hot water, but you must use a low setting if you iron them, otherwise they melt.

They are distributed free to anyone in the qualifying categories who request them, so the requests are priority. Masks have been provided to Seattle Pain Relief, Rain City Painting, Big Lots and for a family funeral. Kaylene has a selection of masks on her porch for delivery to Essential Workers. They are for others bringing supplies, etc. They also sent 100 masks to the Navajo Nation and to a non-profit organization in Kentucky. Facebook has certainly extended the visibility of the group. Medical personnel and other essential workers can request masks through the Facebook messenger page “Hommade Masks for Professional Medical Professionals and Other Essential Workers.” Folks who want to participate as volunteers can make contact through the Facebook page as well.

As with any grass roots group, there are always room for more: more volunteers and more contributions to cover expenses for supplies. Donations can be made by check to Church of the Living God, 212 S. M. St., or through FB Messenger to PayPal, or Venmo. When asked how long they will continue with mask making, Kaylene replied : “We’ll be making masks until no one needs them. That’s our job.”

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Safe Streets: Community Mobilization and National Night Out (NNO)

Strengthening Neighborhoods
Community members want a safer, more nurturing environment.

By Sarah DuBois, Safe Streets Mobilization Specialist

My name is Sarah and I am a community mobilization specialist with Safe Streets Campaign. Safe Streets serves residents in the City of Tacoma and in unincorporated areas of Pierce County. At Safe Streets our vision is to imagine all of us living in a safe and thriving community.

Some neighborhoods in Pierce County are safer than others, and partially because they don’t face some unique challenges. The city of Tacoma is that residents who live there face unique challenges, particularly in the northeastern area. There are several groups that work hard to keep their neighborhoods safe. They meet weekly to discuss the latest news and plan their next events. They have a strong sense of community and are always willing to help their neighbors.

My colleagues work with, but the general desire amongst the neighborhood groups I work with is to see their community as safer and as a nurturing environment for the people who live there. I work in unincorporated Pierce County, particularly in the northeastern area. Prior to November 2019, I worked across all of unincorporated Pierce County with the exception of Key Peninsula, where my friend and colleague RoxAnne works.

One of the first things I learned about unincorporated Pierce County is that residents who live there face some unique challenges, partially because they don’t have the extra support of a city government amongst other things. More importantly, however, they have unique and innovative ways to address many of those challenges. In my time at Safe Streets, I have learned much from the people of Pierce County. I’ve listened to their sadness, anger, and frustration at situations in their neighborhoods that would make us all cringe, but they refuse to give up. I’ve stood alongside them as they’ve marched on their street corners for safer neighborhoods, cleaned up litter in their parks and off their streets, and hosted community events like Easter Egg hunts and National Night Out celebrations. I’ve eaten meals with them and had discussions about their pasts and dreams for the future, both personal and for their communities. I have witnessed their tenacity, courage and resilience in spite of seemingly insurmountable odds, and I am humbled to get to be a part of the work being done by these community leaders around Pierce County. But it is their response to the new crisis and our communities that truly has left me amazed by their creativity and passion for their families and others.

Reasonably, group members could take this time off from their groups to focus on their families and the new needs and challenges they are facing. I support those who are doing this, especially because this is one way we care for our communities, and Safe Streets will be ready to continue serving them when they can come back to their groups. Some groups and many individual group members are staying active during this time either with us or in their communities and I am once again amazed at the creative ways the communities I serve are grappling with the effects of COVID-19 and the stay-at-home order. Group members are making face masks to give away to neighbors. They are updating contact lists for everyone in their neighborhood, especially shut-in seniors so they don’t have to go through this alone. They are helping serve weekly meals to their neighbors and delivering meals to those who can’t make it to the pickup sites. They are creatively planning how to get more food resources into their communities and advocating for greater focus on areas that are sometimes overlooked. They are helping ensure that children have access to the internet for distance learning and that parents have the support to feel successful with the extra tasks that come with their children being at home all day every day. They are planning community gardens to provide creative outlets for families with children and to help with food scarcity for those impacted by joblessness. Somehow, they continue to show up to online meetings with positive perspectives and eager attitudes, ready to figure out how to help next or how to maintain the projects they are currently working with. And they continue to dream about the future and what they will work on when things feel more “normal.”

The current situation with COVID-19 have made me starkly aware of the impact working with these incredible people has on me. I think it also highlights what Safe Streets does so well—embracing people to step forward in the face of adversity and crisis with the tools, resources and confidence they need to come together, even virtually, to make where they live a better place for all. It encourages them to persist with patience and to stay committed to the cause they are pursuing. Right now, I am grateful for the virtual realm and its ability to help keep me connected with most of my groups, but it is a far cry from seeing them in person. I eagerly await the day when we can meet together again in the summit and make plans for what happens next in their neighborhoods. But until then, it is their energy and passion in the face of this crisis that inspires me, keeps me motivated, and makes me want to do a better job of taking care of my own neighborhood in Tacoma.

Sign Up for NNO!

Did you know HAC participates in NNO? Our Board Members will come to your neighborhood event to say “Hello” and bring a Safe Streets SWAG Bag with additional HAC items to share. Email hacoffice15@gmail.com once you have registered your neighborhood’s event with Safe Streets. We will add you to the HAC list and see you on Tuesday, October 6th to celebrate community!

National Night Out is designed to:  
–Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness  
–Generate support and participation in local anti-crime efforts such as Community-Oriented Policing and neighborhood organizing  
–Strengthen neighborhood spirit and unity  
–Strengthen community and police relations/cooperation  
–Send a clear message that our neighborhoods are organized and will not tolerate illegal activity

Safe Streets offers these resources to help you plan your event:  
NNO Planning Guide  
Click! & Comcast Cable TV Tacoma  
Strengthening Neighborhoods  
Virtual City Council Meetings

Special Tacoma City Council Weekly Meetings on Coronavirus Updates - Fridays at 2PM

The Tacoma City Council has established special weekly meetings to provide updates on the status and impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the City’s response to the emergency every Friday at 2 PM. These meetings are open to the public but to comply with Governor Inslee’s Proclamation, the meeting will not be conducted in-person. You can listen in on the meeting by dialing 1-855-747-8824 and using Passcode: 8215373. You may also listen on Facebook LIVE Meeting Agenda will be posted at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

‘Stay Home, Stay Safe’ Order and Participating in Tacoma City Council Meetings

Consistent with the CDC’s recommendations and pursuant to the City’s recent state of emergency proclamation, Council has set the maximum occupancy of Council Chambers, not including Council and staff, at 10. Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and the CDC also recommend that individuals over the age of 60 as well as individuals with underlying medical conditions – like heart disease, lung disease or diabetes – stay home as much as possible and avoid crowds.

Community members are strongly encouraged to participate at Council meetings in written form. This guidance extends to Public Comment for items on the agenda and Community Forum for items limited to matters over which the Council has jurisdiction. Written comments may be submitted to cityclerk@cityoftacomawashington.us every Tuesday before 4 PM prior to that evening’s Council meeting, and comments will be compiled and sent to Council.

Council meetings are televised on TV Tacoma, which is carried on both the Click! and Comcast Cable systems. Council meetings can also be streamed on tvtacomawashington.com.
Congratulations Class of 2020!

“Education must enable each one to weigh evidence and sift, to distinguish the real from the unreal, the true from the false, and the facts from the fiction.” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Anauncia Willis: Class of 2020, is graduating from Stadium High School! Anauncia is passionate about higher education and will be on the path of becoming a registered nurse. Anauncia is an outstanding role model to her younger siblings and fellow scholars at her school!

Anauncia Willis
Stadium High School

Man Dang: Class of 2020, is graduating from Stadium High School! Man is graduating top of his class with a cumulative 4.0 GPA. Man will be attending the University of Washington Seattle this fall and majoring in engineering. Man has been accepted into the STARS program at UW where he will be on the path of his dream career of Aerospace Engineering!

Man Dang
Stadium High School

Imahni Hawkins: Class of 2020 is graduating from Stadium High School and TCC Running Start Program! Imahni has been an active member on the Youth Philanthropy Board and is a recipient of the Act Six Scholarship. Imahni will be attending Saint Martin’s University to major in Psychology!

Imahni Hawkins
Stadium High School

Destiny Bergevin: Class of 2020 is graduating from Foss High School! Destiny will be attending Clover Park Tech this next school year and is passionate about helping others. Some of her potential career paths to fuel her passion include becoming a Traveling Nurse and/or a Behavioral Technician working with children!

Destiny Bergevin
Foss High School

Isis Sapp, Class of 2020 is graduating from Foss High School this spring! Isis is a passionate artist and plans pursue higher education focusing on art to obtain a career in animation. You can find Isis’s published artwork in the Tacoma Weekly!

Isis Sapp
Foss High School

Adaiah Walker, Class of 2020 is graduating from Tacoma School of Arts. Adaiah loves to sing and plays guitar. She loves crystals, natural stones and nature. She is here to make a difference. We are so proud of you! Your Loving Family

Adaiah Walker
Tacoma School of Arts

Local High School Cap & Gown Event Videos

Just in case you missed it, check out the links below to our local high school’s Cap and Gown events! Although COVID-19 changed the way we could traditionally celebrate, we love our graduates and want to lift them up and share their HUGE success. We hope this will inspire all Hilltop students, traditional and non-traditional, to persevere, and do not give up your goal for education.

Foss High School Class of 2020 Cap & Gown Event
Lincoln High School Class of 2020 Cap & Gown Event
Stadium High School Class of 2020 Cap & Gown Event
Wilson High School Class of 2020 Cap & Gown Event
iDEA Class of 2020 Cap & Gown Event
SAMI Class of 2020 Cap & Gown Event

Harlan Estrada: Class of 2020 is graduating from Foss High School! Matthew plans to attend Western Washington University in the Fall.

Harlan Estrada
Stadium High School
"Whatever your child’s talent, there’s a scholarship to fit."

Scholarships aren’t just for graduating seniors and college students. By Perry Newell

If you have been following our Funding College Project Facebook posts, you know that scholarships aren’t simply for high school seniors and current college students. Did you know there are also ample opportunities for elementary and middle school students as well?

Online scholarship search services are not available to students under the age of 13, which can make finding these opportunities a little more difficult. That’s why I felt it was important to combine with some of the programs that are currently open for younger students.

For example, the June 2nd I posted information about the 10th Annual "I Got Bank!" Financial Literacy Contest sponsored by OneUnited Bank which is the country’s largest Black-owned bank. Every year, they sponsor a financial literacy contest for children between the ages of 8 and 12 years old. Students are required to write a 250-word essay about what they learned from the book, I Got Bank, or another financial literacy book of their choice, and submit a unique art project in PDF format. The essay must state how they can use the information in their life.

Every year, ten winners of the competition receive a $1,500 savings account. The deadline for this scholarship is usually around June 30, 2020 and the award is a $1,500 savings account. Find out more at OneUnited Bank.

What about the “No Essay” Scholarship? According to Niche, $6,000 - Amount: $1,000 - Closing Date: June 30, 2020 - Description: Scholarship is open to high school, college, and graduate students and those planning to enroll within 12 months. Applicant must be a legal resident of the United States or an international student with a valid visa. Applicant must log in to Niche or create a free account to apply for the scholarship. Recipient’s Prize: $1,000 Easy Scholarship: Celebrate Pride (While Staying Safe) During COVID-19.

Example: Niche. $6,000 - Amount: $1,000 - Closing Date: June 30, 2020 - Description: Scholarship is open to students 13 years of age or older who are legal residents and are currently enrolled (or will enroll no later than the fall of 2020) in an accredited post-secondary institution of higher education. Applicant must share what they would do “if they could turn back time.”

Here is a scholarship called “New State of Mind” for $1,000. This is an easy Scholarship where you: Send Tips on How to Manage Stress to Help Us Create a Mental Health Guide. Sponsor: DoSomething. Amount: $1,500 - Closing Date: June 30, 2020 - Description: Your classmates and friends could use some mental health support in 2020, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak. While you’re social distancing, you could win an easy $1,500 scholarship by sending us tips on how you get through these particularly stressful times. We’ll use your advice to create New State of Mind, a first-of-its-kind mental health guide that’s for students, by students. By sharing your tips, you’ll be automatically entered to win a $1,000 scholarship. Let’s Do This!”

“Ready, Set, Vote” $1,500 Easy Scholarship: Share a Link to Help Your Friends Register to Vote!

For more information on the Funding College Project, visit www.educatingouryouth.org or email Perry Newell at callnowlawyer.com.

Kaleidoscope
By Zedyco Queen

Kaleidoscope
This poem is not yet a poem. This text is only a group of words. Learning the definition of the words, might give you comfort in mind, yet give you no understanding in thoughts, might be in actions. We in no way want any bad thing for any Group of people. We want Fairness, equal in value of our labor and deeds. For your Life as your forefathers are selected for you, based on the fairness of your skin. Chosen over and through color of skin, Gender, or any other differences, you want to control by sight and sound of words. Words spoken through delicts of tongues. Learning the English language is this most Phantasmagoria thing, Established by the Founders of this country. As we learned, “We the People”, long before we could read or think for ourselves, thinking done for us. Hindwierdness covered over the (Phd’s era) after living privileged surrounded by a pile of lies. 1619 ships, Atlantic publications, bring wheel barrows of facts to 2020. Give a true meaning to the statement, “what’s done in the dark will come to the light.” Incomes of the winning of the population places a burden on the United States. Blying this discoursed on the only Black skinned people known throughout history to be the leader of the free world only makes what the elite has done is true. It is not a poem yet. Cynicism, contempt, astonishment to write the least. You still can not walk in our shoes; you only get an experience of what we Black women go through everyday of our lives. Standing with our backs been raped. Speaking out even before we were slapped and knocked down. Care for us even we have been robbed paid less and stolen million-dollar ideas. Never to be paid reparations. It is not a poem yet. Surely, WT (meaning all human beings) are.

Now our air is poisoned by whom? Our communities are preysed with drugs, and by whom? Our food supply is controlled by whom? Our land is poisoned by whom? Our children are educated by whom? Our homes are poorly built by whom? What gives anyone the right to certify Mother nature??? It is not yet a poem yet. Looking through your Kaleidoscope surely not what I see through mind. Cognizance is not franchise to skin color, yet we are treated as such. Ignorance on your part is not related to the awareness on our part. Can we live life with or without each other is the indicator? It is a not poem yet. Socializing with one another in a meaningful way has not been taught. It’s learned through traumatic experiences such as now. We example ourselves and our actions, not to oppose or oppress, or use the resources and gifts of the persons without compensation. Trapping or excluding the person because of any differences is not advantageous. Because the same person you ignore, because of the inability to speak, or use their legs is the same person that has the concept to save the world you prize and privilege to live. It is not a poem yet. You, you all wanted to hear from me, yet you hear thousands of Black women through me. Your ears must be open to except the written Word, twisted around the nerves of the almighty dollar. We know now, the dollar can not pick up a shovel, hammer, not a skill saw. The computer can not move one grain of wheat into the bins. A command from any person can’t get us out of this thick mess we’ve all got fixed in. Yet we have not figured out the poem of yesteryears. In the beginning thing is and still is GOD. The creator of ALL. Until we seek Her face, we will continue to bear fruit of our labor. Sincerely Gold Star Mother 2007

Submit Articles, Photographs or Advertise in the HILLTOP ACTION JOURNAL
Email hacoffice15@gmail.com for more information.
Ray Gibson’s Caballeros Club

Providing family activities and community service since 1957

By Mary Cogger

“Ray Gibson’s Caballeros Club continues to be one of the most respected and widely known African American organizations in the Central States and the world,” stated Bonnie Pinckney in her 2017 HAC Journal article celebrating the CC Club 60th anniversary. The organization has worked tirelessly over the years to bring community together and provide social opportunity to the African American community and beyond.

Caballeros Club is a strong, historic member of Hilltop history. Before the Club was formed, members of the Black community got together for various social activities. Men got together to play golf, recreate and network. Women also got together. But, African Americans were denied access to many venues. Negroes found job and housing (redlining) discrimination. There were unwritten limits to where an African American could eat, dance, or even roll aoker. In his autobiography, Mayor Harold Moss wrote, “Discrimination in hiring, public accommodations and housing in the Northwest was just as bad. It was just as bad as it was growing up from the mouth of an avowed racist.” Lola Bailey told me, the club was founded because we (Negroes) weren’t welcomed...we had to go relax and let our hair down without judgment.” Ellen Smith put it simply, “Any time you were a Negro you could go to call your own.”

The idea for a club was planted in 1956 when George A. Strickland and Howard Woods discussed a place to welcome the general public with safe, wholesome spaces for meeting, dining, dancing, and other recreation. It welcomed people of all races and helped many of Black America’s institutions.

The first formal meeting of the Caballeros Club took place in January 1957 when Arthur Fox, Howard Woods, Sidney Breckenridge, John Harper, and Junior Collins became the first members of the Executive Board. They formed a private, non-profit social club to provide social, educational, entertainment, and family activities in the community. The founders believed in many organizational structure. Bonnie Pinckney told me “No way did we just want to be an Auxiliary, we wanted to vote and have more say in the organization.” Women were elected as full members in 1992. The first woman president, Bonnie Pinckney, was elected in 1998.

Community Service

The original charter set the general direction for the club which is to operate a facility designed to benefit the community. This includes educational, charitable and special projects. From the beginning family and education have been a priority. Over the years the Education Committee has raised funds and volunteered to support many educational projects. The Club is especially well known for the college scholarships awarded annually to deserving African American high school seniors.

The Club’s Christmas party for children is open to all on The Hill, but others are welcome to come as well. There are, however, some appropriate activities, child-oriented food, and gift baskets. About one hundred bicycles are given out as well.

In the past, and today, The Caballeros Club has worked and still works with other organizations for equal rights and community welfare. The groups including the NAACP, Masons, Urban League, Black Collective as well as local churches, fraternities, and sororities. They are interwoven both in membership and work.

Social Activities

Caballeros Club emphasizes community and fellowship. There are many opportunities to build lifetime relationships. The Club has a full-service kitchen, dance floor and stage. They host dances, dinners, and entertainment. If you want to go and unwind, you don’t need to attend a formal event; you can just go for a meal or a drink. In the summers there are barbeque nights where you can “Bring Your Own Meat” and eat on the back terrace with a beautiful view including Mount Rainier. The Club’s 60th Anniversary event began in 1989 when Ed Ware, originally from Texas, brought the special event to Tacoma. Tacoma celebrates African American Emancipation Day in Texas on June 19th, 1865. An event that helps with socializing, organizing, and entertaining. The full calendar reveals many activities besides special events and eating. There are weekly social events including card games and barbecues. There are also yoga hours, bingo, karaoke, DJ nights, baseball games, and more.

“Supporters of the Caballeros Club” deserve thanks for their dedication, patience, and courtesy. Imagine, at a time in 1957 when philanthropy was particularly not in favor of our founding members, they worked tirelessly to build a time mixture of tolerance, purpose-driven visions and community partnerships which have substance that we have here today,” stated Will Jenkins Sr. in 60th Anniversary Journal.

For every effort that the Caballeros Club has helped transform Tacoma. It began as a product of its time and has continued to grow and impact the communities as they have changed.

Thanks to Bonnie Pinkney, Lola Bailey, Tom and Mari Hilliard, Ellen Smith, Bill Moss, Billie Johnstone, Toni Johnson, and Transforming Tacoma, a video produced by the Tacoma Civil Rights Project.

Ray Gibson’s Caballeros Club is located at 1516 S 26th St, Tacoma. For more information, visit www.raygibsoncaballeros.org, call (253) 572-3746, email caballeros@comcast.net, or check their Facebook page.
Right at the south end of Hilitop lies a free-standing, 100-foot metal tower on private property. About two-thirds of the way up, careful observers will spot a dual-bay antenna. From there, the sounds of KTQA-LP are transmitted across the Dairyland and beyond, on 95.3 on the FM dial. As two of the directors of this low-power noncommercial community radio station, we recently had the privilege to join Brendan and Alicia during a recent HAC webinar via Facebook Live to share about the station's history, current programming, volunteer opportunities, and vision.

Tacomaans scanning the dial in the last two parts of this year have been surprised by programming that sounds like you’ve pulled backwards 80 years to a time when noir, scifi pulp, mystery dramas, and situation comedy dominated the airwaves. Indeed, we at KTQA have been entertaining listeners with those old-time radio programs as we slowly worked to build the capacity of the all-volunteer organization.

More recently, listeners may have heard The Daily Briefing, where two of our usual bulletin speakers, updated, and resources related to the COVID-19 emergency, followed by an interview from a fellow Tacomaan to help us feel connected to our community at a time when even the easiest to feel isolated.

It was a show we started in late March as schools closed, stay-home orders were issued, and COVID-19 precaution weighed heavy on us all. In a little over 2 months, we’ve managed to produce more than 50 episodes where we shared those resources with Tacomasans, and share the stories and insights of elected officials, nonprofit workers, artists, musicians, small business owners, poets, health workers, teachers, and activists from within our community as we stay together, separately.

Earlier in the year, KTQA held its first community engagement event at Black Fleet Brewing, where we, along with our other board member Alaise Frigon, shared the story of KTQA and solicited input from the community our station hopes to entertain, retain, and serve. That input has resulted in a diversified summer programming schedule (see below) while still keeping significant blocks set aside for old-time radio favorites.

We have a studio with a block dedicated wholly to Secular Humanist and skeptical programming. Listeners will also hear local and regional shows, some of which are produced by ourselves. Keeping ears peaked for programs focused on environmental sustainability and state history, too. It’s one of the roles in the lives of KTQA organizers: Becky is a public-school educator currently working as a high school instructional coach. Alaise is a private teacher of fitness and functional movement. In the coming months, we will continue to feature guests from the Introduction to Podcasting/Broadcasting class at SAMU during Tacoma Public School’s Elements Miniseries, and the students’ work is among what you’ll hear when you tune to 95.3 FM.

It should not come as a surprise, then, that when COVID-19 closed schools, they immediately said no to worry about how students with limited technology would access remote learning. Despite the challenges of social distancing and school closings, we set in motion an ad-hoc plan to do what we could to get laptops into the hands of kids who needed them. Friends collected donated laptops, tablets, and hard drives from companies they worked for, and Becky sanitized the equipment surfaces, and Sam packed each

need of technology for school. Within 72 hours the station had more requests than computers! The need was so great that we created a lottery. At first it was hard to convey that we were essentially just two people working from their living room, operating under the same stay-home orders as the rest of the state. Thankfully, we received over 2000 applications to receive laptops for students in need. (There is still a great need for laptops, computers, and tablets, so if you have a retired computer you would like put to good use, please reach out to us!)

In the absence of need funding for our community as we stay together, separately. In the absence of need funding for our community as we stay together, separately.

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June 11 – Thursday – Stadium High School, Class of 2020 – Virtual Graduation Ceremony 4pm-5pm (Tacoma Public Schools via Facebook Live)

June 11 – Thursday – Lincoln High School, Class of 2020 – Virtual Graduation Ceremony 7pm-8pm (Tacoma Public Schools via Facebook Live)

June 11 – July 31 – Modern Womxn: An Art Exploration June + July online & at Alma when open (Handmade PNW; Free via Eventbrite.com)

June 11 & 12 – Thu & Fri – Emergency Food Network (EFF): Free Victory Garden Starts: tomatillos, summer squash, and Swiss chard 10:30am (McCarver/Hampton Park CG, 2301 S ST)


June 12 & 26 – Friday – Friday Family Storytime 1pm-1:30pm (Tacoma Public Library via Facebook Live)

June 13 & 27 – September 10am-5pm (Tacoma Urban League, via Zoom-email corey.orvold@coldwellbanker.com for information)

June 14 – Sunday – June Virtual Bike Habit 11am-1pm (Wild Grief, register to attend for free)

June 15 – Monday – HAC Virtual Monthly Community Meeting 6:00-7:00pm (Meet Virtually via HAC Facebook Live)

June 17 & 24 – Wednesday – Back Alley Bike Drive on Wednesdays 11am-3pm (2nd Cycle, 2085 MLK Jr. Way)

June 18 – Thursday – Virtual- Working Women in Sustainability 8am-9am (Tacoma Sustainability via Zoom, click here for more info.)

June 18 – June 19 12:30pm – Salishan Chalk Festival (Salishan Association, 2065 E ST)

June 19 – Friday – Pierce County Abilities Parade 2020- Inclusive, Everyone Welcome! 5:30pm-6:30pm (Pierce County Support Programs, free tickets at Eventbrite.com)

June 20 – Saturday – Christian Graduation on the Hilltop 12pm (Tacoma Ministerial Alliance, Allen AME Church Parking Lot, 1223 MLK Jr. Way; click here for information)

June 21 – Sunday – Father’s Day


June 22 – Monday – HAC Virtual Weekly Update 6:00-7:00pm (Meet Virtually via HAC Facebook Live)

June 23 – Tuesday – Guided Visualization Meditation BETA Version 11am-7pm (Wellness Coaching, via Zoom with Password 691428)

June 25 – Thursday – Hilltop Library Planning Committee Meeting 7pm-9pm (Tacoma Public Library via Zoom with Meeting ID: 819 6034 2310)

June 29 – Monday – How to Do Business With the City of Tacoma 8:00am-9:30am (Tacoma Municipal Building 47 Market ST Room 248)

June 29 – Sunday – HAC Virtual Weekly Update 6:00-7:00pm (Meet Virtually via HAC Facebook Live)

Visit HAC Facebook Posts and Events for more Community activities near you! View the complete HAC Calendar on our website at www.hilltopactioncoalition.org! Scroll down to Upcoming Events and click on the full ‘MONTHLY CALENDAR’ LINK.