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# ALLEGHENY WEST GAZETTE

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May 2020

## President's Message

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*"You have to accept whatever comes and the only important thing is that you meet it with courage and with the best that you have to give." ~ Eleanor Roosevelt*

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the following upcoming AWCC events have been cancelled:

- May 12<sup>th</sup> General Membership Meeting
- 2020 Memorial Day Picnic
- 2020 Wine and Garden Tour
- 2020 Alleys, Axles and Ales
- 2020 Wine Spectacular Dinner

Like most everything else, AWCC business has ground to a halt. The Executive Committee is meeting on the last Tuesday of each month via Zoom. We are prepared to address any neighborhood issues or questions that might normally be discussed at a General Membership meeting. If there is an AWCC topic that you think needs to be addressed while membership meetings are suspended, please reach out to me or anyone on the Executive Committee.

As of this writing there has been no AWCC business requiring a vote of the Executive Committee, aside from approval of Committee recommendations to cancel upcoming events. We discussed and agreed that we will wait to see where things stand for the Fourth of July Block Party, and perhaps come up with a creative way to have a safe neighborhood celebration.

As you might imagine, the AWCC By-Laws do not provide guidance on how to conduct meetings during a pandemic. If the PA Department of Health continues to mandate a stay at home order or limit gatherings to a maximum of 10 people in June, we will look into alternate ways to meet and, at a minimum, provide updates on some of the on-going membership meeting topics such as WANID and Norfolk Southern Railroad project.

Lastly, a reminder to everyone about the AWCC "Zoom Room" - it's available for anyone to use, for gatherings large and small. Please take advantage of this to keep in virtual touch with one another. If you have an idea for a Zoom event send an email to [webmaster@allegHENYwest.org](mailto:webmaster@allegHENYwest.org).

Stay safe everyone!

— Ann Gilligan, AWCC President

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## Friday Night Happy Hour

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Join your neighbors as we practice using Zoom doing something requiring no practice: Happy Hour! Every Friday from 6:00 to 7:00, BYOB!

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/479233274>

Meeting ID: 479 233 274 (This will remain the same each week!)

The AWCC Zoom account is available for virtual gatherings, large and small. Please join us on Sunday and then stay tuned for invites to more Zoom events. If you're thinking of organizing a Zoom event for the neighborhood, check out how to do that on our website <https://alleghenywest.org/about/coronavirus-resources/>

Hope to see all your smiling faces on Friday evening!

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## From the Governor's Office: Wear a mask outside!

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Gov. Wolf is now asking that all Pennsylvanians wear a mask, cloth or homemade, anytime they leave their houses. The Governor's office asks that N95 and paper masks be reserved for healthcare workers. "Your mask protects me from COVID-19, and my mask protects you from COVID-19," Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine explained. "Homemade masks protect everyone else from droplets created by the wearer. It's important that as many people as possible wear masks when leaving home."

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## Yard Debris Pick-Up

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- Yard Debris Pick-Up will be on Saturday, May 16th. Drop off resumed on May 5, from T-Sat, 7:00-3:00 at the locations listed to the right.

**East End Center - Homewood West**  
6814 Hamilton Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15208  
412-665-3609

**Hazelwood Center**  
40 Melanchton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15207  
412-422-6524

**West End Center - Elliott**  
1330 Hassler Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15220  
412-937-3054



## Update from Ways & Means on 2020 Tours

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It is with great sadness that we, Allegheny West Civic Council (AWCC), have determined it is in the best interest of our guests and homeowners to cancel this year's Tour & Tasting in Old Allegheny and September's Showcase event due to the evolving safety guidelines in response to COVID-19.

We had great interest this year which is encouraging. Currently, all tickets are being refunded. We're now looking ahead to summer 2021 when we hope to again welcome guests

to our neighborhood.

For our Christmas tour, we are waiting to see how the ever changing situation is evolving before making a decision for this year's tour. We're all looking forward to getting back to normal and being social without distance! Until then, please stay safe and thank you for your support!

## We Need Your Help!!

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From Councilman Bobby Wilson's office: My office is partnering with Cityview Church to collect **much needed household supplies for the 240 residents of Pressley Street High Rise, Northview Heights, & Arch Court Apartments.** Needed items:

PAPER TOWELS

TOILET PAPER

HAND SANITIZER

DISINFECTANT/CLEANSER

SOAP BARS

LAUNDRY SOAP

DISH SOAP

Bulk items will be separated to stock supply bags for each resident. Drop-Off Details (Please follow social distance guidelines): Cityview Church, 816 Tripoli Street May 4- May 9 (Monday-Saturday) 12:00PM-4:00PM Questions? [cityviewpgh@gmail.com](mailto:cityviewpgh@gmail.com)

## Let's Make A Neighborhood Art Gallery!

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Gene Wilson shared the article linked below, which discusses displaying our own art in the windows to create a neighborhood gallery. If you have a painting, drawing, or sculpture you've done and are proud of, consider displaying it in your window. (Goodness knows it won't fade with the weather we've been having! We can all have something new to look at on our walks! See this article for more information:

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<https://www.nextpittsburgh.com/features/lets-turn-pittsburgh-into-an-art-gallery-a-call-to-all-residents-to-display-local-art-to-lift-our-spirits/>

## June 2 Primary Election Information

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In March, Governor Wolf signed Act 12 of 2020 into law which moved the General Primary Election to June 2, 2020. The act also allows for up to a 60% reduction of polling places through the consolidation of two or more polling places which may be in the same building. Additional changes could also be authorized by the Department of State.

Due to concerns related to holding an in-person election in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Division of Elections is mailing mail-in ballot applications to every registered, eligible voter in Allegheny County who has not already submitted an application. That mailing is expected to go out in the first few weeks of May. Voters don't have to wait to receive an application but can go online now to [VotesPA](#) and apply online for a mail-in ballot.

Over the past few months, the county has conducted a robust marketing and advertising campaign to reach as many voters as possible to make them aware of the mail-in option. A few weeks ago, the County Executive also directed Elections to step-up the targeted advertising for mail-in voting.

During its April 23 meeting, the Board of Elections considered and approved a [resolution](#) calling for further consolidation of polling locations. The resolution was submitted to the Department of State on April 28 along with an [outline of a plan](#) for the consolidation of present polling places into likely 200-300 locations.

There will be no fewer than one polling place per municipality, with the exception of the City of Pittsburgh which will have no fewer than nine polling places. The expectation is that in larger municipalities, there will be multiple polling places, but work will be done to provide that they are housed within the same location. As appropriate, additional or alternate locations will also be identified by Elections to further the goal of physical distancing when a large volume of in-person voters are expected. Each location selected will have sufficient space, parking and handicapped access and will be appropriately equipped with ballot marking devices for ADA voter use.

Continuing correspondence and communication will be provided to the Department of State and the public so that there is a full understanding of the polling places being utilized. A related communications plan is also being developed, and this webpage will be updated on a continual basis.

Under normal circumstances, Allegheny County utilizes 1,323 polling places and approximately 6,500 elected and appointed poll workers. Additional staff and resources are needed for overall election operations.

**\*\*NEW\*\*** The PA Department of State has issued guidance related to the [Use of Facilities as Polling Places during COVID-19](#). Vote by mail applications need to be received by May 26, and submitted by June 2

### QUICK LINKS

Need to verify that you're registered to vote, or your party affiliation? Check your [Voter Registration Status](#).

Want to see the ballot now? View your [Sample Ballot](#) by entering your municipality, ward and district.

Applied for your absentee or mail-in ballot, and want to check on where it is? Use this [Ballot Tracking](#) tool.

This link also allows you track your completed ballot once you mail it back to the office. When received, the status will be listed as "Vote Recorded."

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Interested in getting elections updates sent directly to you? Sign up for a free [Allegheny Alerts subscription](#) and select “Elections” updates.

## The June 2 Primary, Simplified Bob Griewahn

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As mentioned above, Pennsylvania’s April primary election was postponed to June. The scheduled date is now Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. As a judge of elections, I’m urging all voters to vote by mail in the upcoming primary.

### How Do I Get a Ballot?

The Allegheny County Elections Division recently announced that all registered voters will be mailed vote-by-mail ballots in early to mid-May. You may already have received a ballot by the time you read this. If not, you can still request a mail-in ballot.

### Why Vote By Mail?

If you’re like me, you like going to the polling place each election to cast your ballot. Here’s why you may want to consider voting by mail in this election.

- **Health** - This is the most obvious reason to vote by mail. By avoiding the crowds at polling places, you avoid viral transmission.
- **Fewer Polling Places** - Act 12 was recently signed into law. Among other provisions, it allows the state to reduce the number of polling locations by 60%. Allegheny County traditionally has had over 1,300 polling places, but the country recently asked the state to reduce that number to only 200-300 locations. The new law says that each municipality has to have at least one polling place. The City of Pittsburgh, however, is an exception: Pittsburgh has to have at least nine polling places. Nine. I expect the city to have more than nine locations, but that figure gives you an indication of the kind of reduction the state government is considering. So, there’s a very good chance that you will not be voting at your traditional polling place and may have to travel to vote in person.
- **Long Lines** - Fewer polling places means longer lines for the voters who choose to vote in person. The government’s hope, obviously, is that most people will vote by mail, thereby reducing the lines. Still, there will be voters who show up at the consolidated polling locations. They probably can expect longer lines than normal. And, it’s not just due to the reduction in the number of locations that will cause the long lines. Strict social distancing will be required, which means that the floors will be taped to indicate where voters can stand, and how far apart from each other they must be. That means that more people may have to wait outside to get in.
- **New Machines** - There will be new voting machines this year. Voters will be given scannable paper ballots to fill out, which will then be fed into a ballot reader. Since this is an entirely new system, voters are undoubtedly going to take longer to cast their votes. More time per person means longer lines. Furthermore, the Elections Division had to cancel many of the

training classes for the poll workers who will be assisting voters on the machines. So, you can expect more confusion than normal if you vote in person.

- **All the Other Reasons** -There are a host of reasons people don't vote in person, even if they intended to. Bad weather, illness, unforeseen emergencies, prior commitments, etc. I hear these from my voters all the time: "I always vote, but I couldn't this last time because of XYZ." All those issues can still arise on election day, making it a hassle to vote in person.

So please consider voting by mail. Even though the county will attempt to send mail-in ballots to all registered voters, you may want to apply for one anyway. You can do so at this link:

<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/OnlineAbsenteeApplication/#/OnlineAbsenteeBegin>

You'll need a valid PA driver's license or PennDOT ID number. The online application takes only a few minutes. I did it a few days ago, and it was easy.

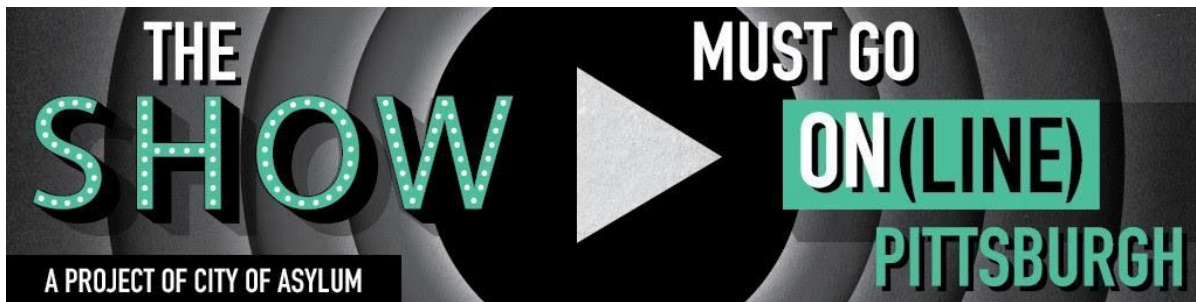
Want to check to see if you're registered? Go to this link to verify your registration:

<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/VoterRegistrationStatus.aspx>

Want to see who's on the ballot? You can look up the sample ballots for your polling place here (Allegheny West is in Ward 22, District 1):

<https://apps.alleghenycounty.us/website/ElectPollPlace.aspx>

Make your voice heard at the polls this year – by mail!



Recently, City of Asylum excitedly announced the launch of our new virtual platform, [The Show Must Go On\(line\) Pittsburgh](#). The Show is a collaborative daily webcast—our region's first shared programming channel. It brings Pittsburgh arts organizations together to provide free access to high quality programs that connect artists and audiences and build community around the arts, even in this difficult time.

Each Monday, we'll send you a schedule of what's going on that week on the channel. Can't wait? Check out the schedule for the month on [our calendar](#) or explore our [streaming channel](#) for full details.



### The Allegheny West Gazette

**Editor: Karen Haller Beer**

The monthly newsletter of the Allegheny West Civic Council. Letters, submissions, advertising and other notices by the **first of the month** to: [gazette@alleghenywest.org](mailto:gazette@alleghenywest.org). Submission does not guarantee publication.

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