



Living in Harmony with Nature

Harmony

Penn Estates Property Owners Association

February/March 2015

President's Message

By Luna I. Mishoe, Acting President/ Vice President

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, it is our sincere hope that your holiday was filled with joy, peace and happiness. It is also hoped that however spiritually you celebrated, you did it to the maximum, never overlooked the real reason for the season and that it brought you a real sense of fulfillment.

I have been happy to have been your servant over the past several years. During that period, I would assume that the item most important to you has been our dues. Your board has passed a budget four consecutive years with no increase in dues. This was not an easy accomplishment, but this board has managed to do so.

We recognize, acknowledge and appreciate the hard work, input and advice of the finance Committee. There are approximately fifteen committees that assist in the governance of your community. All of these committees are not as active as they should be but we consider that to be an excellent opportunity for you to get involved.

Do not be a complainer. I urge you to be a contributor. Get involved and join a committee. If you see a need, let's find or create a committee where we can make it happen. Some had expressed a need for an active neighborhood watch program and now we have one.

We have begun to expand the mission and function of the Government Relations Committee beyond that of "getting out the vote" to educating our residents to all aspects of surrounding governing bodies. More active participation and much less complaining is the way to have a significant impact and make our presence felt in each surrounding jurisdiction- especially those to which we pay taxes and should be expecting greater services in return.

Come on fellow property owners, turn your problems and complaints into plans of action through participation in the appropriate committees. That's the way we bring about improvements and I urge your participation. In fact that is my challenge to you. That is the only way to make Penn Estates a better place to live and raise our families.

Sometimes we have great ideas and we find ourselves inhibited by some rule or regulation, by-law, or a covenant that no longer makes sense. All of them need to be reviewed and updated if needed.

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Leaders Wanted

Board of Directors Election Approaching

By PEPOA Board of Directors

The Penn Estates Property Owners Association (PEPOA) is a non-profit corporation governed by a nine-person Board of Directors. The Board is elected by PEPOA Members (the deeded property owners in Penn Estates) who are in Good Standing.

In this year's election on May 2, 2015, there will be four Director positions to fill; three positions will serve for three-year terms, and one position for a two-year term.

Candidates for the Board must be at least 21 years of age, a deeded property owner in Good Standing, and able to carry out the duties of a Director.

What is the mission of the Board? As stated in PEPOA's Bylaws, "The Board of Directors shall determine all matters of Association policy, shall develop the vision and strategic plan for the organization, shall oversee the management and control of the business and property of the Association, and shall exercise all powers of the Association (except for any powers specifically reserved to the Members in the Declaration, the Articles of Incorporation or the Bylaws)".

What are the Board's responsibilities? The Board of Directors is responsible for governing PEPOA. Directors have the duty to: (1) act in good faith, in a manner they believe to be in the best interest of the Association; (2) act in accordance with PEPOA's Articles of Incorporation, Declaration of Covenants, and Bylaws; and (3) act in conformance with Pennsylvania Community Association and Non-Profit Corporation laws.

A partial list of specific Board responsibilities includes:

- Enforce PEPOA's Declaration of Covenants, Bylaws, Rules/Regulations, and Policies
- Approve additions and revisions to PEPOA's Rules/Regulations and Policies
- Approve the annual operating and capital budgets
- Levy annual maintenance fee and other fees, and collect all monies owed to PEPOA
- Maintain an adequate capital reserve fund
- Enter into contracts on PEPOA's behalf
- Maintain and improve PEPOA's buildings, roads, and other property
- Hire and provide oversight of the Community Manager
- Appoint and remove members of PEPOA committees
- Issue final rulings on Members' appeals of decisions made by the Appeals Committee and the Architectural Review Board

What qualifications and abilities should a Director have?

In order to perform their duties, Directors need to be familiar with, and understand, the various laws and legal documents that apply to community associations in general and to PEPOA in particular.

Directors need to devote substantial time to their duties... anywhere from 10 to 30 hours a month, and possibly more if serving as an Officer. Attending monthly Board meetings is only the tip of the iceberg. Time will also be spent attending Board workshop meetings as needed; acting as a liaison to several committees; responding to Board and committee emails and phone calls on a daily basis; preparing and presenting resolutions and reports; and attending Annual and Special Association meetings, community forums/workshops, and other community events.

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Penn Estates Property Owners Association
304 Cricket Drive
East Stroudsburg PA 18301

President's Message

(continued from page 1)

We started out as a resort/vacation/get away community. Over a relative short period of time we have emerged into a permanent residential community where we no longer have mailbox addresses but permanent street addresses. Our property should not be subject to prior landowner covenants but property owner covenants, rules, regulations, etc.

There is room for much improvement and your input is needed. Let's get a hold of these documents, examine them and make them relevant for the next 50 years. We need to do this and the time is now. Again, I urge you to get involved, have an impact and make a difference that will result in a better community.

I have been asked to talk about the inner workings of the Board of Directors. To those questions, let me just say- stay tuned and I will address them in my next message. There are some matters of legal inquiry that need to be resolved prior to freely being able to respond. Next message will address progress toward PE Drive and other Board projects.

Let me close this message with the hope and desire that we together can make a great community even better. Your Board is always committed to making decisions that are in your best interest and are in your best interest. This is not always an easy task since things are not always cut and dry. This means that we will make some mistakes along the way. We will take some risks. We will lose some and win some. Let me report to you that we have done very well staying out of those types of troubled waters. We do understand that the majority does rule and as a Board, we will support the will of the majority.

It is my responsibility to provide leadership to the Board and I solicit your support and prayers as we move into 2015. We have had some good years but 2015 will be our greatest year ever and your participation will make the difference. The wagon is rolling. Are you on board?

One final note. The board has reluctantly accepted the resignation of Director John White from the board. He has served only a short time but his insights and contributions to this Board are greatly appreciated. Director White, we will miss your presence. We wish you good health and success in all your endeavors.

Harmony

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304 Cricket Drive, East Stroudsburg PA 18301

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Join Neighborhood Watch

By John Baraniuk, Neighborhood Watch Coordinator
Chair Community Safety Committee

Any community resident can join of the age of 18 or older, single or married, renter or homeowner. Once an application is submitted and pending approval. A thorough criminal back ground check will be performed by Stroud Regional PD and all information will be kept confidential.

The Neighborhood Watch Program teaches concerned residents how to look out for each other's safety and to help our Security Officers protect residents and their homes against criminals. It is not a vigilante program, nor is it a program of citizens on patrol in their neighborhoods. It is a program that encourages neighbors to get to know each other, to watch out for each other, and to call our Security Dept. when something just doesn't seem right.

The Neighborhood Watch system relies on the willingness of people to get involved, stay informed of area problems, and work together on solutions.

A Neighborhood Watcher's objective is to watch their immediate area such as simple as a Window Watcher or by different types of patrol: walking, biking or vehicle. If you observe any criminal or suspicious activities, report it to the Security office: 570-424-7042; for non-emergencies: 570-424-7047

Neighborhood Watch Members **DO NOT**:

- Carry firearms
- Have police training or police authority
- Apprehend criminals
- Make arrest
- Confront suspicious persons
- Pull people over in your personal car
- Do anything to potentially put you in harm's way
- Chase on foot or in a car any suspects

Neighborhood Watch Members **ARE**:

- Residents that care about the safety of their neighborhood and the community
- "Eyes and Ears" of law enforcement
- "See Something, Say Something."
- Residents that observe and report suspicious activity to Security

Any questions, concerns or anonymous tips: pepoaneighborhoodwatch@gmail.com.
Applications are available at and can be submitted to the Administration Office.

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Leaders Wanted

(continued from page 1)

Directors must keep certain information confidential, including from spouses, until such time as the Board takes formal action.

Abilities that a Director should possess include: the ability to commit to projects and see them through, start to finish; the ability to listen, keep an open mind, and not rush to judgment; the ability to put your personal agenda aside and work only in the best interests of the Association; the ability to articulate your viewpoint and respectfully disagree with other viewpoints; and the ability to always support majority decisions of the Board, even in those situations where you voted in the minority.

Prior participation on one or more of PEPOA's committees is very helpful for Directors but it is not a requirement to serve on the Board.

Directors do not receive any compensation.

How do I get on the Board?

If you are interested in running for the Board you may apply in one of two ways:

- Fill out an application obtained from the Administration Office. Completed applications must be submitted to the Administration Office no later than Friday, February 13, 2015. The Nominating & Steering Committee will then contact qualified applicants and invite them to an interview with the committee.
- The other way is to obtain a Nominating Petition from the Administration Office and get the signature of 50 Members in good standing. Only one signature per lot is permitted pursuant to the Bylaws. Once the requisite number of signatures has been collected the petition must be submitted to the Administration Office, no later than Saturday, March 21, 2015.

Whether applying by application or petition, all candidates shall prepare a biography of 1200 words or less and provide a wallet-sized photo in .jpeg format for publication in Harmony. The biography and photo must be emailed to pepoaharmony@gmail.com and be received no later than Saturday, February 28, 2015.

Candidates will have the opportunity to deliver a five-minute speech and answer questions at the Meet the Candidates Forum on Saturday, April 25, 2015. The only other opportunity for delivering campaign speeches will be at the PEPOA Annual Meeting on Saturday, May 2, 2015.

Election of the Board

PEPOA Members in good standing may cast votes for Directors in one of two ways:

- Directed Proxy ballots will be included in the Notice and Call to Annual meeting package mailed to each Member on April 2, 2015. Complete the Directed Proxy ballot and mail it in the enclosed envelope to the Association's CPA. Directed Proxy ballots must be received no later than 10:00AM on April 30, 2015.
- Attend the PEPOA Annual Meeting on May 2, 2015 and cast your ballot in person.

Are you interested in running?

Serving as an effective Director can be challenging, and it requires a lot of time and work. It can be a

thankless job at times. However, being part of the PEPOA leadership team and working to improve Penn Estates and keep it one of the best communities in the Poconos is its own reward. You will derive satisfaction and pride from contributing your talents and leadership skills to your community.

2015 Board of Directors Election Timeline

February 13, 2015	Application deadline <i>All candidate applications must be submitted to Administration</i>
February 24, 2015	Interviews completed <i>All candidates must be interviewed by Nominating and Steering by this date.</i>
February 25, 2015	Recommendations to Board <i>Nominating and Steering to submit slate of candidates to the Board for approval</i>
March 1, 2015	Harmony article deadline <i>Candidate bios to Harmony > All candidates, including those using the petition process should submit bios & photos to pepoaharmony@gmail.com</i>
March 6, 2015	Board approves candidates

(continued on page 4)

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Leaders Wanted

(continued from page 3)

Board approves candidates recommended by Nominating and Steering committee.

By-laws require approval at least 60 days prior to election.

March 20, 2015 Harmony to be delivered to PE by publisher

March 21, 2015 Deadline for candidates applying via petition

(Per Bylaws, 6 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting). Candidates will be required to submit bio including picture with petition.

March 23, 2015 Insert any missing bios in paper

*at candidates time and expense. Candidate to make arrangements with Admin.

April 2, 2015 Mailing of election material per by-laws

*Harmony does not get mailed. This should also be the date of record for members in good standing. Board resolution required to establish this date.

April 25, 2015 "Meet the Candidates" event

The Nominating & Steering committee is recommending that this be the only venue for candidate speeches prior to the election, thereby eliminating candidate speeches from the Volunteer Dinner.

Board Adopts CAI Code of Ethics

At its January 4, 2013 meeting, the Board adopted a Code of Ethics for the PEPOA Board of Directors. It is based on the Community Associations Institute (CAI) Model Code of Ethics for Community Association Board Members. The Code formalizes our existing guidelines for Board conduct and incorporates them into one document. It will be

provided to all candidates for Board seats as part of the application package.

Code of Ethics for PEPOA Board of Directors - This Code of Ethics for the PEPOA Board of Directors was adopted on January 4, 2013 under Board resolution BD2013-04

Board members should:

- Strive at all times to serve the best interests of the association as a whole regardless of their personal interests.
- Use sound judgment to make the best possible decisions for the association, taking into consideration all available information, circumstances and resources.
- Act within the boundaries of their authority as defined by law and the governing documents of the association.
- Provide opportunities for residents to comment on decisions facing the association.
- Perform their duties without bias for or against any individual or group of owners or non-owner residents.
- Disclose personal or professional relationships with any company or individual who has or is seeking to have a business relationship with the association.
- Conduct open, fair and well-publicized elections.
- Always speak with one voice, supporting all duly-adopted board decisions even if the board member was in the minority regarding actions that may not have obtained unanimous consent.

Board members should not:

- Reveal confidential information provided by contractors or share information with those bidding for association contracts unless specifically authorized by the board.
- Make unauthorized promises to a contractor or bidder.
- Advocate or support any action or activity that violates a law or regulatory requirement.
- Use their positions or decision-making authority for personal gain or to seek advantage over another owner or non-owner resident.
- Spend unauthorized association funds for their own personal use or benefit.
- Accept any gifts-directly or indirectly-from owners, residents, contractors or suppliers.
- Misrepresent known facts in any issue involving association business.
- Divulge personal information about any association owner, resident or employee that was obtained in the performance of board duties.
- Make personal attacks on colleagues, staff or residents.
- Harass, threaten or attempt through any means to control or instill fear in any board member, owner, resident, employee or contractor.
- Reveal to any owner, resident or other third party the discussions, decisions and comments made at any meeting of the board properly closed or held in executive session.

By following the Code of Ethics, PEPOA's current and future Boards will conform to the highest standards of conduct consistent with Penn Estate's status as a CAI Gold Star Community.

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Volunteers Needed

By Lucy Jacobsen,
Chair Nominating and Steering Committee

The Nominating and Steering Committee is always looking for new volunteers to join the various committees within Penn Estates.

We will be holding a volunteer recruitment event on March 21st, 2015 from 3pm to 5pm in the Oak Room. This is a great opportunity to come and meet with members of all the committees to find out what each committee is all about.

Food and beverages will be served. So come over, talk to committee members and join so that you too can make a difference. You must be a deeded homeowner in good standing in order to be a voting member or a family member to be a non-voting member.

It might be a good idea to check out the December-January issue of Harmony (page 6) for a synopsis of all our committees so you can come armed with questions.

Lets make 2015 your year to make a difference!

Out&About

Things to Do and See in the Poconos

By Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee

Welcome to 2015! I hope that your holidays were wonderful and that your New Year's resolutions are small! And may this not be the record setting winter that has been predicted.

The following is just an overview of local events. I draw from various sources. However, if you want to look on-line for events within driving distance, I find three sources to be most helpful: 800poconos.com, njskylands.com and lehighvalleylive.com. Please keep an eye out for events listed in the local newspaper. It seems that events often are not planned ahead with sufficient time for the announcements to make it to me and the Harmony.

Do you miss the Farmer's Market? Well, you can still enjoy the farmer's market every Saturday from 8 to noon indoors at the Sherman Theater. Do you miss swimming? For a small fee, you and your family can enjoy Stroud Regional Family Swim on Friday evenings from 6:30 to 9. Adults can enjoy lap swim or water walks on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7:45 to 9 for \$4.

If you are truly a lover of all things winter, you might want to take the Paupack Plunge at Lighthouse Harbor Marina on 2/14. Call 325-5810 for information. If you prefer to look at ice while in warm clothes, you might like the Under the Sea exhibit at Sculpted Ice Works Factory. Call 226-6246 for fees, dates and times. You might also consider attending the Jim Thorpe Winterfest on 2/14 and 2/5. You can see ice and wood carving, magic shows, civil war reenactors, etc. Call 325-5810 for information.

The local ski areas host many special weekends throughout the season. You can check their websites for updated event information. On 2/7/15, Camelback in Tannersville will have "Boarding for the Pink" to benefit breast cancer organizations. That event includes a DJ, live band, games, etc. Call 570-629-1661. That same day, Shawnee hosts the 2nd annual Paint the Mountain Pink. 421-7231. On 2/22/15, Shawnee has their Winter Carnival with vendors, ice sculpting, outdoor barbecue, etc. On 2/21, Camelback hosts their Annual Parking Lot Party.

Kettle Creek Environmental Education Center has events planned for the next two months. In conjunction with Quiet Valley Historical Farm, they will have a Signs of Spring program from 2-4 on 3/28. Other events include Eagle Watch 2/6-2/13, Public Bog Walks, Tree Tapping on 2/10, Valentines Day for Wild Life on 2/14 and Public Maple Sugaring Day on 3/7. Call 629-3061 for times, locations and fees (if any).

March brings us parades. Jim Thorpe's St. Patty's Day parade is on 3/15 at 1:00pm and Stroudsburg's parade is on 3/22 at 1:30pm

Real Estate Update

By Maureen Shindle, Contributor

I am happy to be presenting you the Real Estate statistics pertaining to PEPOA properties. This information will appear regularly in Harmony and I hope you find it helpful and informative.

It is a widely held belief that the Real Estate market slows down in the winter causing many people to let their listings expire with plans to relist in the spring. Based on current activity, that belief is really a myth.

According to a representative from GOOGLE who spoke at a recent NAR convention, December and January are the most active months for real estate searches. And this is borne out by how busy I and my colleagues are these days. So if you are thinking about selling, then think about selling now.

Inventory is down, so having your property listed now gives you a better chance of finding a buyer, especially with all those folks searching the "GOOGLE."

Information gathered from the Pocono Mountains Association of REALTORS' Multiple Listing Service on January 9, 2015:

	Active Listings	Pending Sales	2014 Sales
Total	62	14	93
Lowest List Price	\$23,900	\$41,340	\$23,500
Highest List Price	\$199,900	\$324,900	\$209,000
Average List Price	\$105,395	\$110,289	\$93,876
Average Square Feet	1,935	2,327	2,268
Average Price/Sq.Ft.	\$51.45	\$48.4	\$42.64
Average Days/Market	171	116	124

"Pending Sales" reflects only list prices as sold information is not available until the sale is final. "2014 Sales" are sales that closed since 1/1/14. Average Sale Price of these sales is \$90,545, which is 96.4% of the Average List Price. The Average Price/Square Foot indicated for these closed sales is based on the sale prices.

DISTRESS SALES: Defined as sales of properties that are bank-owned (foreclosure), or short sales (where sellers sell for less than what they owe their mortgage lenders), distress sales made up 55.7% of the transactions for 2014. This number has a huge impact on our market because of the drastically reduced prices they allow. For example, the average non-distress home sold for \$53.5 per square foot this year, while the average foreclosure/short sale was \$34.8 per square foot.

About the Author: Maureen Shindle is a 13 year resident of Penn Estates and Past President of PEPOA Board of Directors and a REALTOR® with Keller Williams Real Estate in Stroudsburg. Comments and questions welcome at mpshindle@kw.com or mpsbalancedliving@kwrealty.com.



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Keep Warm, But Safe

By Laura Jones, Community Manager

December, January and February are the deadliest months for home fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). And, heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fires and home fire deaths. That's why it's important for you and your loved ones to take extra precautions during the winter.

Thinking of buying a space heater? The NFPA recommends (and our association insists) that you make sure it carries the mark of an independent testing laboratory. Install it according to the manufacturer's instructions or have it professionally installed. If you have an electric-powered space heater, plug it into an outlet with sufficient capacity. Never use an extension cord. The association does not allow liquid-fueled space heaters.

Turn off space heaters whenever the room is unoccupied or when manufacturer's instructions say they should be turned off. Portable space heaters are easy to knock over in the dark. Turn them off when you go to bed, or at least make sure they're placed in lighted areas or out of high-traffic areas.

If you use a fireplace or wood stove, use only dry, seasoned wood to avoid the build-up of creosote, an oily deposit that easily catches fire and accounts for most chimney fires and the largest share of home-heating fires. Use only paper or kindling wood, not a flammable liquid, to start the fire. Do not use artificial logs in wood stoves.

Make sure your fireplace has a sturdy screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room. After the ashes are cool, dispose of them in a metal container, which is kept a safe distance from your home.

Make sure fuel-burning equipment is vented to the outside, that the venting is kept clear and unobstructed, and that the exit point is properly sealed around the vent. This is

to make sure deadly carbon monoxide does not build up in the home

Other reminders from the National Fire Protection Association include:

- Don't use your oven to heat your home.
- Inspect all heating equipment annually, and clean as necessary.
- Test smoke alarms monthly; install a carbon monoxide alarm outside each sleeping area.

For more information, visit www.nfpa.org.

Preventing Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide, or CO, is a poisonous gas that can be particularly dangerous because it is colorless and odorless. Headache, nausea, dizziness and even permanent brain damage or death can occur. Hundreds of people die each year from accidental CO poisoning, many of them while using portable generators during severe weather.

A byproduct of burning fuels such as gasoline, propane, kerosene, natural gas, oil, wood or coal, carbon monoxide is emitted from internal combustion made by engines, like those that power lawn mowers, portable generators, cars, power washers and many household appliances such as furnaces, ranges, fireplaces, water heaters and room heaters. To prevent CO poisoning in your home, be sure to take the following precautions:

- Educate your family about the causes of CO poisoning and how to prevent exposure to this deadly gas.
- Do not use portable generators indoors, including in garages, carports, storage sheds and the like, even with doors and windows open. CO can quickly build to lethal levels in even partially enclosed spaces.
- Do not place pressure washer engines indoors, and, when using pressure washers outdoors, keep engines away from open windows, doors or vents during use, as CO can seep inside through the openings.
- Hire qualified professionals to install new furnaces and appliances and to inspect and service your HVAC system, chimneys and flues.
- Never service fuel-burning appliances without proper knowledge, skills and tools. Always refer to the owners' manual when performing minor adjustments or performing maintenance on fuel-burning equipment.
- Never use portable fuel-burning camping equipment or burn charcoal indoors.
- Never leave a car running in a garage, even with the garage door open.
- Never use your gas oven or clothes dryer to heat your home.
- Never operate unvented fuel-burning appliances where people are sleeping.
- Do not cover the bottom of natural gas or propane ovens with aluminum foil. Doing so blocks the air flow through the appliance and can produce CO.

- Install CO detectors throughout your home, especially in hallways near sleeping areas, and follow the manufacturers' instructions for testing and replacing. Keep detectors unobstructed by furniture or draperies.

For additional details about how to prevent CO poisoning, visit the Consumer Product Safety Commission's website at www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/466.html or the website for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the Centers for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/co/

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Michael's Kitchen

By Michael Tyrrell, Communications Committee

Here are some easy recipes for St Patrick's day. Even if you don't require 8 servings of corned beef, the leftovers make great Reuben sandwiches, corned beef hash or just plain old cold sandwiches on rye bread with mustard and creamy coleslaw. The skillet Shepherd's Pie makes an easy kid-friendly meal any night of the week. Enjoy and remember, everyone is Irish on St Paddy's Day!

Savory Corned Beef & Cabbage (serves 8)

- 25 whole cloves
- 1 onion, halved
- 1 lean center-cut corned beef brisket, about 4 lbs
- 1 carrot, peeled
- 1 cinnamon stick
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 head green cabbage, cut into 8 wedges
- 1 pkg (1 lb) peeled baby carrots
- 1 lb small red potatoes

1. Stick cloves into onion. Place onion, beef, carrot and cinnamon in a large pot. Add water to cover. Bring to a boil; cover and reduce heat. Simmer for 3 hours.
2. With a slotted spoon, remove onion, carrot and cinnamon; discard. Add salt and cabbage. Cover and cook 15 minutes. Add carrot and potatoes; cook 15 additional minutes or until potatoes are tender.
3. Remove brisket and slice. Serve with vegetables and drizzle with some of the broth.

Per Serving: Calories 361 Fat 24g Sodium 1518mg

Jazz It Up: Try my friend Julie Harter's trick. When the brisket is done (before slicing), score the fat side and sprinkle generously with brown sugar. Broil a few minutes until caramelized.

Five Ingredient Shepherd's Pie in a Skillet (6 servings)

- 1½ lbs ground meatball mix (beef, pork, veal)
- 1 tbsp dried Greek seasoning or dried oregano
- 2 cans (8 oz each) tomato paste
- 1 box (10 oz) frozen peas and carrots, thawed
- 1 container (25 oz) fully prepared refrigerated garlic mashed potatoes

1. Heat a 10-inch nonstick ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Crumble in ground meat and cook 8 minutes until cooked through. Add 2 tsp of the Greek seasoning, tomato sauce and peas and carrots. Bring to a boil. Lower heat to medium and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Heat mashed potatoes in a microwave following pkg directions. Stir in remaining tsp of the Greek seasoning.

3. Heat broiler. Spread heated potatoes over meat mixture. Wrap handle in foil. Place skillet under broiler, about 4 inches from heat. Broil 2 to 3 minutes until potatoes are nicely browned.

Per Serving: Calories 406 Fat 20g Sodium 939mg

Switch It Up: Ground turkey or chicken also works well. Frozen mixed vegetables or lima beans can be subbed in for the peas and carrots.

Classic Irish Soda Bread (makes 20 wedges)

- 4 Cups all-purpose flour plus 1 tbsp for dusting
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ¾ tsp salt
- 3 cups dark seedless raisins
- 1 tbsp caraway seeds
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1-¼ cups buttermilk
- 1 cup sour cream

1. Heat oven to 350°. Grease a 9-inch round cast-iron skillet or baking pan.
2. Combine 4 cups flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, raisins and caraway seeds in a large bowl. Blend eggs, buttermilk and sour cream in a small bowl. Stir into flour mixture until just moistened.
3. Knead dough in bowl, about 10 strokes; dough will be very sticky. Shape into ball and place in skillet. Cut 4-inch "X" ¾-inch deep, across top of dough. Sprinkle with remaining flour.
4. Bake in 350° oven 65 to 75 minutes or until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in skillet 10 minutes. Turn bread out onto wire rack to cool completely.

Lemon Blueberry Scones (Makes 12 scones)

- 3-¼ Cups all-purpose flour
- ⅔ cup sugar
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ¾ tsp salt
- 6 tbsp cold unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 tsp grated lemon peel
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 2 tbsp granulated sugar

1. Heat oven to 400°. Spread a large sheet of parchment paper on counter top.
2. Combine flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a large bowl. Add butter; mix with pastry blender or fork until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Gently stir in lemon juice, milk, blueberries, lemon peel and egg. Mix until just combined.
3. With floured hands, pat half of the dough into a 7-inch circle on one end of the parchment paper. Repeat with remaining dough about 2 inches from first disk of dough. Brush with egg white; sprinkle with sugar. Cut halfway down but not through each circle into 6 wedges each. Slide paper with dough onto baking sheet.
4. Bake at 400° for about 18 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire rack to cool slightly. Pull apart at lines. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Per Scone: Calories 228 Fat 7g Sodium 372mg

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Driving and Outdoor Safety Tips for Winter Weather

By John Baraniuk, Chair Community Safety Committee

Winter is here and with the cold weather comes the need to be extra careful on the road. Seasonal dangers, including snow and ice on roads, and reduced visibility from winter precipitation make it important for drivers to prepare and focus to prevent accidents. Brush up on these winter driving safety tips to avoid trouble on the road:

Watch the weather. One way that drivers can limit their liability in the winter is to plan trips in relatively good weather. Be alert and stay up to date on changing weather and traffic reports in order to anticipate and avoid stormy roadways. New smartphones and tablets make this even easier with real-time wireless weather updates (just be sure not to check while driving).

Slow down. A little more caution makes a lot of difference when roads are slick. Slowing down by 5 mph or more, and driving on low-speed roads will help limit your potential for damage in a collision. Keeping more car lengths between vehicles gives you more time for any sudden stops.

Know Your Extras. This is a big one for those driving newer, more tech-equipped vehicles, it's critically important to understand how your safety features work. The biggest example? Anti-lock brakes. Where tapping brakes works for controlling skid in traditional braking, pumping ABS can be dangerous. Road safety experts and law enforcement professionals know that anti-lock brakes and other features are no substitute for safe stopping distances and reasonable speeds - that goes for other high-tech features like traction control as well. Even some more traditional features of a vehicle can be confusing, for example, experts warn against using cruise control on slick roads.

Condition Your Vehicle For Winter. In some states that get the most winter weather, drivers are allowed to put on items like tire chains or tire studs to add traction. In other states, these additions are illegal because they can tear up roads. Check with your state DMV to see whether these winter preparations are appropriate where you live. No matter what state you're in, it's a good idea to keep tires at proper inflation. Another major part of maintenance is directly related to winter, drivers should take care to remove troublesome ice from the windshield and windows, and big drifts of snow from the hood and cabin top in order to prevent problems with visibility.

Stock A Winter Emergency Kit. In the event that you do have to pull over during a major storm or find yourself with a broken-down vehicle, be prepared with a winter emergency kit. Recommended items include: a flashlight and batteries, hand-warmers, blankets, drinking water, shovel and ice scraper, jumper cables, and standalone emergency lights or flares.

Be safe out there on the roads this winter!

Snow Removal Safety

Individuals over the age of 40, or those who are relatively inactive, should be especially careful. If you have heart trouble, do not shovel without a doctor's permission.

- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking.
- Take it slow! Pace yourself. Stretch out and warm up before taking on the task.
- Shovel only fresh snow.
- Push the snow as you shovel.
- Do not pick up too much at once.
- Lift with your legs bent, not your back. Keep your back straight.
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion. If you run out of breath, take a break.
- Dress warmly.

(continued on next page)

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Collage a Heart for Valentine's Day

By Jane Harris, Communications Committee

"Take a little piece of my heart, now baby..." Janis Joplin laments in her 1968 version of the song, "Piece of My Heart." A sad song for sure but let's turn it around. Let's turn this into a positive, creative activity...for Valentine's Day.

You'll need:

Discarded magazines

Bits and pieces of art papers

Glue and a glue stick

Pencil

Scissors

A few sheets of printer paper or construction paper

Fold a sheet of printer paper in half and cut a heart shape. Create your collage on this, then at the end you can glue the collage onto another sheet of paper; choosing white, pink or red. As far as the pieces for the collage; there can be a variety of sizes and shapes, cut or torn.



Choose patterns, colors, pictures, if you like. Focus on bright colors, pastel colors... add some darks...even black. (I'm a fan of black in my art).

Play around with the pieces...but at some point begin to glue! I usually use a glue stick to start; leaving the edges unglued so that I am able to slip pieces underneath or reposition some of the pieces if I choose. When you are satisfied with the piece, apply a topcoat of watered down Elmers glue to seal the surface.

Allow your own preferences as well as those of children doing the project to direct the process. You can try any shape such as cat or bird to create these unusual collages.

Winter Safety Tips

(continued from page 9)

According to Nationwide Children's Hospital in 2011, averages of 11,500 snow shoveling-related injuries were treated from 1990 to 2006 with nearly 100 deaths related to snow removal.

Snow Blower Safety

Be safe with these tips from the American Society for Surgery of the Hand and the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons:

- If the blower jams, turn it off.
- Keep your hands away from the moving parts.
- Do not drink alcohol and use the snow blower.
- Be aware of carbon monoxide risks of running a snow blower in an enclosed space.
- Refuel your snow blower when it is OFF, never when it is running.

RINGING IN THE NEW YEAR

By Matthew Jacobson, Cub Reporter

By the time you read this it will be 2015. That's right Penn Estates, another year is in the books and it is time to look into the future of what Penn Estates has to offer in the new year. Before I do that, let's take a look at the party that helped the community ring in 2015 and say goodbye to 2014.

Like most of the parties in 2014, the New Years Eve party was free to the first 100 people who signed up at the administration office. This was the new trend of 2014 and will continue to be a trend in 2015.

The music was loud, the food was great and the atmosphere was rocking. Beer and other drinks were served to the party goers as well. As we danced the night away, in the background the TV was sent up so that the party goers could watch as 2014 went away and 2015 was rung in at Times Square.

The party had a incredible turnout with close to 90 people in attendance. If 2014 taught us anything, it is that people prefer a free party. 2015 will be much like 2014 in the sense that ALL of the parties will be free unless it is for a good cause such as the ACS. Speaking of future parties and events here are a few things to come in the following months.

One of my favorite events that is right around the corner will be the Super Bowl party where we get together and watch the NFC division champs take on the AFC champs. This event normally takes place on the first weekend of February, but if last year's Super Bowl, taught us anything, that could change due to weather. Look for the party to be the first weekend in February. This party will of course be FREE.

Another event that will be coming up will be for the American Cancer Society (ACS) and will be a magic show. Organized by one of the captains of the Penn Estates ACS team, Nancy Padilla, the entrance fee to this event will be donated to the ACS. The date of the event has yet to be determined so keep your eyes out for that and come out and support team Penn Estates.

Last but not least, St. Patrick's Day is also on the horizon of future events and will most likely take place on the weekend of St. Patrick's Day. Once again this party will be FREE. So come out and have a good time.

I don't know of many places or communities where you can go and find a good time and good food and good people and go to it for free, but Penn Estates in my estimation is definitely on the top of that list. The dates for the upcoming events will be posted on the bulletin boards located at both the front and back gates as well as by the Oak Room.

I hope everyone reading this had a great 2014 and I hope 2015 will be even better. I know I will be having fun at all the great parties here at Penn Estates. (Did I mention the parties are free!) In closing this is your ace cub reporter saying, stay in harmony with your community and get involved.



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Buildings, Grounds & Roadways Committee 2015 Work Plan Ideas

Submitted by Sean Reilly; Building, Grounds & Roadways Committee Liaison

The BGR Committee meets on the third Saturday at 9:00 in the Community Center. We can use a few new members to discuss these ideas to improve the Community. This agenda of our early December meeting lays out the issues we will be working on in 2015

Buildings, Grounds & Roadways Committee Meeting Saturday December 6, 2014

Committee: Willie Barbosa, Patsy Ortiz, Fidel Nieto, Kieth Moy, Greg Harvey

Liaison: Sean Reilly/Jose Padilla

Agenda: 2015 Project Planning

Budget: The discretionary BGR budget for 2015 is \$10,000.

Overview: The following is a comprehensive list of projects for the committee to discuss and prioritize for action in 2015.

- 1) Annual Quality Audit - The Committee prepares an audit form and conducts an annual quality audit of all the Community capital assets. This audit is conducted in the Spring and submitted to the CM through the Liaison for assisting in prioritizing the annual work projects and the following years Capital and Maintenance budgets.
- 2) Road Planning - Develop a Long Range road repair plan and purchase road mapping software to keep track of annual work and costs.
- 3) Snow Plow Plan - Codify our Snow Plow Plan SOP - assets, tools, plowing of primary, secondary, tertiary roads, bus stops, parking lots, mailbox areas, snow dumps, rolled curb markers, salt, sand etc.
- 4) Penn Estates Drive - Adopt a final recommended Plan specifications and timeline for the reconstruction of Penn Estates Drive in 2016.
- 5) Rear Mail Boxes - Develop a plan for the covering of the rear gate Mailboxes and improving access. Architect, permits and specs.
- 6) Tennis And BB Courts - Study court drainage and cracks
- 7) Crawl Space - Crawl space repair bid prep after inspection report
- 8) Beach Restoration - Hyland lake swimming beach renovation plan and bid specs
- 9) Shield Landscaping - Cricket Dr. maintenance building tree line or privacy fence
- 10) Aggregate Yard - Level and organize the Storage yard for dirt and stone
- 11) Landscaping - Propose an Admin. Building front yard landscaping plan
- 12) Vacant Room - Study old store site for new uses
- 13) Vacant Room - Study upper floor of pool annex bldg. for a store or other use location
- 14) Soccer Field - Add soccer nets and level the soil in the far-far outfield area next to the volleyball area
- 15) Skateboard Play - find and plan a skateboard area
- 16) Geese Management - oversee the USDA geese management service from March-July
- 17) Lake Weed Control - Review the annual lake algae and weed plan to prevent another massive fish kill
- 18) Ice Skating - design a seasonal ice skating rink using the volleyball court
- 19) Fishery Improvement - plan to add large stones , concrete or tree stumps into the deep portion of the lakes to encourage fish reproduction and survival
- 20) Gutter Guards - add gutter guards to the community Center buildings
- 21) Other. Notes On Priorities.

Buildings, Grounds & Roadways Committee Year-end Report 2014

Submitted by Sean Reilly; Building, Grounds & Roadways Committee Liaison

The committee meets on the third Saturday of the month to study and plan important projects and provide recommendations to the Board and Community Manager. The following is the year-end report of the Committee's work.

- 1) PE Drive reconstruction engineering and bid specification – Action Pending engineering design
- 2) CC Crawl space joist replacement and vapor barrier – Investigation underway
- 3) Play Ground Renovation – Completed
- 4) Tennis court and BB courts Long term crack and edge repair plan – Test repair failed; further study needed
- 5) Swimming Lake Beach renovation/ muck removal – Planning underway
- 6) Community Center Main door replacement – Done
- 7) Locust Drive Emergency –fire access gate – Done
- 8) Community Center Chimney leak repair – Done
- 9) Safety- Remove C.C. kitchen dysfunctional gas stove and replace – Done
- 10) Fencing or tree line for dirt/stone piles at the Maintenance Building – No Action
- 11) Paving of the Admin parking lot – Done
- 12) Install digital thermostats in Community Center – Done
- 13) Gutter Guards for C.C. Buildings – No Action
- 14) New flooring installed in C.C. Oak Room – Done
- 15) Geese Management-adopted a plan for USDA to manage the overpopulation
- 16) Fish kill in the Lower Twin Lake – Weed management-investigation open

Weekly Activities

Monday	Mah-Jongg.....	12:30 pm
	Dart League.....	7:30 pm
Tuesday	Bookmobile.....	4:00 pm
	Bingo.....	7:00 pm

Committee Meeting Schedule

Appeals.....	1st Saturday	10:00 am
ARB.....	3rd Saturday.....	7:00 am
Board of Directors Meeting	1st Friday.....	7:30 pm
Buildings, Grounds & Roadways	3rd Saturday.....	8:30 am
Communications	3rd Saturday.....	10:00 am
Community Documents	TBA	
Community Safety.....	1st Saturday	9:00 am
Finance	4th Saturday.....	9:00 am
Government Relations	TBA	
Long Range Planning	4th Thursday	7:30 pm
Nominating and Steering	1st Thursday.....	7:00 pm
Recreation	2nd Thursday.....	7:00 pm
Wildlife and Forestry.....	3rd Tuesday.....	7:00 pm

Exercise Before Homework Benefits Students

By Katherine Hernandez, Contributor

What is homework hour like at your house? Are the kids hanging their heads in frustration and complaining that homework (or school) is the bane of their existence? Do they appear to be drained, uninspired, or unable to complete the work? Is homework time a rush of activity with little focus on quality and a great emphasis on reaching the finish line? Do your kids ask for a lot of help on tasks you believe they should be able to complete independently?

Is homework time stressful for any or all involved? Are you discovering that your child is avoiding homework or even claiming not to have any (even when the student portal says otherwise)? These and other indicators could be signaling that your kids need a play break—one that emphasizes physical activity.

One thing we know for sure is that a body in motion is a healthy, happy, capable body. Physical movement keeps our bodies supple, agile, and energized. It improves all internal functions—including brain activity—and elevates mood and motivation.

People who exercise regularly tend to have a “can-do” attitude when facing challenges. They also tend to be happier than those who do not get regular exercise. Because students face so many intellectual challenges every day, and because they can feel disheartened about their workload, they are in a unique position to benefit immensely from targeted daily exercise.

Students spend a lot of time sitting. They sit to listen and learn, to read and study, to write and do homework. Research tells us that so much sitting over time, is harmful to

our bodies. We also know now that a low level of physical activity impairs brain function and lowers mood. At the end of a school day, then, the best way to rebalance a student's body, boost his or her mood, and ready the mind for further activity is to get the body moving. How lucky that we live in Penn Estates,

which offers a glorious natural environment, fantastic and newly updated playgrounds, and country roads that are safe, beautiful, and just hilly enough to engage muscles and elevate heart rates!

Younger school children love to get moving in one of our playgrounds, where they can run, jump, climb, swing, hang, do cartwheels, and myriad other activities. Older students may prefer to hit the pavement of our lovely community for a run, brisk walk, or a bike ride. Older students may also enjoy doing yoga at home. Another fun and effective activity for all ages is dancing. Spending 10 - 20 minutes dancing to their favorite music is an excellent way for kids to re-energize after a long day of challenging intellectual work and minimal physical movement.

The key here is to find an activity that fits into your schedule and that the student enjoys—it should be FUN, not a chore! Parents will know it is working when they see the smiles and hear the chuckles of joy.

The obvious effect of this play time is the student's elevated mood. But there is a lot more going on inside. Physical activity fires up the brain and prepares it for increased executive function, which involves attention, memory, organization, planning, strategizing, and time management. Recent neurological studies indicate the many ways that exercise stimulates brain cells, but one author explains exactly how and why this works.

Dr. John Ratey, associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and research synthesizer, shows us the effects of exercise on the brain in his book, *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*. The book includes an in-depth profile of the central school district in Naperville, Illinois. Naperville conducted long-term studies and produced compelling scientific data indicating that physical activity increased brain function and improved learning outcomes for all of their students.

Simple brain scans of students before and after a 20-minute walk reveal increased activity in many areas of the brain, but most notably in the pre-frontal cortex, which is responsible for executive function—precisely what students need to engage when facing academic work.

On one hand, we are fortunate to be living in a time when this information is widespread and our in-school physical education programs have evolved away from the old ‘athletics’ model that left too many kids sedentary on the sidelines to a physical fitness approach that gets every student moving in challenging and fun ways. On the other hand, PE is no longer offered as a daily requirement, but has been minimized to a part-time position in our kids' education. Therefore, it is more crucial than ever to ensure that our kids are getting daily exercise outside of school. Their bodies and their brains require it.

With a regular play time break at the end of the school day, parents are likely to discover one or more of the following transformations during homework hour: your child is sitting taller, facing the work with energy and focus; homework time is decreased, because your child's attention is alert and targeted; you'll hear fewer complaints about school and homework; you'll get fewer requests for help; your child's attitude will be more positive; your child's confidence will be evident; the most challenging work will stimulate your child's natural problem-solving skills, rather than inducing frustration or shut-down. Be prepared: any number of other positive outcomes may reveal themselves over time.

So encourage the students in your life to play—it is good for the body and the mind ... and also good for the grades!



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Attention All Couponers and Wannabes...

Submitted by Bettyanne Nevil, Board Member and Avid Couponer

Keep on the lookout for an announcement about a couponing class coming up in the community center. The date will be announced by email.

We will touch on things such as how to use coupons to cut your grocery bill, easy steps to get started, coupon lingo, organizing your coupons and following sales cycles. There's a lot to learn and we are going to try to get it all in. I hope to see you there!

Eats Around Town

By Julie Harter, Contributor



For this issue of "Eats Around Town" let me take you on a journey to the south yet, right out your back door, to a place called "Big Mama's Soul Food". A friend and I went here for lunch to give it a try.

As soon as we entered, we were greeted by very friendly employees that made us feel right at home. I ordered fried chicken, mac & cheese and collard greens, while my friend ordered fried chicken, potato wedges and salad.

Let me start with the chicken. It was perfectly seasoned, moist, and took me back to childhood when we would visit family down south. This is what finger licking good is all about and Big Mama's didn't let this big mama down. Collard greens, another food I can

be very picky about, was a mouthful of joy, cooked perfectly with smoked turkey wings instead of ham. This made for a non-greasy healthier green. I could eat Big Mamas collard greens all day.

My friend's extra large cut wedges were made from fresh potatoes, cooked and seasoned delightfully. The mac & cheese was a warming sensation and felt like a big hug from grandma with each bite. All meals come with a choice of 2 sides and a square of cornbread.

Once we were finished eating the generous portions, we had to decline on dessert which was very hard because they had on display a plethora of cakes that looked moist and delicious. I will definitely return with my family and make sure I get to eat cake too. I give Big Mama's a Big thumbs up.



Miami To The Mountain Has It's Ups and Downs

By Jane Harris, Communications Committee

The first road trip began in 1985; the drive to Miami for a short stay...2 or 3 years. The plan was for my husband to work on his PhD at the University of Miami then we would head back "home" to PA. As plans go; the plan morphed several times over.

The new "plan" was that, eventually, we would work our way back to the Northeast...to the Wyoming Valley where we were born and raised.

Meanwhile we devised a variety of visits...always different. Holidays, family events, summer, spring and fall foliage kept us in touch with our roots.

Easily done if either of us were flying alone. Together meant boarding dogs and finding a sitter to come in for the kitties.

We've done all possible combinations of the above for almost 30 years.

The ebb and flow of pets changed, as did our strategies.

Right now either I fly up alone...or we go as a family. The drive with 7 cats and 2 dogs is done in 24 hours at hubby's insistence that we just GET IT DONE!

Our destination for the past eight years has been our home in Penn Estates where we crash after our drive. Touching base with friends, waving to neighbors, attending a meeting or even helping Naomi to trap a stray feline or two are all part of the experience.

When we begin our trip the cat cages are safely strapped into the back space of our Honda Element. The dogs just behind our seats (with a baby gate in place to prevent them from accessing our laps)...and off we go!

Heading up Hallet Road, the long drive behind us, I'm so psyched...to drive into the garage...open the cages and watch them all scatter, heading right for their favorite hiding place. We're home!



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Breakfast With Santa

By Michael Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member

As in the past, the children of Penn Estates experienced a treat that they look forward to every year, Breakfast with Santa, which took place on Saturday December 6. This is one of the most popular events organized by our dedicated volunteers and the recreation committee.

I arrived about 30 minutes after the start and the Oak Room was packed with gleeful kids and their parents. I suspect this was the best attended Penn Estates event in our history. The drill is that a 3 buck fee per child covers breakfast which consisted of sausage, pancakes, juice and cookies. Pictures with Santa are extra.

A small gift is given to each child by Santa, which is provided by the parents. I did not attend with any child, but still felt a warm sense of community and Christmas spirit at the time which lasted for the rest of the day. Check out the great photos taken by Lisa Ortiz. If you missed out this year, get the date on your calendars for 2015 (probably the first Saturday in December).





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Did you know:

- 69 homes are presently for sale in Penn Estates.
- 93 homes sold in Penn Estates in 2014.
- The highest-priced home sold for \$191,000 in 2014.
(Information provided through Pocono Mountain Assoc. of Realtors MLS Service)
- 90% of buyers start their search on the Internet.
- The average age of today's buyer is 25 years old.

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