



Living in Harmony with Nature Harmony

Penn Estates Property Owners Association

August/September 2017



A beautiful summer photo of our lake

Photo by Ting Qian

Meet Our New Community Manager

I want to take the opportunity to introduce myself. I'm Phyllis Haase, and I've recently joined the Penn Estates team as Community Manager.

My background is in business and facility management and I have earned numerous educational credits in floodplain management, emergency management and labor law.

I previously served as Zoning Officer and 911 Coordinator, prior to accepting the position of Manager for a local municipality.

My collaboration with local, state and federal agencies including but not limited to Department of Environmental Protection (PaDEP), Labor and Industry (L&I), Monroe County Conservation District (MCCD), US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Pennsylvania Department of Transportation District 5 (PennDot), Department of Agriculture and Monroe County Planning Commission (MCPC), has provided me the opportunity to familiarize myself with the state law and permitting, all of which enhances my role as Community Manager of Penn Estates.

I have served on the board of the Pocono Mountain Regional Emergency Medical Services (PMREMS), member of the Pocono Mountain Regional Police Commission, Monroe County Top of the Mountain Planning Board, and Vice Chair of Community Association Institute Volunteer Leadership Committee (CAI).

Please feel free to contact me at PhyllisHaase@PEPOA.org with questions or concerns and follow us on the Penn Estates official Facebook page: Penn Estates Property Owners Association.

President's Message

by Sean Reilly, PEPOA President

Hello Association members and a happy summer to all!

Let's hope we have as many sunny summer days as we had wet spring days. On a positive note, the wet, cool, soggy spring days have helped kill off most of the Gypsy moth caterpillar which periodically eat our forest canopy.

New Officers - I am happy to serve as your President for this next year, after which I will be term-limited out for a year. Your other officers are Jose Padilla, Vice-President; Sandra Bonet, Secretary and Ron Gatti, Treasurer.

New Beginnings - Our spring election of new Board members and Officers coincided with the resignation of our long serving and successful manager Laura Jones. Ms. Jones served the community well over her eight year stay, helping us prosper as a first rate private community in the Poconos. We all have wished her well in her new adventures in community management.

Our search for a new Community Manager has resulted in the selection of Phyllis Haase, a highly experienced manager and officer in both the private and public sectors in the Poconos. Phyllis has been on the job since June 19th and is getting to know our staff and officers, Board and Committees, rules covenants, by-laws and Budget. Welcome Phyllis!

Rear Gate Traffic Snarls - our new system of permitting guests, contractors and delivery trucks to confirm pre-registration and enter the Rear Gate has hit some rush hour backups. The new software and guest paper passes work smoothly. When the approved pass is inserted to the reader the gate lifts in one second. The mechanics work.

The primary cause of backups is guests, contractors or delivery trucks that have not been properly pre-registered and informed by owners or residents who they are visiting. This causes a 2 to 4 minute information exchange delay or if denied, requires the visitor to back up into traffic and turn around and go to the front gate. Meanwhile 5, 6, 7 or more cars with passes are backed up into the roadway waiting.

Solution: PLEASE properly pre-register your guests. FIRST: Call them into the guest registry at 570-424-7047 and provide your name and address, the guest's name, the duration of their stay and your account password to prove it is you inviting them in. If you have forgotten your password call administration (570- 421-4265) to get it or a new one. NEXT: Call your guest and advise them they will be asked for the make, model, color and year of the car they are arriving in and the license plate number. This should take about 60 seconds (you can't believe the number of people who have to get out of their car to read their license plate and slow the line). That's it.

GPS - A good alternative to avoiding any guest or truck backlogs at the Rear Gate is to direct your guests to the lightly used Front Gate off Hallet Road. Give them the 525 Penn Estates Drive address for their GPS device. Upon entering the community they enter your house address for final arrival directions.

Budget Planning - The 2018 Budget planning sessions begin in earnest with the Saturday, July 15 Budget Forum. The draft budget is then prepared by the Community Manager and submitted to the Finance Committee in August for their deliberations. The Board will approve a preliminary budget in September then hold forums in October and November prior to final adoption. All sessions are open to PEPOA Owners.

Road Repair - Now that Penn Estates Drive Is completed, we are turning our attention to the interior roadways. We are projecting expenditures in the range of \$500,000 to \$750,000 in repairs and sealing and paving of between 6 and 10 miles of the most needy of our 27 miles of roads.

Construction - we are moving ahead with the planning, engineering, permitting and bidding of the rear Mailbox Covers, the Basketball and Tennis court refurbishing and the Community Center crawl space repairs to be completed in the fall/winter of this year or spring of 2018.

Lake Work - Beginning on about September 5th we hope to begin our Hyland Lake beach sediment cleaning and sand shoreline shaping. This will restore the original sand contour and width and swimming depth.

Enjoy the beautiful pools and beach and paddling and fishing.



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Eats Around Town

by Julie Harter, Communications Committee Member

Recently I had a hankering for some paella. I haven't been to Marco Antonio's restaurant, on Main Street, for a few years so it sounded like a good date night. When my husband and I walked in, it was still that quaint little restaurant that I remembered and we were seated right away. This place is a BYOB so my hubby picked out a very nice wine for us to drink. The waitress immediately asked to open it and brought it back with two glasses and took our order.

Even though the octopus salad came highly recommended by friends, my husband said he wasn't in the mood for it so we settled on the fried calamari. Well, it turned out that we didn't settle at all because the calamari were cooked to perfection, with the lightly battered pieces that were golden brown. For his entree, my husband ordered the special of the day: Crab Cakes.



I ordered - you guessed it - their Paella Marinara. When our entrees came out, we were pleasantly surprised that there wasn't just one crab cake but two large cakes stacked on the plate. They were made with large clumps of crab with very little filler. They were scrumptious and I know this

because, as soon as the plate hit the table I snatched a big bite - CRAB HEAVEN! Now let's talk paella! My dish was amazing, reminding me of back in New Jersey and the Portuguese restaurants I would frequent in the iron bound section of Newark. The saffron rice was delicious and authentic filled with shrimp, mussels,

littleneck clams, and sea scallops topped famously with a half of a pound and a half lobster. I had leftovers for two more meals. Although we were too full, they do serve dessert and coffee that looked delightful.



So, call a friend or tell your significant other it is time for a night out and go to Marco Antonio's on Main Street in Stroudsburg.

Out & About

Things to Do and See in the Poconos

By Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee

Summer is truly here. I was at our pool the first weekend that it opened. What a beautiful and crystal clear pool! Are you enjoying the pool and lake? Have you seen the incredible bird and wildlife pictures on Instagram? Driving home this evening I saw my first fox running across the road. I have always enjoyed camping, loving the wildlife and the night sky. I now enjoy the camping experience from home, but with a soft mattress and flushing toilets.

Here are some of the upcoming events around the area. As always, I take my information from internet sites. Please call to confirm dates and times and costs. Of course, there is a delay between writing this article and the publication of the Harmony. You may want to check the newspapers, and internet for other events.

This is a great season for outdoor festivals. On 8/12-8/13 the Sweet Corn and BBQ festival will be held at Shawnee Mountain Ski area. Quite Valley Living Historical Farm is an interesting day any time (except Mondays) and they have special events throughout the year. They host the Heritage Craft Fair on 8/5 and the Annual Pocono Craft Fair with crafts, demonstrations and music on 8/26 and 8/27. August 5th is a fun day for kids. The Kid's Day at Monroe Farmer's Market on Monroe Street in Stroudsburg is on 8/5 from 10-4. Mady's Snow Day is at Pint Size Park in Tannersville on 8/6. Enjoy magicians, a climbing wall, games, tattoos and more. There is a \$10 fee for adults but kids are free.

The Annual Festival of Wood is at Grey Towers in Milford on 8/5 and 8/6. On 8/26 and 8/27 is the Blue Mountain Resort's Beer Fest. The PA Wing Festival (formerly the Wing-Off) is on 8/12 at Pocono Raceway at Long Pond. The West End Fair is at Gilbert from 8/20 to 8/26. The Pocono Garlic Fest is on 9/2 and 9/3 at Shawnee Mountain. Stroudfest in downtown Stroudsburg is on 9/2. The Annual COTA Jazz and Arts Festival is at the Delaware Water Gap on 9/8 and 9/10.

The Tannersville Bog Walk of 2.5 hour is on Wednesdays from 10-12:30 through 9/13. If you enjoy the outdoors, check out the many activities and events at the Pocono Environmental Education Center in Dingman's Ferry.

How about a little free music? There are outdoor concerts at Dansbury Depot on Monday nights through September 25th. The Shawnee outdoor community concert series and farmer's market on Tuesdays from 6-8 through 9/19.

Have fun! Please let me know of your favorite events so that I can include them in the future.



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Volunteer Recruitment Day

by Lucy Jacobsen, Chair Nominating & Steering Committee

On May 20th, the Nominating & Steering Committee held our annual Volunteer Recruitment Event. Each committee was represented by the committee chair, Liaison or a committee member. Residents who attended were able to get detailed information about the committee. The committee prepared a light fare menu and beverages; a special cocktail was served to those who joined a committee.

We received nine new volunteer applications. There are still many committees in need of volunteers. If you can give about 1 hour per month and want to make a difference, join a committee. You can stop down and the administration building to pick up and application. You can view all the committees on the PEPOA website.

In order to be a voting member, you must be a deeded homeowner in good standing. To be a non-voting member, you must be a family member of a deeded homeowner in good standing. Renters are not permitted to be volunteers, but are always welcome to attend events.

Thank you to all those who attended and to the members of the Nominating and Steering Committee for all their hard work in putting this event together.

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..... | 2nd Tuesday | 7:30 pm |
| Communications | 3rd Saturday | 10:00 am |
| Community Documents | TBD | |
| Community Safety..... | 1st Saturday | 9:00 am |
| Finance | 4th Saturday..... | 9:00 am |
| Government Relations | TBD | |
| 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..... | 4th Wednesday | 7:00 pm |

REMINDER: The speed limit on ALL Penn Estates roads is 25 MPH, except where otherwise posted. Thank you!

Important Phone Numbers



| | |
|--|---------------------|
| EMERGENCY (Fire/Medical/Police) | 9-1-1 |
| Security | 570-424-7042 |
| Welcome Center (Guest Registry) | 570-424-7047 |
| Administration Building | 570-421-4265 |
| Penn Estate Utilities (Sewer/Water) | 800-860-4512 |



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Harmony

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School Bus Safety

by John Baraniuk, Board Member,
Community Safety Committee

Are you aware that Penn Estates has a school bus stop parking rule? For the safety of our children, back in 2014, the Community Safety Committee suggested to the board to implement a rule where residents could safely park while waiting for the school bus to pick up and/or drop off their child.

The board agreed to this idea and signs were placed at all school bus stops and at the intersections where the rule applies.

The rule is under Article VII, PARKING RULES, Section 7-A of the Rules and Regulations. No standing or parking of any motor vehicle allowed as follows: 30 feet before or after a stop sign, with or without a bus stop, and vehicles at bus stops must park on the right side only facing the intersection and bus stop.

Any person found to be in violation of this article is subject to possible citation and fines as outlined in the Article XXI-Schedule of Fines.

The Community Safety Committee also asks the parents who are taking their children to the school bus stop to please give yourself extra time to arrive. Speeding to the school bus stop endangers you and others around you. Do not stand in the middle of the roadway at a school bus stop. This causes a hazard and can interfere with drivers using the roadway.



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Real Estate Update

by Maureen P. Shindle, Contributor

The Penn Estates real estate market remains extremely active with 62 closings and 30 pending transactions as of July 6, 2017. If all pending transactions close, we are now averaging 15 sales per month up from 12 per month in May. If this trend continues, we are on target for 184 sales in 2017, setting us up for a remarkable year and a windfall for our budget since each sale brings in \$1,190 for our Capital Improvement Fund.

There are currently 41 active listings of which four are foreclosures and no short sales. Of the current pending deals, seven are foreclosures. Foreclosures (24) were 38.7% of sales during 2017. The average sale price for these foreclosures is \$67,323, up appreciably from 2016.

There has also been a notable decrease in Average Days on Market with closed deals moving to 108 days from 180 earlier this year. Additionally, given the current close rate, we have 2.7 months inventory. These numbers are true indicators that Penn Estates remains a desirable community for new homebuyers.

Information has been gathered from the Pocono Mountains Association of REALTORS' Multiple Listing Service for the period January 1, 2017 to July 6, 2017.

| Category | Active Listings | Pending Sales | Total Sales |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|
| Total | 41 | 30 | 62 |
| Foreclosures | 4 | 7 | 24 |
| Short Sales | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Low List/Sold Price | 76,500 | 44,900 | 25,000 |
| High List/Sold Price | 260,000 | 116,900 | 124,900 |
| Avg. List/Sold Price | 125,850 | 82,307 | 67,323 |
| Avg. Days on Market | 74 | 38 | 108 |

Total Sales include sales from 1/2/2017 to 7/6/2017. Average Sale Price of these sales is \$67,323 which is 86.7% of the Average List Price. Foreclosures represent 38.7% of the sales for Penn Estates to date.

Pending Sale information reflects only list prices as sold information is not available until the sale is final. 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 38.7% of the transactions for 2017 year to date. This number has an impact on our market because of the considerably reduced prices they allow.

Maureen Shindle is a 16 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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Love your dog. Leash your dog!

We love dogs—we really do. That's why the association is committed to enforcing leash laws on association property. According to the U.S. Humane Society, an unleashed dog has an average life span of less than four years? Allowing your dog to run free threatens your dog's health and welfare and the happiness it brings to you.

We also love our community. That's another reason the association is committed to enforcing leash laws—so all residents may enjoy our community.

We trust we can count on you for voluntary compliance with the leash law. We don't like to call animal control or issue citations, but we won't have any choice if your dog is running free.

ARTICLE XIV RULES FOR PETS AND WILDLIFE Approved Rules and Regulations January 3, 2014

1. The keeping of poultry or animals other than those classified as family pets, i.e., dogs, cats, and caged birds, shall be prohibited. [Cross reference Declaration of Protective Covenants #9].
2. Animals may not be kept, bred or maintained for any commercial purpose. No exotic animals, livestock or poultry of any kind shall be raised, bred or kept on any lot.
3. All canines in the community shall be registered with the Association. Owners and Renters who register their pets will receive a numbered tag which needs to be placed on the pet's collar so that the dog may be identified and returned. A nominal suggested donation shall be requested for each dog registered.
4. All pets in Pennsylvania, after six (6) months of age, must have a Pennsylvania license or other state license. Pet tags must be displayed and vaccination record produced upon request by Public Safety.
5. All pets must be confined to the dog owner's property. When walked off the owner's property, all dogs must be on a leash. Any and all pet excrement must be immediately picked-up and placed in a trash receptacle or

Pet Waste Station.

6. No dogs, cats or other animals referred to, as household pets will be permitted at the lakes, pools, beaches, playgrounds, picnic areas or any other places designated as recreational areas and/or common areas.
7. All household pets must be kept under the pet owner's control at all times. The following will be deemed in violation of this rule:
 - A. Animals found roaming freely; or
 - B. Ongoing or persistent barking, which disturbs or interferes with the peace, tranquility and comfort of others, or otherwise deemed a nuisance. [Cross reference Article II Rules for Conduct, #4(B) and #11]; or
 - C. Behavior that is perceived as menacing to others, behavior that damages property, or behavior threatens health and safety of others or their pets.
8. Willful and obvious disregard for safety of others, by repeated instances of permitting pets to roam freely in community will be deemed in violation of this rule.
9. Any pet found roaming freely in the community can be picked up and detained for a reasonable period of time at a designated penned area before being released to a local shelter. Any dog or cat found without identification will be deemed stray or feral and immediately sent to a shelter. All costs associated shall be the responsibility of the owner.
10. Property Owners, Renters and their Guests are prohibited from feeding non-domesticated mammals found within Penn Estates. Domestic mammals by definition are ones which have become adapted through breeding in captivity to a life intimately associated with man. Feeding of non-domestic mammals of any kind, including but not limited to deer, squirrel, raccoon, skunk, opossum, bear, coyote, feral cats, etc., is strictly prohibited.

Violations of any part of this section will subject the Property Owner, their Renters or Guests to fines as outlined in Article XXI – Schedule of Fines.

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Past President Farewell Message

by Luna Mishoe, Past PEPOA President

On Saturday May 6, 2017, when our Board reorganized, I relinquished (by vote) the Presidency. Even though I will not be President during the coming year, I remain a Board Member. In May of 2018, I will come off for a year because we now have term limits and I will be completing my second three-year term. Gee, time got by quickly.

I would be remiss not to pause and express my gratitude to you for having the trust and confidence in me to elect me twice to the Board. I want also to thank our Board for voting to allow me to serve as President a full year. I have enjoyed facing and leading the charge through many challenges and tough decisions that had to be made.

To my successor, I offer my congratulations, support and best wishes for a continued successful administration. I would be most pleased if our Board would complete the projects that are on the table now, not carry them into 2018 or substitute other projects ahead of them.

I have been asked to give an accounting of my tenure as President. It is my pleasure to do so but let me first say that it has been a team effort and I have provided progress reports in each edition of the Harmony as your President. What I did was to initiate an organizational strategy whereby each director could exercise his skill and interest to the max and in the best interest of our Penn Estates residents. We ended up with four working panels that worked concurrently to get projects completed; construction, finance, special projects and personnel. These panels worked hard to get things done. Let me give you this brief, but not all-inclusive, synopsis of my administration.

CONTROL OF GYPSY MOTH PROBLEM - We were able to accomplish spraying which minimized the appearance and damaging effects of the Gypsy Moth. We do not have the Gypsy Moth problem and will not for a while.

BUDGET SURPLUS - We carried a surplus into this year's budget for the eighth consecutive year. My goal is 10 consecutive years, and I believe that is still realistic.

GRAND OPENING OF THE CHILL GRILL - After seeking, planning, interviewing, renovating and preparing for years, we finally had a grand opening of the Chill Grill. It has been a long time coming and finally it is a reality. LET US ALL PARTICIPATE in the making of this amenity a continued country store success story.

ENHANCED BEAUTIFICATION OF OUR COMMUNITY CENTER - You have noticed several improvements at the community center that tremendously enhance the beauty and comfort of the facility. My regret is that the crawl space area did not get completed. It is an active project. When completed, we will increase our usable space by approximately 50% without having to engage in any additional construction.

NEWLY ORGANIZED YOUTH PROGRAM - I am sure you have heard about the establishment and continued growth of our youth activities program which now boasts over 40 youngsters on a monthly basis. The youth group is growing and your

participation and guidance would really be appreciated.

GATE ACCESS SYSTEM - We are still wrestling with our new gate access system. There is a lot to be desired, but it is a big improvement over what we had. We will not rest until the system performs to our standards and we will remain vigilant. Problems are continuously being addressed and perfection appears to be less than 100%.

WATER AND SEWER RATE REDUCTION - Almost every other year or so there is a request for either a water or sewer rate increase. With regard to the water rate increase, we came together, requested and held a hearing here in Penn Estates. The result was that we did accomplish a reduction, but not as much as we thought it should have been. These requests will continue to come, but we must continue our efforts to keep the outcome of each of the future increase requests at a minimal.

WE ARE NOW A DEBT FREE COMMUNITY - If you are not aware by now, allow me to report to you that we are now a debt free community. We have paid off all our loans which will save us significantly in interest and other fees. This is a major accomplishment. Now we can complete existing planned projects and initiate additional one as the need occurs. This is an envious position to be in for any community.

PENN ESTATES DRIVE COMPLETION - The completion of Penn Estates Drive has taken more than seven years. After many years of contemplation, planning and discussion, it is now done. It was completed ahead of schedule and below budget.

THE HALLET ROAD BRIDGE - The final item that I want to report to you is the reconstruction of the Hallet Road Bridge. This bridge opened to traffic in June, ahead of schedule. Go ahead and shout if you so desire! I chose to stay involved and on top of this situation all the way and we were able to accomplish the reconstruction in a six-month period (January-June) while initial estimates were in the three-year time frame. Once PennDOT and our State Representatives identified the funds, the planning and implementation measures commenced. PennDOT deserves a lot of credit and appreciation for their dedication to this project. It is much sturdier and will accommodate traffic in both directions. It is not weight restricted.

The Presidential reins have been turned over to newly elected Sean Reilly and he will have plenty of support in getting additional projects completed such as the rear mailbox project, the marquis, the crawl space at the community center, the tennis and basket ball refurbishing project as well as improvements to the side roads. These projects will be quite ambitious but necessary.

You will be even more proud of being a resident of Penn Estates as these projects are completed. As you can see, there is plenty for you to do, so plan to get involved. I plan to remain involved. Join me - get involved.

Treasurer's Report

by Ron Gatti, Penn Estates Board Member and Treasurer

The Penn Estates Property Owner's Association is funded primarily by the dues assessed to every property owner. The annual dues make up approximately 83% of our total receipts, with only 17% from all other sources. Without these assessments, Penn Estates could not maintain our roads, operate the amenities, provide security and the other services required and enjoyed by our residents.

Fortunately, most owners pay their obligations on time and our overall financial position has been very stable. For those owners who have difficulty paying their accounts when due (February 15th of each year) we have offered various payment plans to allow some flexibility. However, dues not paid by July 15th of each year are considered delinquent, and those accounts are subject to penalties, including loss of good standing, and additional costs as provided by law and our governing documents.

Over a period of years, according to our records, the total delinquency exceeds \$2.5 million. Some of the debt is uncollectable for various reasons such as disappearance, death, bankruptcy, foreclosure, etc.

The Finance Committee and the Board of Directors will be reviewing our Collection Policy and Procedures manual with a view toward implementing stronger collection of delinquent accounts wherever possible, and eliminating from our records the debt which cannot be collected.

We recognize that in some cases hardships exist, and we will make every effort to consider special circumstances that can befall anyone. However, if we are not diligent in our delinquent account collection efforts, it would result in unfair burdens on those residents who meet their obligations on time, even when it may be necessary to sacrifice to do so.

In closing, we want to commend the great majority of owners whose dues are paid in full; and to suggest that any owner who is delinquent contact the Administration Office at 570-421-4265 to discuss their account. All owners may be assured that it is our intention to maintain the fiscal integrity of the community, which can involve litigation in pursuit of collection of delinquent accounts when necessary.

Outdoor Water Conservation

Even though we use water every day, it's easy to take it for granted. Just imagine how you would function without clean water. It's everyone's responsibility to conserve and protect water resources. The decisions and actions you make today truly affect our water resources for the future. The following suggestions will help you get in the habit of saving water in the great outdoors:

- Get a rain gauge to measure rainfall. One inch of rain per week is generally sufficient for lawns and gardens. Supplement only when rainfall is inadequate.
- Use mulch around landscape plantings. Mulch will help eliminate weeds and hold moisture in the soil.
- Select hardy plants that don't need much water. Native plants that are well adapted to your climate and soils will survive well without supplemental watering.
- Water during the cool part of the day to avoid rapid evaporation.
- Raise the mowing heights on your lawn mower. This promotes healthier grass that can better survive dry periods.
- When watering is necessary, water slowly and thoroughly. If you notice puddles or runoff, turn water off and wait for water to soak in. Also be sure your sprinkler puts water where you need it not on driveways or sidewalks.
- Wash cars efficiently. First give the car a quick rinse, and then turn the water off. Wash one section of the car at a time and rinse that section quickly. Turn the water off each time.

Visit www.auduboninternational.org for more conservation tips.

Tree Trimming can be Dangerous to our Wildlife

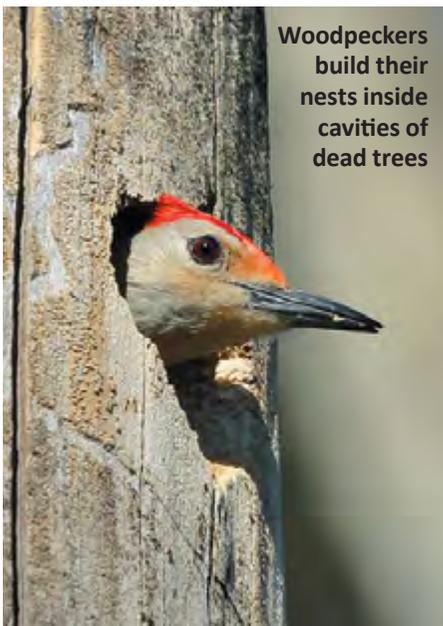
by Melissa Penta, Contributor

When making plans to cut or trim trees around your home, please consider the wildlife that could be using them as their nesting site. Local birds and mammals use our trees to nest from early spring to late summer. If you cut trees during that time then there is a chance that you could unknowingly kill eggs or babies. Most nests will be tucked away unseen or in the safety of the canopy. Hummingbirds' nests are hardly the size of a quarter and some animals build their nests inside cavities of dead trees.

Unless there is an emergency of a tree falling immediately or on your home, the best time to do your tree trimming is between September and March. Remember that we live in harmony with the wildlife around us and this includes protecting their families.



Wood thrush nest in the nook of a tree



Woodpeckers build their nests inside cavities of dead trees



A young raccoon peeks out of its home

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No-Sew Upholstery

by Jennifer Nicholson, Communications Committee Member

I can't sew. I don't own a sewing machine and I can't sew by hand. That is a shameful public admission for someone like me. I claim to be very crafty. It's hard to see projects that I would love to tackle but I cannot because my lack of sewing skills holds me back. One time I had to pay to have curtains hemmed and it wound up costing more than I paid for the curtains in the first place. So no, I will not be able to make my own cool clothes, sew cute little crafts, or even hem a straight line in a curtain (yes I tried) but I can upholster furniture.

There are a few different techniques for no-sew upholstery. I needed new cushions for my deck furniture and chose a method that would not only give me the look I wanted



but also reinforce my seating. My green and white striped cushions were left by the previous owner of my house and needed to go. I also had the problem that my bench and chair seat bowed down toward the floor so that when you sat in it you sunk down and found it difficult to stand up again. So I chose the method of no-sew upholstery that involves stapling everything to wood reinforcement. I measured the seat and cut the wood to fit. I had ordered batting and foam online and got the fabric I loved from American Ribbon Factory in town. First I laid down the fabric, then batting, then foam and lastly the wood. All you have to do is pull everything around as if you are wrap-

ping a present. The fabric and batting get pulled around and stapled to the wood. The only hard part is making sure your corners are nice and neat. I chose a thick, strong piece of wood for my seating and a much lighter, thinner piece of wood for the back of the seat because I didn't want the back of the seat to be too heavy and sink down, squishing the foam of the seat.

All in all I am very pleased with the result. In the end I don't think I saved any money over just ordering new cushions but I got a few benefits from doing it myself that I would not get from buying new cushions. First, I got that reinforcement I wanted. My seating is strong and firm and you don't sink down and feel trapped. Just buying cushions



would not solve that problem. The second benefit from doing it myself is that I could choose any fabric I wanted. When buying cushions you can only buy the colors and patterns that are offered. Outdoor seat cushions are very pricey and I couldn't bring myself to pay that much for a fabric I was indifferent to at best. And last I have flexibility in the future. If next year I decide that I want a totally different look then all I have to do is replace the fabric...everything else stays as is and I just staple new fabric to my creation. I can even leave the old fabric there and just put the new one right over it if I am feeling lazy (which I will).

This method can be used for indoor seating, benches, RVs etc. If you don't need the wood then you can reupholster existing cushions just using fabric glue. Instead of stapling the fabric to wood you just wrap it up like a present and fasten it to itself using fabric glue. Remember- no one will ever get down on the floor and inspect the underside of your cushions. If it's messy down there then no one ever needs to know.

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Raining Outside? Collage Time!

by Jane Harris, Communications Committee Member

What is a collage? What is a crazy collage? The word collage comes the French word “coller” which means “to paste.” You will cut and glue photos, parts of photos, pictures from magazines - maybe even newspapers.

What you will need:

- Magazines*
- Photos you don't mind cutting up*
- Scissors*
- Glue sticks (or any craft glue)*
- Construction paper, copy paper, poster board, even a piece of cardboard.*

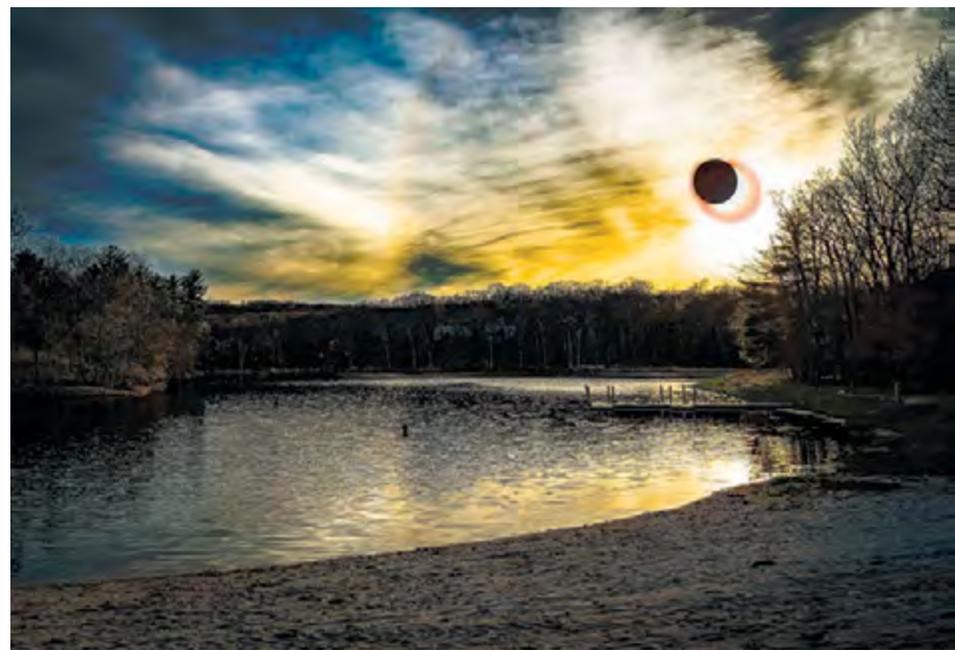
A really fun idea is to cut your face (head) from a photo and build a new body using techno images, dog or cat limbs... bird wings...pictures of furniture for this new crazy you!

You can create a scene around the figure or not.

I like finding a room setting or an outdoor scene in a magazine and adding pictures as if they really were there...like an elephant on a sofa...a kitten in the sink...or you sitting on top of an airplane! Create your own crazy world.

One important thing is to cut carefully and place the pieces in a way that makes the scene seem real even though it's CRAZY!

Pictured is one of the collages I've created.



The Great American Solar Eclipse

by David Montalvo, Contributor

On Aug. 21, 2017, people across the United States will see the sun disappear behind the moon in what is billed as The Great American Solar Eclipse. Aptly named since this is the first time since June 8th, 1918 that an eclipse has crossed the continental United States. Which means the entire country sits center stage for this celestial event.

Penn Estates is, unfortunately, not in the “Path of Totality,” where the disk of the sun is 100% obscured by the moon. From our relative perspective, the sun will only be about 73% obscured at maximum, which is still a memorable experience, weather permitting. While prime viewing will be around 2-3 pm in the afternoon, the moon’s approach and passing of the sun will be appreciable for most of the day.

If this event is somehow missed we will have another opportunity on April 8th 2024. On this date, from our relative perspective, the sun will be about 91% obscured.

As tempting as it may be to watch this celestial performance, please keep in mind looking directly at the sun is unsafe. This includes using an unfiltered camera, telescope, binoculars, or other optical devices. Unfiltered optical devices concentrate and focus light before it enters the eye which can result in serious injury.

The only safe way to look directly at the eclipse is through special-purpose solar filters, such as “eclipse glasses,” hand-held solar viewers, or the classic “pinhole projection” method. NASA recommends using products which meet ISO 12312-2 international standards. Several products are available on Amazon and other online retailers.

Stay safe and enjoy The Great American Solar Eclipse, Penn Estates.

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Kayaking

by Michele Valerio, Contributor

Kayaking is a fantastic way to exercise, see nature and socialize with friends. The Delaware River has many outfitters from the Delaware Water Gap all the way up to Milford PA - making it easy to rent or if you have your own kayak, get a shuttle back to your car after kayaking. The Pocono Pony offers free shuttles as well. I have been on the Delaware a few times and have managed to spot an eagle each time including the nest. It is nice to see that such a majestic bird has been making a come back.

I have also kayaked on the Susquehanna River with a group called Canoe and Brew. They are a fun group welcoming beginner and expert kayakers alike. The trips range from short 6-mile jaunts to overnight camping trips on an island. If you would like to take a trip on your own to the island, contact the outfitter Susquehanna Outdoor Adventures near Bloomburg. If you are lucky maybe you can get to stay in



one of the tree houses.

Most of the outfitters will provide lessons and necessary safety gear such as a life jacket. Even if you are an expert swimmer you must wear a life jacket. The waters are higher and faster than usual this year so you can plan longer mileage on the river. Hope you can get out there and enjoy the water.



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Reading Corner

By Evelyn Infante, Communications Committee Member

Lucky Number 7

7-7-17, a day when lotto machines around the country worked overtime to spit out those lucky tickets that would change the lives of believers in the power of 7.

Ever since man looked up at the sky and discovered seven visible planets, man has endeavored to bestow good luck on the number 7. After all, there are seven seas and seven continents, seven chakras, seven wonders of the world, and seven colors of the rainbow. In music there are seven notes on a musical scale, and isn't it true that music makes the world go round? And how about those seven spots on a ladybug? Coincidence? I think not. The universe has certainly given us lots of evidence to support the good-luck theory.

With all that evidence, man took it further. From the Bible's account of creation taking six days plus a day of rest, to King Solomon's temple taking seven years to build, to the story of Israelites marching around the walls of the city seven times during the battle of Jericho, and the Kaballah's seven-knot bracelet of protection against the evil eye, to the Jewish sitting shiva for seven days to mourn their dead, examples abound. Even Snow White has seven dwarfs to keep her company. Hollywood has certainly made use of the number seven - Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, The Magnificent Seven, Furious 7, The Seventh Seal, etc, etc.

So I was wondering, since there is no time, why doesn't the week have ten days? We could work five and have five days off. Imagine that. But no, we had to have seven days. Ten wouldn't have worked for the believers of lucky seven.

Since ancient times, the number seven has been so interwoven in different cultures of the world, that we don't even realize how that number has become universal. Ever wonder why we stretch during the seventh inning of a baseball game? Why not the sixth? By the sixth inning, aren't we tired of sitting?

Oh, but there's also a negative side to the number seven. The Romans believed the body's physical and soul regeneration took place every seven years. If you broke a mirror, that process was interrupted and you had to wait another seven years, hence seven years of bad luck. For the Chinese, the number seven is the ghostly number, which is unlucky.

There are seven deadly sins, and seven plagues. And how about that seven-year itch couples are supposed to go through? Marilyn Monroe proved that one in the movie, The Seven Year Itch. There are probably more reasons to fear the number seven, but pay that no mind. We don't want to be negative about such a wonderful number.

All in all, the number seven is generally perceived to be a good luck number. It is a gambler's magic number.

Did you miss out on winning that pot on July 7, 2007 and again on July 17, 2007? Well, the universe gave you another chance.

Did you buy those lucky lottery tickets on 7-7-17, and if you don't win, there was always 7-17-17. Come to think of it, July was the 7th month of the year, and doesn't every month have a seventh day? I know, 7-17-17 had four sevens. Can't beat that!



A Different Kind of Escape

by Matthew Jacobsen, Communications Committee Member

Escape Rooms have arrived in Stroudsburg! We now have two: Escape Poconos, which opened in 2015 and Klues Escape Room, which opened in 2016. I had the pleasure of experiencing both of these activities and if you like a challenge, these two local places are right up your alley.

The best way to describe these activities would be to compare them to a giant puzzle game. You are put inside a small room and given an hour to escape from it. There are clues along the way as you progress throughout the room. Each clue can either lead to the next room, give you a key to a lock or just give you access to an even more detailed clue that will lead you out of the room. Each place however does have some differences with how they help you progress.

Escape Poconos, which opened in 2015, has three rooms for guests to attempt to escape. The Million Dollar Heist takes place inside of bank whose alarm just went off and you need to get out before the cops arrive. The Lock Up puts you and the rest of the group behind bars and the goal is to not only escape the cell but find any evidence the police have gathered so they can convict you. Finally, you have Poconos Room which is basically a log cabin that you are trapped in and need to escape from. I am proud to say that my group and I succeed with 3 minutes to spare. Escape Pocono gives you up to three hints that you are allowed to use at any point during the hour; however, once you use all your hints you are on your own.

Klues Escape Room, which opened in 2016, has four rooms for people to explore: The Curse of the Pharaoh, The Mad Hatter Room, The Mad Scientist and the room I attempted, Moonshiner. The Pharaohs room is as it sounds; you're in a pharaoh's tomb and you must solve the clues or be cursed forever. The Mad Hatter is a tribute to Alice in Wonderland where you must find your way down "the rabbit hole" to enter wonderland. Mad Scientist is a room where an experiment has gone wrong and need you to find a cure. Moonshiner's scenario tells you that your uncle has been arrested and in order to pay his bail you need to go to his cabin, find his moonshine and sell it to post his bail. I am sad to report that I did not complete this challenge. Klues gives you hints as you go along if they notice through their cameras if you are really struggling.

Klues Escape Room hours of operation are Monday and Tuesday 9:30am to 10pm and Wednesday to Sun 8am to 10pm, Escape Poconos hours are Thursday and Friday from 4pm to 10:30pm, Sat from 12:30pm to 10:30pm and Sunday 12:30pm to 5pm. Whether you go with family or friends, this will be a fun experience and a chance to test your detective skills.

Stay in Touch with Penn Estates

Website: www.pepoa.org

Facebook

Official Page: Penn Estates Property Owners Association

Resident Group: Living in Penn Estates

Other: Penn Estates Online Yard Sale

Instagram: [penn_estates_wildlife](https://www.instagram.com/penn_estates_wildlife)

Twitter: @PennEstatesPOA

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Self Defense Seminar

by John Baraniuk, Community Safety Committee

On Saturday June 10th the Community Safety Committee sponsored a Self Defense Seminar hosted by Rovito Brothers Martial Arts of Sciota, Pa at the Community Center. The seminar was free and light refreshments were provided.

Todd Rovito, the owner, began the seminar by introducing himself to the audience and telling them of his martial arts background. He presently works for Homeland Security and is a former Stroud Regional Police Officer. He explained various ways to defend yourself using different methods. Todd answered questions from the audience which consist of approximately 30 people.

Todd demonstrated using his associate Brian Trinkly, what to do when someone is threatened with a knife. Todd's associate Debora Buckley demonstrated how she can defend herself even though she is small and petite by using her



legs and brute kicks on her attacker.

Todd's associate Jackie Row demonstrated how to defend herself from her assailant. Debora also showed how to fight off her assailant using her legs as leverage bringing her body to an offensive position and Todd demonstrated what to do when an attacker has a gun pointed at you.

After the seminar, Todd and his associates posed for a group picture with the committee, Dorritte, John, Romona, Barbara and Christine, an applicant for the committee.

The feedback we received was very favorable and we will plan another self defense seminar in the near future.

Rules and Regulations

by Sandy Bonet, Communication Committee Board Liaison

Remember that packet of papers you got when you first bought or rented your home here in Penn Estates? If you're like me, you glanced at them, maybe even read them once and then put them in a drawer and went about settling into your new home.

Well, a few months later, I realized I needed a fence in the backyard for my furry herd of small dogs. Fortunately, I took another look at our community's rules and regulations and learned how to go about getting a permit for a fence. That's the first time I mindfully read about the responsibilities of living in Penn Estates and came to realize how they are designed to keep us living in harmony with nature and with our neighbors.

So, just in case you haven't had to build a fence, paint your house or respond to a speeding citation lately, here is a brief summary of the resolutions that most frequently result in citations:

Vehicle Access to the Community

These regulations are at the heart of what it means to be a gated community like ours. Restricting access to homeowners, renters and their guests, helps to create a safe, secure environment for all our families.

1. Tampering with any gate, an/or trespass or "piggy back" to gain entry is prohibited and punishable by citation and fine.
2. Pass back of a valid access card to another vehicle is prohibited.
 - The owner of the property to which the access care was issued, regardless of whether the care owner is a Property Owner or Renter, shall incur a fine.
 - If either of the vehicles entering is not property registered with the Association, and not displaying proper vehicle identification, an additional fine shall be incurred.

Guest Policy

The Property Owner is ultimately responsible for the conduct of their guests or their renters. Those who rent their property should make sure that their renters understand this and have a recent copy of the Rules and Regulations. These are available from the Administration Office.

1. Property Owners are liable for the behavior of Renters and/or guests while visiting or living in Penn Estates. This includes adherence to all rules, including the motor vehicle rules, of the Association. Those who do not comply or attempt to circumvent the POA's rules shall be subject to citations and/or fines. Ultimately, Property Owners are responsible for the payment of all fines incurred.
2. If guests of an Owner or Renter wish to utilize amenities, without the Homeowner or Renter, amenity badges will be required.

Motor and Other Vehicle Rules

The Penn Estates community includes many children, walkers, joggers and bicyclists

as well as pets and natural wildlife. Speeding and running stop signs present a danger to all of them. By far the majority of citations are issued for either speeding or failure to stop at a sign.

1. A "No Tolerance Speed Zone" exists along with Community Center properties on Penn Estates Drive between Lansdale Drive and Mill Road, year-round from 6AM to 8PM. The fine for violation of the Motor Vehicle Rules in the No Tolerance Zone will subject the offender to double the fine among for speeds in excess of the posted 25 MPH.
2. All motorists must:
 - Stop at least 10 feet away from a stopped school bus with red signal lights flashing and arm extended.
 - Stop when approaching an intersection where a school bus is stopped with red signal lights flashing and arm expended.
 - Wait until the red lights have stopped and the arm has been withdrawn before moving
 - Not move until all children have reached a place of safety
3. Vehicles approaching a stop sign must come to a complete stop before proceeding into the intersection. Rolling stops are not permitted
4. No commercial vehicle may be parked or otherwise stored on any street, lot or designated parking area at any time unless being used in connection with delivering or picking up goods or providing interior services to the owner or resident of the property during the hours of 7AM to 9PM.
5. Commercial vehicles shall include any vehicle that is commercial in nature and not ordinarily kept or stored within a residential community.

Pets and Wildlife

1. All pets must be confined to the dog owner's property. When walked off the owner's property, all dogs must be on a leash. Any and all pet excrement must be immediately picked up and placed in a trash receptacle or Pet Waste Station.
2. Property Owners, Renters and their Guests are prohibited from feeding non-domesticated animals found within Penn Estates. This includes, but is not limited to, deer, squirrel, raccoon, skunk, opossum, bear, coyote, feral cats, etc.
3. Violations of any part of this section will subject the Property Owner, their Renters or Guests to fines.

Fireworks

As a forested community, family-oriented community, fireworks create both a fire and injury risk s for all of us

1. Fireworks are prohibited in Penn Estates. This includes but is not limited to sparklers, smoke bombs, firecrackers, skyrockets, roman candles, aerial fireworks or other fireworks of like construction, and any fireworks containing any explosive or flammable compound.

Conclusion - This is only a small sampling of our responsibilities as residents of Penn Estates. Please take the time to read your complete copy. If you don't have a recent copy, they are available at the Administrative Office.

Does My Child Need a Tutor?

by Katherine Hernandez, Communications Committee Member

With the new school year approaching (or underway, depending on which school your child attends) it's a good time to get clear about some signs that your child needs a tutor. As a teacher, parent, and tutor, I've spent more than fifteen years learning to detect and respond to these clues before they snowball.

Often, families come to tutoring long after a problem has persisted to the point of causing significant damage to the child's skills and confidence. This is understandable, since detecting the difference between a small misunderstanding and an actual deficit that requires intervention can be difficult.

There are a lot of factors to consider, not the least of which is how your child will respond to the suggestion of more help with academic learning. Your conversations will need to emphasize the fact that, at some point, every learner needs support and those who get that support tend to improve quickly and have a better school experience.

Knowing what to look for is key to catching struggles before they balloon into bigger problems. Like most problems in life, academic slipping is best treated early, so the child doesn't fall so far behind peers that getting back on track requires monumental effort. In some cases, a few sessions of tutoring can get the slipping student back up to speed. On the other hand, if a child's academic struggle perseveres, then intervention may need to be longer.

I hope the following list helps you and your family stay on track.

Five Signs a Tutor May be Needed:

- **Disorganization.** At first glance, disorganization may seem like an aesthetic issue that is not reflective of academic performance, but I urge you to look again. Disorganization can be a sign of overwhelm, giving up, or loss of caring about one's responsibilities or reputation. Lack of organization can lead to:
 - Missed Deadlines
 - Missed Assignments
 - Missed Opportunities to Study for Quizzes and Tests
 - Rapidly Falling Grades
- **Frequent Frustration in Homework Sessions.** We tend to think frustration during homework is normal, but homework is very often a review or extension of work that was done in class. Frequent frustration, then, can indicate a deeper problem that requires more work learning the course content or building required skills.
- **Decreased Interest in Talking about School.** When things are going well, kids are quick to share, but if they are struggling academically, they tend to want to talk about anything else. At home, if you notice your child avoiding talks about school or specific classes, then you'll want to take a closer look; encourage him or her to share with you what they've been working on. Pay attention to how your child talks about each class; you can detect where there is a problem and then offer support. It might help to explain to your child that, in academia, uncertainty has a habit of compounding if left unchecked, causing bigger problems down the road.
- **Increased Interest in Socializing or Recreation.** Another expression of the decreased interest in talking about school is the increased interest in other endeavors. Of course, students naturally want a serious break from school at the end of the day, but when their recreation begins to consume increasingly larger portions of the afternoon, evening, and weekend, you'll want to check in. This could be a sign of avoidance, which is usually a strong indication of struggle.
- **Falling Grades.** This is an obvious sign of struggle, but it's a critical one. Often, by the time a grade reflects a student's struggle, that struggle has been in place for some time. Luckily, most schools have online gradebooks and teachers are enormously gracious enough to update them regularly. Thanks to these benefits, we can catch falling grades before it's too late to do anything about them, but we'll still want to kick into gear quickly and find out what's causing the negative turn.

It helps to think of academic tutoring as an occasional necessity, rather than a luxury. When a student is struggling to keep up in school, there is more at stake than grades: self-esteem, diet, sleep, social relations, willingness to participate in extra-curricular ventures, motivation, and even creativity can all be affected.

Tutoring, then, can have a profound effect on students in need when used as a temporary intervention.

Where to find a tutor: Begin at your child's school. Some teachers tutor in the evenings and there may be information in the main office about outside service-providers. Put out feelers on social media. You might be surprised how many families near you are using tutors and can provide references.

Tiny Homes are HUGE!

by Jennifer Nicholson, Communications Committee Member

I have been fascinated with tiny homes for a few years now. At first I heard a lot of negative feedback from my love of tiny homes. People said they were impractical or just stupid. I heard things like "Where are you supposed to put all your stuff?" or "Why are we being conditioned to accept smaller living spaces...I am American and I want a big house."

Yes, some people thought the trend was some kind of conspiracy to get us conditioned to living with less. Despite all the initial negativity, the tiny home trend has really

struck a chord with some people. It has become a way of life for an ever-increasing number of people. I could tell by the blogs on YouTube that the tiny home community was growing; but up until June I had no idea that they had become a national obsession.

Tiny homes are just what their name says they are. Tiny! Some purists will only classify a home as tiny if it is below say 300 square feet. It is a different cut off for different people but in general tiny homes are 500 square feet or less. Obviously the more people you have living in a home the more square footage you can have and still classify as tiny. One person living in a 600 sq. ft. home may not be tiny but 4 people living in the same home would absolutely classify it as a tiny home. Some even live in homes less than 100 sq.ft.

So, what's the deal? Why is this so popular? It is different reasons for different people. Some young adults who are unable to afford to buy a home in the area in which they live find a tiny home a way to home ownership that is feasible and cost effective. If you live in an expensive suburban area you may never be able to afford to own your own home and rent can be just as expensive as a huge mortgage.

Some people do it for the mobility. Most tiny homes are on wheels and can be pulled by a truck. Retired individuals or working adults who do a lot of freelance work from home via computer find the mobility of a tiny home very desirable. Some people are just innately nomadic. They want to wander and a tiny home allows them to wander with the comforts of home.

Some people do it to be able to live in affordable luxury. Getting top of the line flooring, counter-tops etc is much more affordable when it's on a smaller scale.

For me it was the use of space that I found so fascinating. I love to see how people can be innovative and find way to make new furniture designs to have many different functions for one item. I look at tours of tiny homes on YouTube for fun just to see the neat way that people can make all space useful.

In June I went to a Tiny Home Festival in Sussex NJ. I was instantly astonished at the lines! There were so many people there waiting on lines to tour all the tiny homes on display. It is not a small community of tiny homes anymore. They have boomed in popularity. Many of the people with their homes on display will tell you that getting rid of all that extra stuff and living in a tiny home is extremely freeing.



Michael's Kitchen

By Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee

Everyone seems to love Tex-Mex food and there is no shortage of full service restaurants, chains and fast food storefronts providing this cuisine. Here are some of my recipes that are great for easy family dinners but fun enough for guests.

The guacamole is a recipe I developed a few years ago that really mirrors the table-side guacamole served at Rosa Mexicano restaurants in New York. The meatballs are very appealing as an appetizer but also make good heroes or can be served as a main course over rice.

For a do-ahead company dish, assemble the Shrimp Enchiladas the day before, cover and refrigerate (add more time when baking if not at room temperature). You get a bonus with the Slow Cooker Beef - a second meal! Buen provecho!

Shrimp Enchiladas (makes 10 enchiladas)

3 tbsp unsalted butter
1 small onion, chopped
1 green pepper, cored, seeded and cut into 1-inch strips
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 lb fully cooked frozen shrimp, thawed and coarsely chopped
2 tbsp flour
1 cup half & half
1 can (10 oz) enchilada sauce
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
10 fajita-size flour tortillas

- Heat oven to 375°. Melt 1 tbsp butter in a large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion, peppers and garlic and cook 7 minutes. Stir in shrimp and cool slightly.
- In a small saucepan, melt the remaining 2 tbsp butter over medium-high heat. Sprinkle with flour and whisk until smooth. Whisk in half & half and continue to cook until thickened, about 5 minutes. Whisk in enchilada sauce until blended.
- Remove sauce from heat and stir in ¾ cup of the sauce and ¼ cup cheese into shrimp mixture.
- Coat 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Spoon 1/3 cup of shrimp mixture down center of one tortilla. Roll tightly to enclose filling and transfer to prepared dish. Repeat with remaining tortilla and filling. Pour remaining sauce over enchiladas, spreading to edges, then top with remaining ¾ cup shredded cheese.
- Bake at 375° for 20 minutes until cheese is melted and sauce is bubbly. Cool slightly before serving.

Grilled Turkey Fajitas with Peppers & Onions (makes 10 fajitas)

Rub:

1 tbsp chili powder
1 tsp each garlic powder, onion powder, black pepper and salt
½ tsp ground cumin
¼ tsp cayenne pepper

Turkey:

2 lbs turkey breast cutlets
2 tbsp olive oil
¼ cup lime juice
1 green and 1 red pepper seeded, cored and sliced into 1-inch strips
1 onion, cut crosswise into 1/2-inch thick slices
1 bunch scallions, trimmed
10 flour tortillas (8-inch)
Optional (garnishes): salsa, chopped tomato, chopped red onion, chopped fresh cilantro, sour cream

- Combine rub ingredients.
- Arrange turkey in shallow baking dish and coat with 2 tsp of oil. Sprinkle both sides of cutlet with rub and marinate 1 hour in refrigerator. Add lime juice and coat cutlets. Marinate 30 additional minutes.
- Prepare outdoor grill with hot coals or heat gas grill to high.
- Combine peppers, onion, scallions and remaining oil in bowl.
- Grill vegetables 3 minutes per side until nicely charred. Arrange on large platter. Grill turkey cutlets 3 minutes per side or until cooked through. Thinly slice turkey across grain on diagonal and arrange on platter with grilled vegetables.
- Gently warm tortillas and serve with the turkey and vegetables. Garnish with salsa, tomato, onion, cilantro and sour cream.

Slow Cooker Chipotle Meatballs (makes 24 meatballs)

1½ lbs ground chuck
1 cup unseasoned bread crumbs
¼ cup milk
2 eggs, lightly beaten
2 tsp chili powder
1 tsp each garlic powder, salt, ground cumin
1 can (28 oz) fire-roasted tomatoes, broken up
½ cup chicken broth
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tsp dried oregano
3 chipotles in adobo, chopped
2 tbsp chopped cilantro

- In a large bowl, combine ground beef, bread crumbs, milk, eggs, chili powder and ½ tsp each of the salt and cumin. Form mixture into 24 meatballs, using about 1 tbsp for each.
- Coat slow cooker bowl with cooking spray. Stir in tomatoes, broth, garlic, oregano, remaining ½ tsp salt and cumin and the chipotles. Add meatballs.
- Cook on HIGH for 3 hours. Stir in cilantro before serving. Serve as an appetizer, in a hero or with rice.

Slow Cooker Beef Tacos with Guacamole

(makes 12 tacos, plus 3 cups beef for a second meal)

1 beef chuck roast (about 3½ lbs)
1 tbsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
2 tbsp vegetable oil
2 tsp chili powder
1 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp cayenne pepper
1 onion, chopped
1 sweet red pepper, seeded and chopped
4 cloves garlic, sliced
1 cup beef broth
12 fajita-size flour tortillas
Chunky Guacamole (recipe follows)

- Season roast with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat and brown on all sides, about 12 minutes total. Remove and discard strings if roast is tied.
- Coat slow cooker bowl with cooking spray. Place meat in slow cooker and season with chili powder, cumin and cayenne. Pour broth over top.
- Cook on HIGH for 6 hours or LOW for 8 hours.
- Remove roast to cutting board and shred with 2 forks. Stir meat back into liquid in slow cooker.
- Wrap ¼ cup beef mixture in each warmed tortilla; top with Chunky Guacamole.

Chunky Guacamole:

- Coarsely mash 4 ripe avocados in medium bowl. Stir in ½ cup finely chopped red onion, ½ cup quartered grape tomatoes, 1 seeded and chopped jalapeno, 2 tbsp lime juice, 2 tbsp chopped cilantro, 1 tbsp olive oil and ¼ tsp salt.

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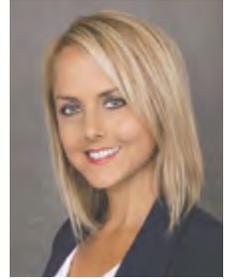
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