



Living in Harmony with Nature

Harmony

Penn Estates Property Owners Association

October/November 2021

From Phyllis's Desk

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

Dear Members,

It is now eighteen months since the pandemic began, and while we thought it would be over by now, the numbers have shown an increase due to the delta variant bringing forward some continued uncertainties.

While this is unnerving, it is something that we do not have total control over, but there are many things we can do to protect each other and work to keep the count of COVID-19 cases down. We can all be diligent regarding our personal space, health, personal hygiene, and surroundings.

We remind everyone to properly wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth when you enter any association buildings, maintain 6 feet from others, wash your hands properly, and get vaccinated.

In light of our area experiencing a resurgence of COVID-19, we want to reassure the community that the Board of Directors and Management continues to take all necessary precautions to protect the health and safety of members, tenants, guests, and staffing. **Effective September 11, 2021, the Board of Directors has paused all events until January 2022. The fitness center and recreation center currently remain open for member's use.**

Please direct your guests to obtain passes at the kiosk and not go to the Welcome Center for entry passes if possible. This will expedite their entry and allow for social distancing. As a reminder, landlords are to register their guests at least three days in advance of arrival.

While the season of giving is upon us, I ask every one of our residents to take a moment to slow down and cherish all that we have to be thankful for. In a world with so many current uncertainties, it is ever more important to embrace each other and hold the sense of community tight.

Reach out to a neighbor, extend the olive branch to ensure that they are ok and if they need any assistance. We want to make sure that everyone is safe.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff, I wish each and every one of our residents a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday!

Stay in Touch with Penn Estates

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President's Message

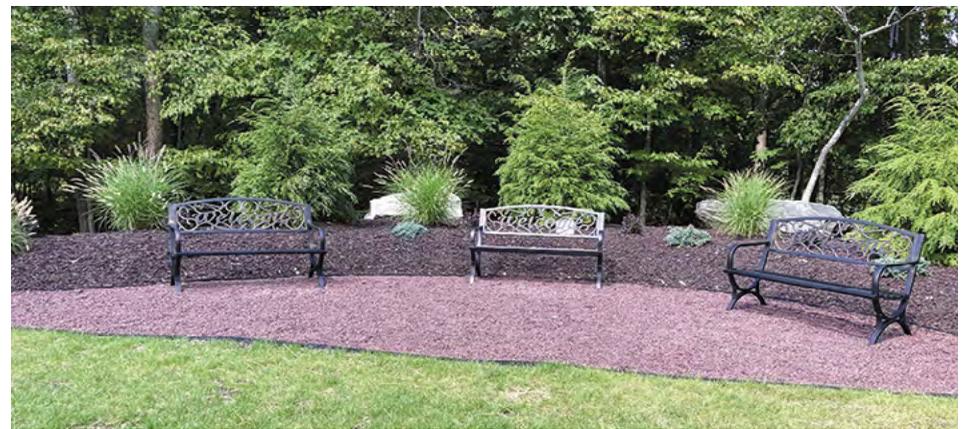
by Ken Nevil, PEPOA President

On Thursday, September 9, 2021, the Penn Estates Board of Directors and our Community Manager dedicated the community, Memorial Garden, at the Lower Twin Lake, located off of Lake Drive near Lakeside Drive.

The Memorial Garden was designed with the intent of our community members to have a quiet and serene area to go and memorialize their loved ones that have departed or a peaceful place to reflect on years gone by.

Our first order of business for the amenity was for the Board of Directors and various community members to conduct a solemn ceremony to remember all those who departed during the "9/11" attack on America, which was 20 years ago, on September 11, 2001. We will not forget them nor those that have passed due to various illnesses attributed to this horrific attack.

Finally, to those servicemen who answered the call to duty after the attack and died heroically in defense of our country - thank you!



In closing, I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their support on this project and our Community Manager, Phyllis Haase, whose forethought and design of the Memorial Garden makes it a truly remarkable area for our members.



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Dog (and Cat) Days of COVID

by Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee member

Ahhhh. The past eighteen months have been the longest and shortest time in my life. It seems like forever, yet the time has passed in a blur. Returning to the office after working from home for so long seems daunting - yet inviting. I do miss seeing people in person.

After returning to the office, I will miss so many more things, such as sleeping those extra minutes that I would have spent commuting or working in my bare feet. I won't miss trying to quiet the dogs or to keep the cats off my lap while on video meetings.



Many of you have already returned to the classroom or office or wherever you work. Some of you may just be getting ready for that grind. We can mentally prepare ourselves for the adjustment; however, our pets live in the moment and have no idea that their lives are going to be turned upside down.

Some pets have no experience of the old normal. According to Packaged Facts, "Among current pet-owning households, 35% adopted pets in the 12-month period ending February 2021." Further, the "overall percentage of US households owning pets notched up to 56% in 2020." Hmmmm. That number means that a whole bunch of households will be coping with unsettled pets.

I first truly realized how difficult the transition could be when I was away for a family gathering of several hours. I returned home to four animals by the door, panting and just totally freaked out. They seemed excited to see me yet anxious, making sounds I haven't heard in quite a while, and jumping frantically.



The curtains on my French doors are now tattered lengths of fabric. These are pets who were perfectly calm during my long absences pre-pandemic. This time I was only gone a few hours, not a full work day plus commute time. They were used to the old normal. They were not at all ready for the new normal, any more than I am.

So, what is a pet owner to do? Pets are creatures of habit. They love structure and predictability. Have you ever been a ½ hour later than usual in feeding your cat or your dog? Did they pace and paw and make unsettled sounds? Ah. You were not on schedule.

So, all of a sudden you are getting up at 6 instead of 8, leaving the house quiet instead of filled with people noise and music, coming home at 6 or 7, going to bed so much earlier, and no longer with the energy to play.

Did you enjoy the couch being in one piece without shredded cushions? Did you enjoy only cleaning up animal waste OUTSIDE your house? You can plan ahead to make this transition so much easier for your pets and for you.

One thing that has helped me is to gradually adjust them to a new schedule. I have been gradually moving my wake-up time and my bedtime closer and closer to the times it will be after I return to the office.

That same gradual change helps with almost every aspect of life. I am away for short times, gradually increasing the amount of time that the pets are alone. I am moving their feeding time gradually to what it will be. I am increasing the time between potty breaks very gradually. If you have a pet walker or sitter, you may want to do a number of practice runs to get them used to each other.

Most experts suggest having special toys or food puzzles that your pets love and are only given when you go to work. A very important preparation is activity. Playing with your cat with a toy to tire him out before you leave can help. There are toys that can be loaded with peanut butter or treats and make the dog work for the treat. A regular walk in the morning before work will be healthy for your dogs, and will increase your steps on your Fitbit or Apple watch.

Some dog trainers suggest a "sniffari." Instead of taking a long walk at a fast pace, let your dog follow his nose. A walk at your dog's pace with many odors to explore may tire them out more than a long walk. You may consider leaving the radio on for company, or even playing a DVD that was created to entertain cats. Some of my colleagues have cameras allowing them to check on their pets in real time. Finally, there is no shame in bringing in a dog trainer to help with training them (or you).

I don't know what the new normal will be for any of us. I hope that these tips help make it be a bit easier for you and your pet.

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Senior Lunch Group

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member

As Penn Estates starts to get back to normal, events that we missed out on for the last year and a half are being scheduled again.

On June 9th we had our first Senior Lunch (now renamed "Leisure Time Group") since March of 2020. Phyllis Haase, our Community Manager, with the assistance of her major domo, Sue, put together a very nice lunch which consisted of cheese and crackers, mixed salad, southern bourbon gazed pork loin, greens and mushrooms, cornbread and roasted potatoes.



sary cake was served for dessert.

In August [due to the extreme heat] our bar-beque on the back deck was moved inside and the menu was more of an indoor picnic theme with fried chicken, cold cuts and salads. We had a really good turnout with about 30 attendees.

The lunches are scheduled on the second Wednesday of every month. Cost is \$5.00 per person and you need to get tickets in advance at the administration office. If you feel like you wouldn't know anyone, no sweat. It's a very welcoming group. Hope to see some new faces at future lunches.

We finished off with cookies and danish. Soft drinks are always served. We all enjoyed the meal, but it was especially nice to see friends that we have missed.

For July, a 50th wedding anniversary themed lunch was held for two of our group, Martha and Miguel. The tables were decorated for the occasion and a beautiful anniversary



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2022 Budget Preparation

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

It is that time of year, where management, the Finance Committee, and the Board face the preparation of the annual budget. The budget process always begins when the year opens by evaluating monthly reporting and targets. Information is reviewed and gathered, which is then compiled by management and drafted in July and August each year. The work on the budget will continue through its approval and adoption by the Board.

The Association holds the fiduciary responsibility to maintain the common areas on behalf of our 1,767 unit owners. We are a not for profit corporation and, as such, need to create a zero-sum budget where income is offset to the dollar by expenses. We provide a balanced budget to meet the expenditures and to make every reasonable attempt to meet that budget without an increase to the homeowners, but this is not always possible.

In 2021 we faced a fair amount of uncertainty surrounding the pandemic and continue to manage and operate for the Association's betterment, all while evaluating our current financials and forecasting through the year-end.

We have already begun the process of receiving budget expectations for 2022 with our contracts, including general insurance and health insurance. We have been notified that insurance is expecting an increase, and we will shop the market to locate an adequate policy with minimal increase. This is just one example of the budget challenges that we face annually.

The management evaluates all areas, such as wages, season predictions, i.e., hot summer, snowy winter, water/sewer, and electricity costs, in addition to all daily operating costs. We ensure that we review all contracted vendors so that we do not fall short of budget expectations.

We evaluate what projects we would like to complete next year to continue to enhance member satisfaction. We evaluate our reserve study for capital improvements and replacements.

Starting with our current income statement, we project expenses through the end of the current year. Comments will be included on new contract prices,

utility increases, and other changes from the old year to the new. Creating an accurate budget is critical to the operation of our Association.

After the Finance Committee reviews the operating and capital budget, it will be presented to the Board. The Board will then review all aspects of the budget.

Lastly, the draft 2022 budget will be presented to the membership with a proposed increase of \$26.80 on October 12 at 7:00 pm, and October 16 at 9:00 am, via Zoom. The draft budget will be made available to the membership by accessing the website or visiting the administration office on September 23. The Board will then move to adopt the 2022 budget at their meeting on October 25 at 7:00 pm.

These meetings will be open to the membership via Zoom. The details will be sent out via email as well as posted to the Association's website.

Alzheimers Bingo Event

by Bettyanne Nevil, Communications Committee Member

Penn Estates is such a caring community as witnessed by recent charitable events. We come together and support issues near and dear to our neighbors' hearts. On August 28th, we helped support Alzheimer's by donating and supporting a tricky tray and bingo held for their benefit.

There were so many items to raffle off. Everything from a microwave to decor, dresses to jewelry, school supplies, blankets, and techie phone items. There were cat baskets, plants, and accessories. There were amazing baked goods and pastries donated.

In total, \$765 was raised. The snacks alone raised \$120! This was all accomplished just a month after our fundraiser for ACT.

I am impressed seeing the support and want to thank all who participated whether by donating, playing bingo, or supporting the tricky tray. Give yourself a round of applause!

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The Truth About the Menu at the First Thanksgiving Dinner

by Sandra Bonet, PEPOA, Board of Directors, Secretary

Thanksgiving facts and Thanksgiving myths have blended together for years like so much gravy and mashed potatoes to create the much loved holiday we celebrate in the United States today. In fact, the blending is so complete that separating truth from fiction is no easy job.

What We Know for Sure

The Mayflower did bring the Pilgrims to North America from Plymouth, England in 1620 and they landed at what is now Plymouth, MA, where they set up a colony. In 1621 they celebrated a successful harvest with a three-day gathering that was attended by members of the Wampanoag tribe of native people.

There are only two documented accounts of that event and both mention only "fowl and deer" as food served at the meal.

That's all we know. The rest of the story is made up of myths that have developed over time.

What Was Probably Served?

It is certain that today's time-honored favorites including roast turkey with stuffing, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie didn't have a place at the table until later in the holiday's 400-year history.

After only one year in the new colony, the settlers had not yet built an oven. The first ship with supplies had not yet arrived from England so they had no sugar or wheat flour. They had no butter. Potatoes, both white and sweet, had not yet made their way to North America.

Based on what was available to them at the time, here's what was probably served:

- Lots of meat including duck, goose, swan, deer and wild turkey cooked over an open fire on a spit without stuffing.
- Vegetables would have included onions, beans, lettuce, spinach, cabbage and carrots. There could have been peas but the records show that a very hot summer had scorched the crop and they were

in short supply. There was corn, which was plentiful at the first harvest. But it was cooked much differently at the time. It would have been removed from the cob and turned into cornmeal, which was then boiled and pounded into a thick corn mush. If they had sugar, they would have sweetened it, but not for this feast.

- Fruits in the area included blueberries, grapes, gooseberries, raspberries and, of course, cranberries, which Native Americans ate and used as a natural dye. So, the settlers might have been familiar with cranberries but they couldn't have made the tangy sauces and relishes we have today due to the lack of sugar. If they did indeed eat them, they were certainly very sour.
- Fish and shellfish, according to culinary historians, probably made up much of the meal. Mussels were abundant and easy to harvest. Lobster, bass, clams and oysters might also have been part of the feast.
- What about the pumpkin pie? The settlers and the native people ate pumpkins and other squashes-- possibly at the harvest festival--but without butter, wheat flour and ovens, pie was not on the table.

Most people would agree that today's evolved Thanksgiving menu is much more enjoyable than the original thanks to sugar, butter, flour, potatoes, gravy, stuffing and other caloric delights! Although the addition of lobster and other seafood would be worth considering.





Harmony

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Moving? Here are some tips for a less stressful relocation

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

Home sales in Penn Estates have been stirred up due to increased property values. Whether your new home is just down the street, in a nearby town or across the country, moving can be stressful. There's a lot of work to be done before that final box is unpacked—more than many expect—and it's easy to overlook the details that pile up the closer you get to your departure date.

First, we'd hate to see you go if you're leaving the community, and we hope you enjoyed your time here. But before you head out, here are some important tips to help make your move smoother:

- **Shipping Notes:** If you're shipping items, keep the shipment registration number with you. You may need this number when calling your mover.
- **Bed Ready:** Put sheets and towels in a dresser drawer so you don't have to go searching through your boxes for them the first night in your new home.
- **Freshen the Fridge:** If you're bringing your refrigerator, thoroughly clean and dry the inside. Then, put a handful of fresh coffee, baking soda or charcoal in a sock inside to keep it smelling fresh.
- **Pack Wisely:** Heavy items go in small boxes; lighter items go in larger boxes.
- **Safe Memories:** If some item is particularly significant to you, like a picture, take it with you in your car. If it's irreplaceable, you don't want regrets later. Place sheets or blankets between framed photos or art for protection.
- **Protect Plates:** Plates should be packed on end vertically, rather than flat and stacked.
- **Bare Necessities:** Cell phones/chargers, toiletries, snacks, drinks, soap, flashlight, screwdriver, pliers, can opener, paper plates, cups, utensils, some pans, paper towels and cleaning supplies are some of the essentials you may need upon arrival. Pack a box with these items and load it last.
- **Bulb Basics:** Remove light bulbs from your lamps.
- **Involve the Kids:** Ask your children to write their names and new address on the boxes for their rooms. It'll help them remember the address.
- **Pet Care:** Ask a friend to watch your pet at his or her house on moving day. It'll keep your pet calm, safe and out of the way.
- **Plant Care:** Try not to let foliage rest against car windows; the leaves could

burn due to glass intensifying sunrays.

Take the time to implement these tips to properly prepare for the move—it may seem like more work upfront, but ultimately it can save you lots of hassle in the long run.

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THE HISTORY OF HALLOWEEN

by Sandy Black, Contributor

This was a fun piece for me to write, so I hope everyone enjoys reading it.

Halloween is a holiday celebrated each year on October 31, and for 2021 it will be observed on a Sunday. Halloween's origins have been found to date back to the ancient Celtic festival of "Samhain". The Celts who are believed to have lived over 2,000 years ago and were located mostly in Ireland, the United Kingdom and northern France. People would light bonfires and wear costumes to ward off ghosts.



During the eighth century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1st as a time to honor all saints. Soon, "All Saints Day" incorporated some of the traditions of Samhain. The evening before was known as All Hallows Eve, and later changed to Halloween. Over time, Halloween has evolved into a day of activities for children especially such as trick-or-treating, carving jack-o-lanterns, festive gatherings and of course the donning of costumes, costume parties and enjoying treats.

The celebration of Halloween has been derived from ancient festivals and religious rituals and is widely celebrated in a number of countries around the globe. There are different versions of the Halloween holiday which are celebrated other than the United States of America.

In Mexico and other Latin American countries, it is called "Dia de Los Muertos – the Day of the Dead" which honors deceased loved ones and ancestors. They commemorate the holiday with a three-day celebration which begins on the evening of October 31. The celebration is designed to honor the dead who it is believed to return to their earthly homes on Halloween. Families will build an altar to the dead in their homes and it is decorated with candy, flowers, photographs of the deceased with samples of their favorite foods and drinks and fresh water. A wash basin and towel are left out so that the spirit can wash themselves up before indulging in the feast.

In England, "Guy Fawkes Day" which falls on November 5th and is similar to the Celtic festival of Samhain is also another way to celebrate Halloween. The English stopped celebrating Halloween because Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation was changing citizens to the new religion which did not believe in saints. Thus they had no reason to celebrate the eve of All Saints' Day. So for England a new autumn ritual emerged "Guy Fawkes Day and festivities were designed to commemorate the execution of the notorious English traitor, Guy Fawkes.

In Ireland, where in reality Halloween originated, the day is still celebrated as it is done here in the United States. Bonfires are lit as they were in the days of the Celts and children get dressed up in costumes and they spend the evening trick-or-treating. After trick-or-treating neighbors and friends get together to attend parties where games are played such as bobbing for apples, treasure hunts and the traditional judging of the best costume. The Irish also play a card game where cards are laid face down on a table with candy or coins underneath them. When a child chooses a card, he or she receives whatever prize is found underneath it.

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Debra's Book Shelf

by Debra Celentano, Communications Committee

Review of 'Unsticky'

by Sarra Manning

This is a throwback review. I've been busy following my nephew around for his travel baseball team and just enjoying the summer while it's here. I've not read much this summer. Enjoy! This book is really very good!

I read this book in less than 24 hours. This book has been on a few WTRAFSOG lists but they are so different. In this book we meet Grace and Vaughn. Grace is an assistant in a fashion company and Vaughn is an art dealer. They are both flawed, and I love them for it.

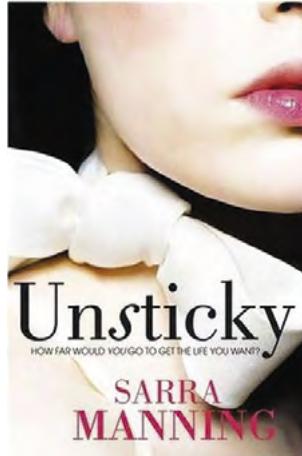
Grace was raised by her grandparents and grew up thinking no one really wanted her, and she gave up easily – on relationships, schooling, and on herself. She is very good at watching life pass her by and never doing anything to improve her life. She meets Vaughn after being dumped in public on her birthday! How horrible is that?!? But it made me fall quick for Vaughn.

However, that love I had faded quickly when he starts to show his true colors. I started to get really pissed and wanted to give him a good slap. But then they get passed their little rough patch and he is just so swoon worthy! He also really helps Grace. She begins to transform herself and I found myself so proud of her.

Vaughn tries his best to keep his hard shell intact, but Grace begins to chip away at them and then I loved him again! What started as an "agreement" starts to turn into something more. They begin to really care for each other, but they are both so broken that neither can admit it. Then it happens...you know the thing that has you yelling at your e-reader.

Now, here is what I really loved about this book though...it doesn't follow the typical format. I was biting my nails up to the end. I really didn't know how it was going to end. I wanted the HEA and I am not one to give away the ending so you'll have to read to see if they get it but I wanted more!!!

The ending is a bit abrupt but not enough for me to lower my rating. I wish there was a second book but from what I found on Goodreads this is a stand-alone book. You won't be disappointed. I was thankful for the snow and lack of Internet because I sat here with my tea and just was sucked into this book. I highly recommend it.



Navigating Your Finances

by Bettyanne Nevil, Communications Committee

Holiday Shopping Tips

It's that time of year when you start thinking about holiday shopping and gift giving. I buy things all year long when I see them for a great price. But, no matter how much I prepare there are always things that I need as the holidays get closer.



Most families I know spend more on food for holiday celebrations than they would for normal family meals. For food, you can usually score free hams and turkeys using shoppers club points from your local grocery store. Things like baking supplies and side dishes will vary in price from store to store. There are tools available to assist you in locating the best deals.

For grocery stores, I go to livingrichwithcoupons.com and use the comparison pricing tool. You do not even have to download anything. Just go to the page.

If you are wondering if there is a coupon for that, I go to thekrazycouponlady.com, and use the coupon locator. Many big box stores carry items like appliances, televisions, and furniture as exclusive to them. That is only because they have it packaged under their own private label.

If you are trying to find the best price on a large item you can use the bing.com/visual-search or images.google.com. These searches will compare prices for you.

For finding the best prices on toys, gifts, and home goods, try ShopSavvy, Red-Laser, and retailmenot which are all apps you have to download. There is also The Amazon App that will compare items you scan in to see if they are cheaper online. Pricegrabber, is another app that compares in store to online pricing.

All in all, what may seem like a lot of work may all be accomplished before leaving your home. Hopefully you have your fully funded holiday expense envelope and are ready to snag some deals. Happy shopping!

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HEALTH & FITNESS

High Blood Pressure

by Yolanda Sarrabo, CPT, NASM

There is an assumption that though one suffers from some a chronic condition such as high blood tension (hypertension); that exercise is not an option to mending the problem. Though adding fitness to an already delicate situation may not totally solve what is happening; it can help lead you into a healthier lifestyle. Let's briefly review what is HBP and why is it such a hot topic.



High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)

HBP as usually termed is when the blood that is pushed through the walls of your blood vessels is way too high. The blood needed to allow us to be, is a complex circulatory system that works by tissues and organs that need oxygenated blood that your circulatory system carries throughout the body.

When the heart beats, it creates pressure that pushes blood through a network of tube-shaped blood vessels, which include arteries, veins and capillaries. This pressure — *blood pressure* — is the result of two forces.

The first force (systolic pressure) occurs as blood pumps out of the heart and into the arteries that are part of the circulatory system. The second force (diastolic pressure) is created as the heart rests between heart beats. The systolic and diastolic numbers together is what provides the blood pressure reading.

Anyone that suffers through HBP knows that it's a big deal if either number is too high, and believe it or not, even when the numbers are way too low. The green-light reading of 120/80 was standard, but now there are new recommendations from the American Heart Association [see chart top right].

Course of Action

Exercise helps in strengthening the heart and that is a big deal when dealing with HBP. Working through HBP is a process and any small actions in handling

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)	and/or	DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

the condition is a positive step to better health. Working through exercise and maintaining a moderate heart rate is suggested, as you want a heart rate that is up, but obviously not overdone.

Various forms of aerobics (or low impact) that can help pump up that heart rate are the right steps, such as biking (motion or stationary) and walking. Strength training that uses weights should be discussed with your doctor, as you should be careful putting strenuous stress on heart versus a healthy pump of the heart rate.

Lastly, your diet has to be part of this conversation, as lowering fats and salt helps in maintaining normal blood pressure reads; Although adding some form of exercise is suggested, it can also depend on what your physician feels for your specific situation; Therefore, do discuss further with your physician.

Source: Heart.org

Yolanda Sarrabo is principal at Chronic Fitness Personal Training Boutique Service and a regular contributor. www.chronicfitnessinc.com



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Did you know:

- 13 homes are presently for sale in Penn Estates.
- 74 homes have been sold year to date.
- The highest-priced home sold for \$576,000 year to date.
(Information provided through Pocono Mountain Assoc. of Realtors MLS Service)
- 93% of buyers start their search on the Internet.
- The average age of today's buyer is 33 years old.

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Tricky Tray Bingo in Support of Animals Can't Talk (ACT)

by Paul R. Quillin, Contributor

No, animals can't talk, but once again our friends and neighbors here in Penn Estates spoke up. Their voices amounted to about \$800 collected including the 50/50 split from the previous month's weekly bingo. The proceeds went to ACT, which is run by Naomi Gauntlett along with the generous help of volunteers.

Animals Can't Talk Rescue is a 501c3 all volunteer organization. ACT hopes to help as many unwanted, lost and abused cats as they can. All are veterinarian checked, inoculated, treated (when necessary), spayed and neutered. The main objective is to find them good homes. ACT exists only on the kindness of donations and adoptions.

For those who've never attended a Bingo Tricky Tray, here's how it went. The actual Bingo took place in the evening, but in the afternoon The Oak Room was open for browsing the tables displaying all the donated items. Calling them "items" does not do them justice. I was really surprised at the quality of what was donated.

Each prize, or group of them, had been assigned a number and there was a container to hold each number's "tickets." So once each person purchased their tickets (five dollars got you fifteen) they dropped them into whichever containers matched their choices.

There was no need to be at the actual drawing, or at Bingo for that matter. Those who did not plan to stay had their ticket numbers along with their contact information recorded.

That evening The Oak Room was turned over to those staying for Bingo, a part of each player's admission going to ACT. When Bingo had finished the drawings were held for each of the numbered prizes.

We want to thank everyone who participated in The Tricky Tray, played in the Bingo Game and most importantly, we must give credit to Bettyanne Nevil for bringing all of this to life.

Learn more about ACT at: <https://www.animalscanttalk.org/>.



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3298 Stonehenge Drive

Poetry Corner

by James Ruffini, Communications Committee Member

Count Drac, The Nervous Count

Despite what you hear, and what you've been told,
Count Dracula is not as bad, as he is old.
He stays in his coffin to sleep all day it seems,
But he's really too nervous, and doesn't want to be seen.
So, he waits for the sun to set out of sight,
Then he musters the courage to come out at night.
He creeps around in the dark, under the shadow's cover,
And if you turn around quick, he'll fly off in a flutter –
Fluttering high in the sky like a bat in the night.
You won't see him again for a long while alright.
He doesn't even give a reflection not even a glimpse in the mirror.
He hates how he looks, and doesn't want you nearer.
He won't eat garlic – oh no, no way!
Because the smell will only give him away.
And then alas, the sun begins to raise its head,
And the Count hurries home, out of sight to his bed.



The Wolman's Howl

Tonight's the night when the moon is full.
Tonight's the night when you hear his howl.
A howl deep down from the Wolfman's belly.
A howl so loud it could turn you to jelly.
For tonight is the night they call Halloween.
The night when all the great monsters are seen.
This is the Wolfman's favorite night.
The night he takes care and combs his hair right.
He brushes his teeth and sweetens his breath.
They'll be so many parties, with so many guests!
He puts on his favorite shirt
Although it is torn and needs some work.
"The other monsters love it", he says to himself.
Plus, it's the only shirt he owns and not much else.
He steps out of the house, after he is done –
Done getting ready for the long night's fun.
He lets out a howl, from his front stair.
To let the world know the Wolfman's here.



Phantom of the Pumpkin Patch

Don't go into the pumpkin patch
On this Halloween night.
Up jumps the Pumpkin Phantom
With all his little sprites.
They dance and howl and celebrate
'Cause it's their New Year's eve,
And they pull out all their tricks
From their great billowing sleeves.
They'll tell you plainly with a grin:
"This is our domain,
So on this night, you can't come in."
For if you venture past the pumpkins –
Venture in when the moon is full –
They'll give you such a tremendous fright,
You'll turn as white as those ghosts and ghouls.



Eats Around Town

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member

Chestnuthill Diner

The Burgs are home to numerous solid diners for breakfast, lunch or dinners. Here is a rec for a diner in Brodheadsville right on Route 209 at the "T" "with Route 115. It's a bit out of our area, but the food is really extra special!

We first stopped there when we used to go to the mega Shoprite in Brodheadsville before we got our own super-sized Shoprite at the mall. We also often take a ride to Gould's Produce which is just down the road.

On a recent trip to Gould's on a Sunday, we stopped with a friend for brunch. We started with Bloody Mary's which are huge and very well executed. I had a Grilled Reuben with fries. The sandwich was super generous, the meat lean and the fries perfectly done. We also split an order of Loaded Fries just for science. Lots of crumbled bacon, cheese and sour cream.

My partners in crime had a Black and Blue Burger and a Grilled Chicken Caesar Salad. The sautéed chicken in the salad was really seasoned to perfection and there was plenty for a doggie bag to take home. The burger was medium-rare as ordered and the blue cheese abundant. All burgers and sandwiches come with a generous portion of their crispy fries.

On past trips we have had their standard California Cheeseburger, Corned Beef and Pastrami Sandwiches and what they call a Rachel (basically a Reuben but with coleslaw in place of sauerkraut).

Their service is crackerjack. Of course, their breakfasts are perfect but that is the subject of another article. If you find yourself in the Brodheadsville area stop in for a meal. You won't be disappointed.

Taste of Brooklyn



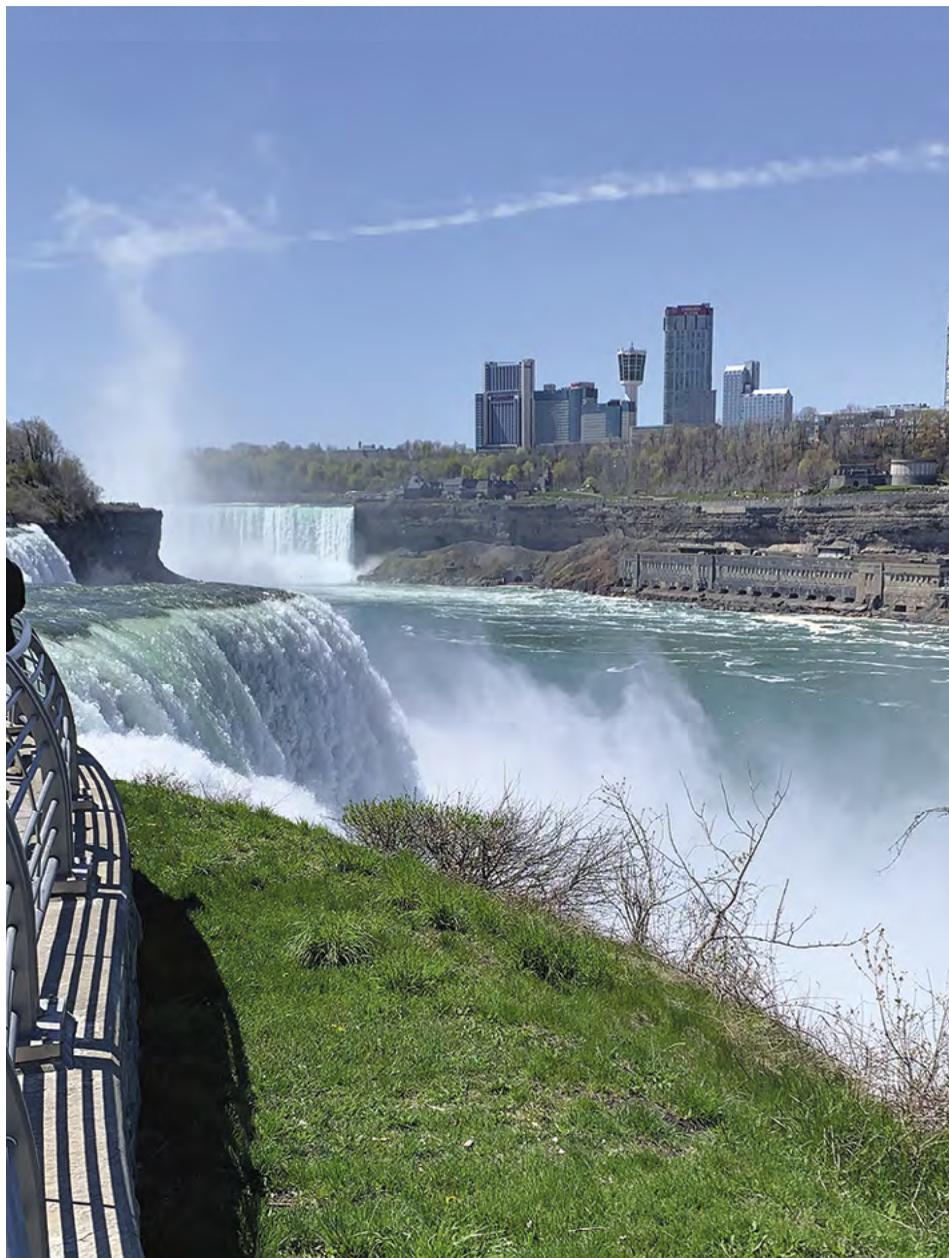
A new entrant in the casual food scene in Stroudsburg is Taste of Brooklyn on West Main Street. They are located in the space formally occupied by Rootin' Tootin' Hot Dogs. They fixed the place up a bit and it's now very comfortable and cozy with a retro vibe.

Chef Owner Jennifer Granit works in an open kitchen concept. One of her specialties is empanadas, both savory and sweet. Every day she offers at least one special savory empanada of the day (think Chicken Cordon Bleu, Buffalo Chicken, Reuben, BBQ Chicken and Sweet Potato). Some of her

sweet specials have been Blueberry Cobbler, Lemon Meringue - get the drift?

She is very personable and easy to chat with as she does her thing. The Cheeseburgers are one of the best in the area. They use angus burgers, cheese of your choosing, lettuce and tomato on a brioche roll. The bun is brushed with some buttery goodness just before serving. The fries are ridiculously crispy. She coats them with a special ingredient before frying.

Breakfast is served all day. We have enjoyed cheesy eggs, home fries and toast and a breakfast pork roll and egg sandwich (seemed as big as my head). Really good coffee as well. I recommend stopping by, even if just for a quick snack to check the place out. I guarantee you will be back!



Niagara Falls - Great Weekend Trip

by Debra Celentano, Communication Committee

If you are looking for a place to go that's only a car ride away, I suggest you check out Niagara Falls. I spent a long weekend there in April and loved it! The Falls were amazing (as you can see from the photos) but best of all most of it is free. We spent several hours walking around and exploring. The drive is a long one but manageable. I think it was about five hours.

We did go early in the season, so the crowds were minimal and there were some restrictions because of Covid (eg: having to buy tickets prior to some of the paid attractions there, so plan accordingly).

I have a dog and I try to take her most places with me, so I was excited to see there were several dog friendly hotels and the Falls themselves were pet friendly (for the most part). So, if you are like me and love to include your fur baby on your vacations, you'll have no problem finding a place. We stayed about 20 minutes from the Falls.

If you like gambling, there was at least one place I noticed that had a casino. The Canada side was closed so we didn't get to venture over the border, but I'd love to go back when things eventually settle and see the Falls from that side.

Overall, couples and families would equally love Niagara Falls. There's lots to do and we didn't spend a ton of money there. Bring your walking shoes and go enjoy this amazing place.

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Real Estate Pulse

by Lisa M. Sanderson, Contributor

The Average 2021 Penn Estates Home Seller Received 104% of their Asking Price

I know, odd headline, but I couldn't help myself. This year the average home seller *IN PENN ESTATES* received 4% more than their asking price. We traditionally see (in a 'normal' market) 97-98% as a normal list/sold price ratio but this year is anything but normal.

With the pressures of a housing shortage exacerbated by shifting of housing priorities due to the pandemic, there has never been a seller's market like the one we are living in today. Buyers are waiting for new home listings and descending on them like cicadas waking from a 17-year nap. Multiple offers are pushing prices to historic highs as buyers try to compete for their dream house in Penn Estates.

It's funny. I remember rejoicing years ago when the average sale price hit \$150,000. Now that number is well over \$250,000 and there doesn't seem to be an end in sight. With available inventory still incredibly low, we should enjoy this wave well in to next year, barring any crazy economic downturns or world events.

And, it's worth mentioning that this great market (along with improved employment and other economic conditions) is helping to shore up troubled homeowners. The Mortgage Bankers Association reported on August 19th that mortgage delinquencies dropped again in the second quarter of 2021. This is good news since we



are all kind of holding our breath here to see how the mortgage forbearances that were put in place last year as part of the pandemic relief play out. Things being so good, homeowners have more options for retaining their homes and working through their delinquencies. All very positive.

The dark lining to this silver cloud is, of course, plunging home affordability. So many neighbors are having trouble finding new places to live because rentals and starter-priced homes are so hard to come by. Hopefully we will see some balancing in that regard soon as governments at all levels look to incentivize affordable home initiatives.

Penn Estates Home Sale Data

Information has been gathered from the Pocono Mountains Association of REALTORS' Multiple Listing Service on September 6, 2021.

	Active Listings	Pending Sales*	Closed YTD	Closed 2020
Total.....	10.....	18.....	68.....	127
Foreclosures	1.....	1.....	1.....	10
Short Sales.....	0.....	0.....	1.....	0
Low List/Sold \$	185,900.....	159,900.....	100,000.....	55,801
High List/Sold \$.....	599,000.....	499,800.....	576,000.....	395,000
Avg. List/Sold \$	340,940.....	301,722.....	259,036.....	170,260

*Pending Sales reflects only list prices as sold information is not available until the sale is final.

*Lisa Sanderson is a past president of the PEPOA Board of Directors, founder of the *unofficial* Living in Penn Estates Facebook Group, and a 29-year veteran of the real estate industry. She is the Broker of Record of Keller Williams Real Estate Pocono, with offices in Stroudsburg, Milford, Sciota, Palmerton, and Pocono Pines. Comments and questions are welcome at lisa@gmail.com*

Out About

Things to Do and See in the Poconos

by Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee Member

Is summer really over? I am enjoying the end of an absolutely perfect day as I write this article. The weather was a comfortable temperature, the sun was shining through the still green and lush trees, and the evening portends perfectly cool sleeping weather. Hurricane Ida was less damaging here than in neighboring areas and states. Autumn colors are soon to arrive. Despite new covid variants, global warming, and political strife, there is so much to treasure in each moment.

I am listing some of the upcoming events planned around this area. It is a changing time period, so who knows what will actually take place. I suggest that you check current information on each event before you head out for the day. Please call to confirm dates and times and costs or check the websites.

If you are interested in some of the more active events, you might want to check early. The early registration fees are often lower the sooner you register. Some events still have Covid guidelines.

The Poconos are a great place to see fall foliage, and there are many ways to enjoy the sights. Blue Mountain Resort offers scenic chairlifts on Saturdays and Sundays through October 31st. The cost is \$10 for unlimited rides that day.

There are many train rides specifically to enjoy the colors of the season. The Stourbridge Line has a 3½ hour train ride (50 miles) on Fridays through October 29th. That train originates in Honesdale. The cost is \$25 for adults and \$15 for children three and older. Also originating out of Honesdale is the Pocono Foliage Express which is a 1½ hour, 20-mile round trip for \$20 for adults and \$10 for kids. That is on Sundays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

On Saturday and Sunday from 10/9 through 10/30, catch the Pumpkin Patch Express. The train makes a stop for you to pick a pumpkin. The same train line offers the Glen Eyre Foliage Express out of Hawley on Saturdays and Sundays.

The Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway in Jim Thorpe offers 70-minute rides on vintage trains through 11/7/21. You can ride in open cars or traditional rail cars. Check their website for times and costs, and to purchase tickets on line.

It's time for harvest festivals, pumpkin patches and Halloween events. Country Junction in Lehighton hosts the Great Pocono Pumpkin Festival daily from 9/25 through 10/24. Enjoy wagon rides, games, petting farm and a pumpkin patch.

Quiet Valley Historical Farm hosts their 47th Annual Harvest Festival on 10/9 and 10/10. Jim Thorpe's Fall Foliage Festival takes place on Saturdays and Sundays from 11-5 from 10/9 through 10/24. Enjoy ghost tours, music, food and various activities.

Spooky Stroudsburg will take place in downtown Stroudsburg throughout October. Business will decorate and there will be various activities throughout the month, such as scavenger hunts, a pumpkin carving contest, trick or treat, etc. There will be live music and a magician at Courthouse Square on 10/30 from 2-4.

PEEC in Dingman's Ferry offers many activities throughout the year. You can check their calendar for upcoming events. Their Harvest festival is on 10/9. Enjoy animal presentations, arts and crafts and other activities for \$5 a carload.

Haunted houses abound in this area. The Waldorf Estate of Fear is part of the Country Junction. There is a haunted outdoor trail, with high tech effects and live actors. There is also an escape room. It runs from 10/1 through 10/30 from 7pm to 11pm on Fridays and Saturdays. The Hotel of Horror in Saylorsburg runs on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through 11/6/2021.

There are other festivals this time of year. The Black Bear Film Festival takes place on 10/15 to 10/17 in Milford. The Pocono Food Truck Festival will be at Shawnee and benefits the Shawnee Fire Company. Enjoy food and music on 10/9 and 10/10 from 11-5:30.

The Pickle Me Poconos Festival will be on Crystal Street in East Stroudsburg on 10/2 from noon to 5. You can listen to bands and enjoy food from food trucks at the Harley Davidson Bikes and Bands in Tannersville on 10/17 from 12-4.

If you are interested in contributing to your community, you can learn about local community organizations and network at the Community Action Conference on 10/16 from 2-10 at the Chateau Resort and Conference Center in Tannersville.

For the more active folks among you, the Pocono Half Marathon and Fall Running Spectacular is at Promise Land in Greentown on 10/24. Of you can enjoy the thrills of a nighttime zip line and climb at Blue Mountain Resort on Fridays through 10/29. Go online to purchase your tickets, and to sign a release.

Are you more interested in peaceful meditation? Blissful Existence and Healing Acres in East Stroudsburg offers meditation circles, equine gestalt coaching and farm to barn dinners.

Have fun! Please let me know of your favorite events so that I can include them in the future, especially if they are annual events.



by Michael J. Tyrrell,
Communications
Committee Member

Your slow cooker is a good friend 12 months a year. Soups and stews are thought of as especially comforting dinners in the colder months. They can also make very satisfying, easy meals throughout the year as well. Here are 3 soups and a stew I think you will enjoy.

I have developed loads of slow cooker recipes over the years and have a few basic tips to share:

- For easy cleanup, line the slow cooker with a disposable slow cooker liner. Add ingredients as directed in the recipe. When finished cooking, spoon the food out of your slow cooker and dispose of the bag. Do not lift or transport the liner with food inside.
- Some recipes call for browning ingredients first. It is more work but does add more depth of flavor. Most recipes will be successful whether you brown or not brown first.
- Often a recipe calls for holding back some of the seasoning until the end of the cooking time. The seasoning can get cooked out a bit with long cooking time. Reinforcing the seasoning at the end is a technique chefs use and gives a hit of freshness.
- A great trick for slow cooker recipes, especially soups and stews if they seem a little flat, is to toss in a few drops of hot sauce and a squeeze of lemon juice at the end of cooking.

Slow-Cooker Italian Wedding Soup (makes 8 servings)

1 egg, lightly beaten
 ¼ lb ground beef
 ½ cup chopped onion
 3 tbsp bread crumbs
 3 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese
 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
 ¾ tsp salt
 ½ tsp black pepper
 8 cups low-sodium chicken broth
 3 large carrots
 1 small head escarole, washed, trimmed and cut into ½-inch strips
 1½ tps dried oregano
 1¾ cups ditilini pasta

1. In a large bowl, stir together egg, beef, onion, bread crumbs, 1 tbsp Parmesan, 1 tbsp parsley and ¼ tsp each salt and pepper. Form into 1-inch meatballs (about 45) and place on baking sheet. Refrigerate while preparing soup.
2. Combine broth, carrots, escarole and oregano in slow cooker. Gently add meatballs. Cover and cook on LOW for 6 hours. Stir in pasta for last 20 minutes of cooking time. Stir in remaining ½ tsp salt and ¼ tsp black pepper. Sprinkle each serving with remaining parley and Parmesan cheese and serve.

Smoky Navy Bean Soup (makes 8 servings)

1 lb navy beans, soaked overnight
 2 cups chopped smoked ham, about 8 oz
 1 large onion, chopped
 3 ribs celery, thinly sliced
 3 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
 1 can (14½ oz) petite diced tomatoes with chipotle or jalapeno pepper
 ½ tsp dried thyme

Smoky Navy Bean Soup cont.

1 tsp salt
 ¼ tsp black pepper
 1 bag (5 oz) baby spinach

1. Coat slow-cooker with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Drain beans and add to slow cooker bowl. Stir in 6 cups water, ham, onion, celery, carrots, tomatoes and thyme. Cover and cook on LOW for 10 hours.
3. Remove 2 cups of the soup, puree and return to slow cooker. Add salt and pepper; gradually add spinach and stir until wilted.

Indian-Style Tomato and Lentil Soup (makes 6 servings)

3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
 4 plum tomatoes
 1 cup brown lentils
 1 large onion, chopped
 2 ribs celery, diced
 1 large carrot, diced
 3 cloves garlic, chopped
 4 tsp garam masala
 1¼ tsp salt
 1 can (15 oz) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
 1 bag (5 oz) baby spinach
 ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
 lemon wedges, for squeezing

1. Coat slow cooker bowl with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Stir in broth, 1 cup water, tomatoes, lentils, onion, celery, carrot, garlic, garam masala and 1 tsp of the salt.
3. Cover and cook on HIGH for 5 hours. During last 30 minutes, stir in remaining ¼ tsp salt, chickpeas and spinach.
4. Just before serving, stir in yogurt. Squeeze lemon over each serving.

Pork Posole and Corn Bread Stew (makes 8 servings)

3 lbs boneless pork shoulder, well-trimmed and cut into 1-inch chunks
 ½ tsp salt
 ½ tsp black pepper
 1 tbsp canola oil
 4 large carrots, cut into ¼-inch pieces
 2 onions, chopped
 2 tbsp flour
 3 tsp chili powder
 1 tsp dried oregano
 4 cloves garlic, chopped
 1½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
 1 box (8.5 oz) corn muffin mix
 2 eggs
 zest of 1 lime
 1 tbsp lime juice
 2 tbsp plus 1 tsp chopped cilantro
 1 can (15 oz) white hominy, rinsed and drained

1. Season pork with ¼ tsp each salt and pepper. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook pork for 5 minutes, stirring often, in batches, until browned. Remove pork to slow cooker.
2. Add carrots and onions to skillet and season with ¼ tsp each salt and pepper; cook for 5 minutes, stirring often. Stir in flour, chili powder, oregano and garlic; cook 1 minute and remove to slow cooker. Add broth to skillet and bring to a boil and pour into slow cooker. Cover; cook on HIGH for 4½ hours or LOW for 6½ hours.
3. One hour before end of cooking time, stir together corn muffin mix, eggs, lime zest, 1 tsp cilantro and ¼ cup water. Remove cover; stir in hominy, lime juice, and 2 tbsp cilantro. Dollop corn muffin mixture on top. Place cotton dish towel over slow cooker bowl then top with cover. Cook for remaining time or until top is firm.

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