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Saturday, Oct. 29th, 7-11pm

Adult Halloween Party

in the Oak Room

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COMMUNITY DAY



More photos on page 6

SPEED LIMIT 25

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photos by David Montalvo, Maria Montalvo and Phyllis Haase

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Penn Estates Public Safety Department Update

by Chief Anton Toryak

With summer officially in the rear-view mirror, there are a few important items to keep on your mind. School is back in session. This means children are walking on the shoulder of our roadways and buses will be going from stop to stop. As the mornings remain darker later, please remain vigilant in your driving habits. Scan for pedestrians in the distance and use high beams when applicable.

Parents/Guardians, think about providing your children with reflective items or battery-operated lights to clip on backpacks to increase their visibility to vehicles. Also remember in your travels that flashing red lights on a school bus

mean YOU MUST STOP. Please help keep our children safe!

With the change in season, new weather patterns will be moving into our area which will create some unique challenges including possible loss of power. *FirstEnergy Company recommends the following:*



- Keep a flashlight, portable radio, and extra batteries handy – not only in your vehicle, but also in your home.
- As the days tick by, leaves will begin to fall from the trees and onto the roadways. Extra caution needs to be used when travelling in these conditions.

Wet leaves create similar traction issues as ice and snow. Fast speeds and abrupt cornering on wet leaves can cause a vehicle operator to lose control and cause an accident.

- One final item to keep in mind is the ever-increasing potential for power outages. Strong winds can cause trees and limbs to fall. This can cause damage to the energy system.
- Know where your electric service panel is located. They are commonly found in the basement, in an attached garage, or other interior locations near the exterior electric meter.
- Keep an emergency supply of bottled water on hand.
- If you use an electric range for cooking, keep an emergency supply of convenience foods that do not require cooking.
- If you have a backup generator, be sure you know how to use it safely.

Keep a plain, hard-wired telephone handy; you may need it to report your electricity is out. Many cordless or feature-laden telephones require a plug-in power source to operate and may not work if a power outage occurs. A cell phone will work as long as its battery is charged, and the nearest cell tower has power or battery backup power. However, a plain, hard-wired phone can operate on power delivered through the phone line.

When possible, PEPOA will open the Oak Room as an emergency station to assist our residents in the event of long-term power outage events.

I wish everyone a happy and safe fall season. Please remember, the speed limit throughout Penn Estates is 25 MPH.

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Outdoor Water Conservation Tips

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

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.

Utility Inc asked the community to conserve water as we have experienced low levels of rain this summer. The following suggestions will help you get in the habit of saving water in the great outdoors:

- 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 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.

Did You Know?

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

Pet parents: please be considerate when walking your furry children. Cleaning up dog waste is an important part of both yard and pet maintenance. Removing dog waste promptly from areas where people work, move and play will reduce the chances of stepping in it and spreading bacteria.

Penn Estates Rules and Regulations Article XIV section 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.

SENIOR LUNCH

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member



Our monthly senior group lunch took place on August 10 on the back deck and the weather really cooperated - it was a beautiful day. We had about 25 people attend and it was great to see those we haven't seen in a while.

Community manager Phyllis cooked and served the meal, along with her right-hand assistant, Sue. We enjoyed a wonderful fresh anti-pasto salad, rolls & butter, bowtie pasta tossed with pesto, fusilli and red sauce and Italian sausage. We finished off with assorted pastry.

These lunches generally take place on the second Wednesday of the month. The cost is \$5 and you need to register at the office a few days in advance. There is always plenty to eat and plenty of interesting conversation. Phyllis usually gives all who attend a small take-away like candy or cookies or in the case of this lunch a small live rose plant.

The group is very friendly and even if you are a newbie you'll be made to feel welcome. Hope to see some new faces at the next lunch.



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From Phyllis's Desk

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

Avoiding Conflict with the Neighbors

We can all get along. **The key is communication.** It's often the best way to prevent and resolve conflict before it reaches the legal system. You don't have to be friends or spend time together to achieve a peaceful coexistence, but you should try to be a good neighbor and follow these tips:

- **Say hello.** At the mailbox, while walking the dog or when a moving van arrives, introduce yourself. Regularly offer a friendly greeting.
- **Provide a heads up.** If you're planning a construction project, altering your landscaping or hosting a big party, contact your neighbors beforehand.
- **Do unto others.** Treat neighbors as you would like to be treated. Be considerate about noise from vehicles, stereos, pets, etc.
- **Know your differences.** Make an effort to understand each other. Differences in age, ethnic background and years in the neighborhood can lead to different expectations or misunderstandings.
- **Consider the view.** Keep your property presentable - especially areas that others can see.
- **Appreciate them.** If the neighbors do something you like, let them know; and it will be easier to talk later if they do something you don't like.
- **Stay positive.** Most people don't try to create problems. If a neighbor does something that irritates you, don't assume it was deliberate.
- **Talk honestly.** Tolerance is good, but don't let an irritation go because it seems unimportant or hard to discuss. Let your neighbors know if something annoys you.
- **Be respectful.** Talk directly to your neighbors if there's a problem. Gossiping with others can damage relationships and create trouble.
- **Remain calm.** If a neighbor mentions a problem they have with you, thank them for the input. You don't have to agree or justify any behavior. Wait for any anger to subside before responding.

- **Listen carefully.** When discussing a problem, try to understand your neighbor's position and why he or she feels that way.
- **Take your time.** Take a break to think about what you and your neighbor have discussed. Arrange to finish the conversation at another time.

See You Later, Summer!

It's that time of year - you've exchanged your swimsuit for sweaters and scarves just in time to roll up your sleeves and prepare your home for cooler weather.

As we watch summer fade into the sunset, consider adding the following items to your winterization checklist, and ensure your home is in tip-top shape for the fall and winter seasons:

- **Update your window treatments.** Summer's venetian blinds and sheer curtain panels won't keep the frigid air from creeping in on a cold night. Consider switching to a denser curtain fabric for the winter months to keep your home feeling cozy and keep heating bills low.
- **Schedule appliance check-ups.** Your HVAC system, air ducts and hot water heater should be checked by a licensed professional to ensure all elements are in good shape for the change in weather—especially if any appliances worked overtime during summer months.
- **Don't forget the attic.** Check for leaks in the roof, possible cracks in attic windows and insufficient insulation. With the help of a licensed professional or advice from your local home improvement store staff, you can shield your attic from harsh weather.
- **Replace weather stripping.** Doors and windows need extra help to hold heat inside your home. Inspect all door and window perimeters for cracks or tears in your current weather stripping. You also can add a second layer of protection with temporary weather stripping applied overtop your existing seals.
- **Deep clean and declutter.** Thoroughly clean your home's nooks and crannies inside and out. Ensure electrical cords, outlets and air vents are dust- and clutter-free; tidy up garages and storage areas; and clear any debris from your home's exterior, especially around vents and drains.

Out&About

Things to Do and See in the Poconos

by Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee Member

Summer seems to go by faster each year. We have had lovely days, though hot and oh so dry! I hope that our drought is over by the time this is published. We certainly have been lucky compared to the flooding and fires in other areas of the country.

It is time for fall foliage. I fear that there will not be a colorful display this year. As I drive down the road, I see so many trees with only brown leaves, and some trees that may not make it at all. On the bright side, there are many events to enjoy, and most of them are in October.

Here are some of the other upcoming events around the area. As always, I take my information the Internet. Please call to confirm dates and times and costs.

This is the season for spooky events, night time adventures and corn mazes. The Hotel of Horror and Altered Nightmares at the Lake House Hotel in Saylorsburg hosts indoor spooky tours. The tours start around 6 or 7 and end around 10 or 11. The tours cost between \$20 and \$35 and happen on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays until November 5th.

The Waldorf Estate of Fear hosts spooky indoor and outdoor tours on Friday and Saturday evenings through October 29th. There are high tech lighting and live actors. The costs vary. Both venues recommend purchasing tickets online.

The Old Jail Ghost Tours are at Jim Thorpe on Saturdays through October 29th. The cost is \$15 and no one under 12 years of age will be admitted.

The Pocono Haunted Trolley Tours at Delaware Water Gap take place at either 6:30 or 7:30 on Fridays and Saturdays through October 29th. The one hour guided trolley tours includes tales of hauntings and unsolved murders. The cost is \$25 for adults and \$20 for children 12 and under.

There are outdoor adventures, especially at night. Camelback Mountain Adventures in Tannersville will host a 1000' Zip Line After Dark on Fridays and Satur-

days through October 29th. The cost is \$25. They also run the Mountain Coaster After Dark through October 29th. Camelback also offers snow tubing after dark on Fridays and Saturdays through October 29th at a cost of \$30.

Blue Mountain Resort in Palmerton offers Nighttime Zip and Climb on Fridays through October 28th. The cost is \$49.

The Stourbridge line and the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway typically do special runs for each season. This is the season for fall foliage train rides.

There are fall festivals as well. Jim Thorpe offers their Fall Foliage Festival on Saturdays and Sundays through 10/23. On 10/8, the Rocktoberfest in Lehighton runs on Saturday (noon to 10) and Sunday (noon to 6) with beer, wine, car show, raffles, rides, music and food.

The International Food Festival takes place at Shawnee Mountain Ski area on October 8th and 9th. There will be chair lifts, music, food, crafts, etc.

The Electrifying Jack-o-lantern Experience will be at the West End fairgrounds in Gilbert on Wednesdays through Sundays through October 30th. The Great Pumpkin Festival is at Country Junction in Lehighton through October 30th.

Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm will host Spooky Days on the Farm on 10/28 and 10/29. Their 32nd Old Time Christmas tours take place on Saturday and Sunday December 3rd, 4th, and 10th. The Black Bear Film Festival in Milford is on 10/14 through 10/16.

Yenser Tree Farm in Lehighton has a number of seasonal events. Tickets for all events must be purchased on line at yenserstreefarm.com. On 10/7 they have Food Truck Firepit Friday from 5-9. On 10/14 and 10/21 they have Trick or Treat Thru the Maze. There is a five-acre corn maze, food trucks, hayrides and a kid fun zone. Stroudsburg has Spooky Stroudsburg. Businesses will be decorating for the season through 10/31. On 10/29 the businesses will hand out candy to children.

The tree lighting events are not yet listed. However, the West End Festival of Lights in Effort will run through 12/23. You can walk through a lights display. There will be crafts and more. The cost is \$6.

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

HEALTH & FITNESS

The Holidays are Here!

Yolanda Sarrabo CPT. BCS NASM, Contributor

As summer winds down, it's time to start prepping for the holidays. As we know, staying healthy and fit is a 365/year effort. There can be down time, stress time, and those instances when you may go all in. You've been doing so well!

Halloween - This is a fun and creative time for children...and some adults. Don't get set up for a fail! The candy and sweets are a big deal and though it's a one-day celebration, the amount of leftover candy and treats are a con, especially for those who've worked so hard in shedding pounds over the summer.

Tip: Buy smaller treat bags, and enough to judge if you'll actually get a lot of trick or treaters. It can be a sugar rush mess, having loads of candy sitting around and only a few takers... beside yourself.

Thanksgiving - The Thanksgiving holiday is a no brainer. There will be plenty of food and unfortunately those treats that we can't seem to rid ourselves of. Most people indulge every now and again, but be careful. Start by being very deliberate about the right way to approach this particular holiday.

Tip: When reviewing the holiday menu, think about the carbs and stick with one. Do you really need mashed potatoes *and* lasagna? If you know the menu prior to eating, start planning what you'll attack and what you'll pass on. I like to keep a fitness challenge in my back pocket. Think about doing a two-week fitness and diet challenge. Perhaps rethink beef or chicken for those two weeks and stick with a fish menu until the Thanksgiving holiday. As for the exercise portion, try doing cardio every other day for two weeks for 30 minutes.

Christmas - Unfortunately, the same sentiments fall into this holiday. Use the latter and have fun with prepping a fit challenge that allows you to stay engaged in the holidays but also not disturbing your health routine.

Cheers!

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



Navigating Your Finances

by **Bettyanne Nevil, Communications Committee**

Gifting For the Holidays

Guess what? It's almost holiday shopping time! I may not squeak when I walk, but I load empty TP rolls with dryer lint to use as fire starters. So, there's that.

I shop all year long for the next holiday. I maintain a gift closet. I stock it with well-known gift requests when they are marked down, or available using rewards. I listen to the commercials fed to my little ones. I read the latest reviews.

There are many ways to save. I use a lot of apps - one being *Retail Me Not*. I get credits back for purchases all year long. Another I use is my Amazon credit card. If you put your monthly bills on it, you earn points to spend at Amazon.

Your loved ones may want time with you, or a framed picture of an event you both attended - maybe your children in a frame. Gifting is not hard or expensive.

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photos by David Montalvo, Maria Montalvo and Phyllis Haase



Autumn Allergies

by **Stephanie Joy Lewis, Contributor**

Just when we think we're free from those uncomfortable spring allergies, enjoying warm summer months, and . . . "A-choo!" Autumn is upon us and here we go again. What's this about?

Ragweed is a major perpetrator of fall allergies. One plant can share up to a billion grains of pollen for us to enjoy. It blooms in August, but the allergic symptoms stemming from it play overtime, well into the fall. It is prevalent in the east, so there seems to be no escaping it here in Penn Estates or Pennsylvania. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America^[2], about ¾ of those who suffer spring-time allergies will also be affected by ragweed pollen in the fall.^[1]

According to some reports, our best strategies, which for many of us may be far too onerous, include those of avoidance^[1]:

- Stay indoors during the peak hours of mid-morning to mid-afternoon
- Wear a painter's mask to filter pollen (we're good at this by now!)
- Keep the home and car sealed – doors and windows closed (right, just when we want to enjoy the new, cooler weather and fresh air)
- Take outer jacket and shoes off before you enter your home from outdoors
- Vacuum carpet and upholstery frequently (with all that spare time we have?)
- Wash clothing, linens, and carpet frequently (see above)
- No line-drying your laundry (not permitted in Penn Estates, is it?)
- Bathe your indoor/outdoor cats and dogs frequently (that may not go over so well with our four-legged friends)

Of course, reliably taking our doctor-prescribed medications for asthma or allergy may be extra important during high allergy season.

Home Remedies:

Note: Talk with your doctor or health professional before starting any home remedy. It is also advised to not use home remedies if you suffer a severe allergic reaction, which warrants immediate medical attention.^[3]

- Acupuncture (interesting!)
- Air Conditioners and Dehumidifiers (limits mildew and mold)
- Air filters, in particular (HEPA – high efficiency particulate air filters)
- Bromelain (think, papaya and pineapple)
- Butterbur (said to be effective, like an antihistamine)
- Honey (some say local is best)
- Quercetin (found in broccoli, cauliflower, green tea, and citrus fruit)
- Saline nasal irrigation (for hay fever symptoms)
- Probiotics
- Some essential oils (review the risks; the FDA does not oversee)
- Spirulina (a blue green algae that may help allergic rhinitis)
- Stinging Nettle (said to be a natural antihistamine)
- Vitamin C (said to reduce histamine levels)

Of course, there are over-the-counter allergy medications that may help. (Ask your physician or pharmacist.)

With a bit of advance preparation, we may be able to enjoy the beauty of the season of autumn here in Penn Estates without great interference by our allergies. As always, be prepared and carry that packet of tissues!

[1] <https://www.healthline.com/health/allergies/fall-allergens#ragweed>

[2] <https://www.aafa.org/>

[3] <https://www.healthline.com/health/home-remedies-for-allergies>



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Thanksgiving Celebrations

by Sandy Black, Contributor

The United States is not the only nation that celebrates Thanksgiving - a day of gratitude. Canada celebrated Thanksgiving in 1578, 40 years before America. An English navigator, Martin Frobisher, celebrated in Nunavut to give thanks for the safety of his fleet. This celebration is considered to be the first Thanksgiving celebration in North America. But the First Nations, indigenous people of Canada and Native Americans have been holding their harvest festivals long before Europeans.

The German equivalent of Thanksgiving is called "Erntedankfest" - harvest festival of thanks. This religious holiday takes place on the first Sunday of October. During a typical Erntedankfest the celebrants carry Erntekrone - the harvest crown - made of grains, fruit and flowers to the church in a solemn procession and then they will feast on of fattened-up chicken and castrated roosters.

In Liberia, a West African republic, where freed slaves from the United States was established in the early 1820's and helped spread Christianity. Liberia's government passed an act declaring the first Thursday of November as National Thanksgiving Day. Today it is the largest Christian holiday. This holiday is celebrated with baskets of local fruits such as papaya and mangoes instead of turkey and pumpkin. They also serve spicy roast chicken, mashed cassavas, live music and of course dancing.

In Japan the celebration is called Kinro Kansha - Labor Thanksgiving Day and it evolved from the ancient rice harvest festival, "Niinamesai." The date of the festival was set as November 23rd. Labor organizations lead the events at which citizens are encouraged to celebrate the principles of hard work and community involvement. To mark the holiday, children make thank-you cards for policemen, firefighters or other municipal workers.

In Puerto Rico, which is a territory of the United States, they enthusiastically adopted the traditions of celebrating the fourth Thursday in November as Thanksgiving. They even embrace the Black Friday shopping craziness the following day.

Puerto Rico has put their own traditional twist on the Thanksgiving feast with the roasted, seasoned "pavochon" or a turkey stuffed with mofongo (a mashed plantain dish) but roast pork is also a common item on the menu. The balance of the menu will have the traditional plantains and of course rice and beans.

HALLOWEEN CELEBRATIONS

by Sandy Black, Contributor

Halloween is celebrated annually on October 31st. Celebrations are derived from ancient festivals and religious rituals. Did you know that Halloween is one of the world's oldest holidays? It is still celebrated today in a number of countries around the globe. Such countries still holding their traditional rituals are Ireland, Canada and of course the United States of America. The traditions and rituals all include costume parties, trick-or-treating, pranks and games.

There are different versions of the holiday. Mexico and other Latin American countries celebrate the Day of the Dead known as "Dia de los Muertos" which honors deceased loved ones and their ancestors. In England it's "Guy Fawkes Day" which falls on November 5 and is commemorated with bonfires and fireworks.

In Mexico, Latin America and Spain, "All Souls' Day" takes place on November 2nd and is commemorated with a three-day celebration which begins on the evening of October 31. The celebration is designed to honor deceased relatives who are believed to return to their earthly homes.

The tradition is that families construct an altar in their homes and decorate it with candy, flowers, photographs and samples of their deceased relatives favorite foods, drinks and fresh water. Often a wash basin with a towel is also placed on the altar so that the spirits can wash their hands before indulging in the feast.

Relatives then proceed to the gravesites of their departed family members and they tidy up the gravesites. They then decorate the gravesites with flowers, wreaths or paper streamers. Candles and incense are also burned to help the deceased find the way home. On November 2nd, relatives gather at the gravesites to picnic and reminisce. Some gatherings even include tequila and a mariachi band.

On November 5th in the evening bonfires are lit throughout England and effigies are burned and fireworks are set off. This tradition falls around the same time and has very similar traditions even though the celebration has very little to do with Halloween or the ancient Celtic festival of "Samhain." The English stopped celebrating Halloween because the Martin Luther Protestant Reformation had begun to spread. As followers of this religion, they did not believe in saints so they had no reason to celebrate on the eve of All Saints' Day.



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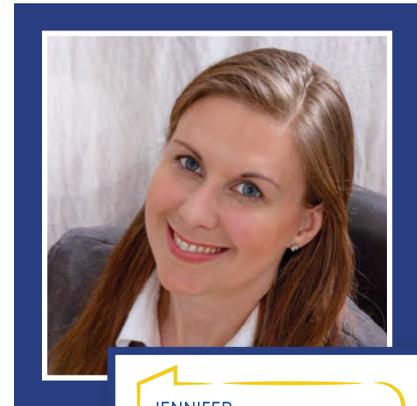
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What We're Streaming

Guilty Pleasures or Hidden Treasures?

by Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee Member
with contributions from Paul Quillin

Summer slipped by so very quickly. Winter evenings and snow days are on their way (unless global warming interferes). Other than during the pandemic, winter is the best time to catch up on streaming movies and series. Here are a few that we have enjoyed watching in recent months.

Guilt

Masterpiece Theater / PBS Passport
recommended by Sharon Kennedy

As I thought about series that I have enjoyed most I realized that I do have a theme. I seem to enjoy series on PBS and series that feature mysteries or crimes that have unexpected twists and turns. Guilt seems to check all those boxes. It is a mystery series that first aired on BBC in Scotland in 2019. It now is available as part of the Masterpiece Theater series through PBS passport. There are two seasons of four episodes each. The fourth episode of season 2 will be aired on September 11th. Based on information on the internet, there should be a third season in 2023.

I have to be honest. I watched the first episode of the first season several months ago and was not truly engaged. I moved on to other series, not intending to watch Guilt. However, the reviews were so good that I decided to give it another try. I am so glad I did. I was hooked in the second episode and remained

hooked from then on. The first episode sets the stage for the entire first season. Set in Scotland, the story opens with two brothers, who were mostly estranged from each other, driving home together after a wedding and running over an old man. The older brother, an attorney, convinces the younger brother that they should not call the police. They cover up the incident (and the body) in a way that leads to situations requiring more and more lies and deceptions. No one is quite what they seem and every move leads yet another complicated cover up. If you decide to watch this series, I hope you enjoy it as much as I have and do.

Last Tango in Halifax

Prime Video / Vudu / Apple TV
recommended by Paul Quillin

Last Tango in Halifax is a British comedy-drama series. The head writer Sally Wainwright drew her inspiration from her own life. Sally's mother decided to explore social media and signed onto a website called "Friends United" where she reconnected after 60 years with a sweetheart she had when she was 15. Thinking of how passionate and emotional her mother became at that time inspired Sally to develop this screenplay. By the way, her mother's story had a happy ending, as it actually led to her mother's second marriage.

The main characters:

- Anne Reid as Celia
- Derek Jacobi as Alan
- Sarah Lancashire as Caroline, Anne's daughter
- Nicola Walker as Gillian, Alan's daughter
- Timothy West as Uncle Ted

The series stars Derek Jacobi and Anne Reid as Alan and Celia. We follow these two septuagenarians as they rekindle a lost love and meld their two very disparate families (and dramas) together. And that's really it. The show draws you in though because of its excellent cast of brilliant theater actors who portray their characters so clearly that the many scrapes and bust-ups and just simple conversations they have make you eager to spend more time with them. For instance, there are scenes where Alan and Celia just go on and on about their situation and unlike most TV shows that wouldn't have the patience to settle on two characters chatting away about nothing like this, here it works, because you have the brilliant Anne Reid and Derek Jacobi doing it. But it's not just Alan and Celia, it's a treat to listen in on inane phone conversations between Gillian (Alan's daughter) and Caroline (Anne's daughter) who are polar opposites. Let me add here that Caroline and Gillian are also excellently played by Sarah Lancashire and Nicola Walker, (my favorite of all: "Unforgotten").

So, the interplay of these characters, what they say to each other, has the unlikely effect of making you feel that you'd like to know them. Take the scene where a friendly security guard just comes up to Alan at the grocery store and says hello, then continues exchanging pleasantries. Sounds like it should be boring but it certainly is not.

As I said earlier, and if you know how strongly I feel about character development's importance, here we have real people. Not one is unflawed. There are no bad guys, good guys here, from the leads on down we see fully fleshed out characters. Celia shows her bias and entitlement even hinting that she is aware of it. She says: "but I like nice things!" Even though she doesn't add: "and if I'm not entitled to them, who is?", you get the feeling it is implied.

Her daughter Caroline has inherited some of the same genes. Luckily for her she is well equipped to occupy her elevated position although she may wear it a bit too proudly. Alan's daughter Gillian, a farmer by choice, comes across as much more grounded. Her head is easily turned (like when a muscular young gardener shows up). She has a knack for getting into some really uncomfortable predicaments. We eventually learn that Gillian is living with a deadly "secret" which haunts her every day. Ok, no more hints. I could go on about the others, but each one is unique, real and expertly portrayed.

"Last Tango in Halifax" is high on my list of recommendations and is available to watch on a smart TV via Prime Video, Vudu and Apple TV.

If you have a perhaps little known series that you would like to recommend, please send a paragraph describing the program, how to access it, and why it is one of your favorites. You can forward it to pepoharmony@gmail.com.

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Eats Around Town

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee

The Arlington Diner

One thing there is no shortage of in the Poconos is diners and we're lucky to have a few great ones in the Stroudsburg area. One of our favorites is the Arlington up on 611 where we had our first meal when we were meeting with our builder 40 years ago.

We hadn't been there in a while but stopped in on a recent Saturday in conjunction with a trip to the Green Market at Courthouse Square. It's a real old-fashioned diner. Nothing has changed much over the years. It's still comfy, extremely well maintained and immaculately clean. The staff is cheerfully accommodating and cracker-jack.

Poetry Corner

by James Ruffini,
Communications Committee Member

Devil's Night

*Don't go out on Devil's Night.
Stay in your bed and turn on the light.
Little demons and ghouls have their fun all right,
Outside on the streets this Devil's Night.*

*You don't want to know the mischief they cause
On Halloween eve, they run without pause.
Flying, and laughing, and breaking the laws.
You really shouldn't see the mischief they cause.*

*Please heed my words, stay under the covers.
And tell your friends, and your sisters, and of course your brothers.
Stay in bed, don't even peer through the shutters,
Because a goblin or ghost may spook you to stutters.*

*Just wait until daybreak on Halloween day,
When you know all the ghosts and ghouls are away.
They hate the daylight, it's no fun they say.
So just wait to Trick or Treat on Halloween day.*

Thirsty

*His wrappings were dusty, sandy, and musty.
He needed some water, a tall glass or shorter.
The sarcophagus was shut (his name was King Tut,
Or some other royal name of days long waned).
Then some explorers found the great King's parlor,
And opened the tomb, to which he was doomed.
The seal was broken, with ancient words spoken.
When the mummy walked out, they gave a huge shout:
"The mummy is alive, go run, go hide!"
So, when he finally saw and rubbed his dry jaw,
He said, "Because I am King, they left me their things.
Perhaps they'll come back and not go further,
What I really need is a nice glass of water."*

Three Witches Who Keep You In Stitches

*Quick with a joke, or a rhyme or a riddle,
The three witches would laugh
When they turned a pig into a fiddle.
They joked at their cauldron as they mixed in some spice,
A secret herb, or a bat wing, or even some mice.
They'd laugh on their broomsticks riding so high,
You could hear their cackling in the darkest of skies.
And if they saw you out on Halloween eve,
They'd recite a spell which you could not leave.
And when they were done with their little rhyme,
You'd laugh at their jokes all of the time.*

They do a really nice breakfast all day. The Swiss omelet we had was very generous and perfectly cooked. Nice crispy home fries, rye toast and tomato juice completed the deal. There is a nice variety of breakfast sandwiches in addition to the expected breakfast fare. A huge selection of sandwiches, burgers, wraps and salads are on the menu as you would expect; also, full meals and specials.

I was having a hard choice deciding what to order. Then I spotted a gyro wrap.

OMG, it was spectacular! Lovely heated pita, loads of seasoned slice gyro meat and overflowing with lettuce, tomato, onion and tzatziki sauce. The generous order of fries was ridiculously crispy and the coleslaw they served was very creamy and well seasoned. I couldn't have been happier!

They are not currently open for dinner. Check out the Arlington for a quick meal. You will not be disappointed!



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Social Security COLA – The Silver Lining of Inflation?

by Stephanie Joy Lewis, Contributor

See a video version of this article at <https://www.joydisability.com/post/2023-cola>

Inflation is an undue burden on all of us today. I don't know anyone in Penn Estates not feeling the pinch. It is especially difficult for many with fixed incomes. Often seniors and disabled neighbors cannot add a part time job to their existing daily activities. Many of these neighbors, maybe even you, rely largely on Social Security Retirement, Disability, Survivor, Dependent benefits from a worker in the family, or Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

There is a tiny silver lining for those of us receiving Social Security benefits or SSI. Each year, in October, the Social Security Administration (SSA) announces the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) to monthly Social Security benefits. Many folks wait with bated breath for the announcement. We are NOT there yet, time-wise, as of this writing, but we are close, and there are expectations.

What is the COLA? The important purpose of the COLA is to make sure that the buying power of the benefits noted above is not diminished by inflation. COLA has been law since 1972 and automated since 1975. Prior to 1975, to get an increase, Congress had to proactively enact special legislation. *Can you imagine having to wait for Congress to act?* Fortunately, the automatic COLA is in play and does not seem to be going anywhere.

Here's the math: In a nutshell, the 2023 COLA will be the difference, in percentage, between:

1. the price of a vast basket of consumer goods and services known as the CPI-W in the end of the 3rd quarter 2021, and
2. the price of that same basket at the end of the 3rd quarter 2022.

Did it increase and, if so, how much? If there is no increase in these two price index levels, there will be no COLA. (There was no COLA for 2010, 2011 and 2016, the only years in history unable to provide beneficiaries with a COLA.)

Critics: Critics of the CPI-W denounce that it omits important cost of living

items. These omissions include those provided the by government, as paid for by taxpayers, and not 'out of pocket' directly. As such, the omissions include expensive costs such as Education, Medicare, and Medicaid. This is noteworthy given the increase in Medicare Premiums that often eat into the fixed monthly income of the disabled and retired. Therefore, the CPI-W is said to substantially *underweight* the actual costs of living by the very people it is intended to cover.

Possible COLA for 2023: As of this writing, educated speculation by economists is forecasting one of the highest COLAs in decades, possibly since the early 1980s. I am seeing forecasts in the 8.9-9.5% range, give or take. One advantageous aspect afforded Social Security beneficiaries is that the COLA never reverses itself in a later year. Once beneficiaries' benefits increase by, say, 9%, that increase will never be taken away (as per current law, which is not expected to change).

Benefit For All: For those not collecting Social Security yet - Rest assured that your primary insurance amount (PIA) that you have already earned, *or will earn later*, also gets this year's COLA applied to it. That way, when you do eventually collect your earned-and-paid-for benefits one day, they will already have been increased by this COLA and all others. As such, be you 18 or 65, as you work now, your insurance amount for later is growing silently.

Note: This article/video is for general information only and is not legal advice to any particular reader or individual. For legal advice, you must specifically retain a lawyer who evaluates your specific situation.

<https://seniorsleague.org/ask-the-advisor-august-2011-advisor/>

<https://www.ssa.gov/cola/>

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/how-big-a-social-security-cola-can-retirees-expect-in-2023-11661615640>

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HOW COVID CHANGED MY APPROACH TO TRAVEL

by Sandy Bonet, Contributor

When the COVID lockdown ended, we were like bears coming out of hibernation. As people slowly began to resume life in the post-Covid world, we travel addicts peeked out of our caves and instantly heard the siren call of far-away places. But for me, the call had a slightly different tune than in times past.

When my friend Cathy called to say she would be living in London for six months and invited me to join her for a few weeks, I started planning my trip immediately. Following my usual travel routine, I got the latest version of Lonely Planet's London guide book and listed all the places I had missed in previous trips to England. Those included Bath, Stonehenge, Hampton Court and a day at the British Museum.



When I started looking for tours and tickets, I realized everything except the British Museum was a one day trip that required being at an appointed place at an appointed time (early morning) and coming back in the evening. A personal driver was not in my budget.

Somehow, the idea of rushing around all over southern England seemed exhausting. Maybe it was a result of staying put at home thanks to COVID, or maybe it was just a result of getting older. In any event, I wondered what it would be like to spend the whole time in Chelsea, the neighborhood where my friend would live.

I could get to know the areas accessible by walking, double decker busses and maybe the London Tube (i.e., the subway, to us). Also, it would give me a chance to meet and talk with the locals and really feel the pulse of one section of the city. Better yet, it didn't require getting up at the crack of dawn, rushing to meet other people's time lines or being tied to a schedule.

It sounded great! So, working via text and email with my friend, we identified some experiences she wanted to have and what was interesting to me. Only one of our destinations required a bus and Tube ride. Here are some of the highlights:

- A short double decker bus ride and walk to Liberty. Famous for their unique Liberty Fabrics, this is really a department store with beautiful items for the home, perfumes, scarves and clothing featuring Liberty fabrics. It was a key item on my sewer's bucket list. Even if you don't sew, the Tudor style building itself is worth the experience.
- Another short bus ride to the Victoria and Albert Museum to see the exhibit of African fabric and fashion. I took pictures of almost everything and am currently trying to recreate some of those looks in my sewing room.
- The Portobello Road Market is a short taxi ride from Chelsea; however, we opted for a wild ride on the upper deck of a bus - what fun. The market is one of the best-known street markets in the world and for good reason. The mile-long hustle, haggle, color and energy of this market is a shopper's delight. I could have spent my entire vacation exploring its treasures.
- On Sunday we went to an English Sunday roast at a neighborhood restaurant. It is a tradition rooted deep in England's gastronomic past. The roast beef and Yorkshire pudding looked as if they were straight out of a Dickens novel - and absolutely delicious!
- At the British museum (a bus ride away) we saw the Rosetta Stone and a wonderful Stonehenge exhibit that included examples of the stunning gold adornments worn by Celtic warriors and clan leaders.

- On the top of both our "must-do" lists, was having high tea at the Ritz. It did not disappoint. Dressed in our very best, brought over just for this occasion, we took a bus-tube combo ride to the Ritz. The moment we entered we were "royalty." Impeccable service, delightful tea sandwiches, pastries and, of course, a huge selection of teas. It was pricey but worth it. Another bucket list item checked off!
- Speaking of tea, just steps away from the Ritz is Fortnum and Mason, London's oldest grocery store. But it doesn't look at all like Shop Rite or Giant. It looks more like Harrods and it is much more than groceries. Upscale home goods, high end clothing and perfumes are just a few of the delights on its multiple floors. As a life-long tea drinker, I loved checking out all the varieties and choosing what I wanted to bring back to enjoy at home.

The best part of this kind of travel is getting to know the people in the neighborhood. For me that included the taxi driver who drove me from Heathrow to Chelsea. In his cab we enjoyed lively conversation about British history and politics and agreed to continue the talk when he drove me back to the airport at the end of my trip.



It was fun to chat with the pharmacist at Boots (a UK drug store chain) about the price of drugs in the UK compared to the USA. We got our hair done at the local Toni and Guy and befriended the hairdressers. We got to know the restaurant servers, shopkeepers and the other shoppers and museum goers wherever we went.

Although I had been to London several times, this trip left me feeling that I understand the city and its people much more than before. I am now considering going back to Morocco (one of my favorite places) but staying only in one city and really enjoying the people, the food, the beauty and adventures that are within walking distance or require only a short camel ride.

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