

Presidents Message

by Ken Nevil, PEPOA Board President



2023 Election

In the May 2023 election, there will be three director positions to fill, each serving a three-year term. Candidates for the Board must be at least 21 years of age; a person who owns at least one residential lot in Penn Estates, whose name appears as a grantee on a recorded deed for the property, and who is registered at his Penn Estates lot's address to vote in municipal elections.

Qualified residents may only be natural persons; they may not be corporations, LLC's Trusts, or Partnerships and are in good standing. As per the bylaws, being found guilty of a misdemeanor or a felony offense under any state or federal jurisdiction is cause for removal.

The Board of Directors is responsible for the governance of the association. Directors have the duty to:

1. Act in good faith, in a manner they reasonably believe to be in the best interests of the association.
2. Act in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation, Declaration of Covenants, and Bylaws.
3. Act in conformance with but not limited to the Uniformed Planned Community Act, Fair Housing Act, and Non-Profit Corporation law.

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

Abilities that a Director should possess include the ability to listen, keep an open mind, and not rush to judgment. To put your personal agenda aside and work in the best interest of the association. To articulate your viewpoint and respectfully disagree with other perspectives; and the ability to support majority decisions of the Board, even in those situations where you voted in the minority.

Candidates that meet the qualifications outlined in the bylaws may obtain a board election packet beginning on January 2 from the administration office. The deadline for candidate packets to be returned to the administration office is by the close of business on February 1.

Serving as an effective Director can be challenging, and it requires a lot of time and work. It can be a thankless job at times, and Directors do not receive any compensation. However, being part of the governing body and working to improve Penn Estates and keep it one of the best communities in the Poconos is its own reward. You will derive satisfaction and pride from contributing your talents and leadership skills to your community.

A SPOOKY GOOD TIME AT THE KIDS HALLOWEEN PARTY

OCTOBER 31, 2022

photos by David Montalvo



More photos on page 7

From Phyllis's Desk

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

Winter is Just Around the Corner

During the snow season comes the problem of keeping the roads clear of snow. By its very nature, this task requires the cooperative efforts of everyone. Usually, there are two separate snow removal operations. The first is during a storm itself and consists of quick passes with the plows to keep the roads open. Priority is given to the most heavily traveled roads.

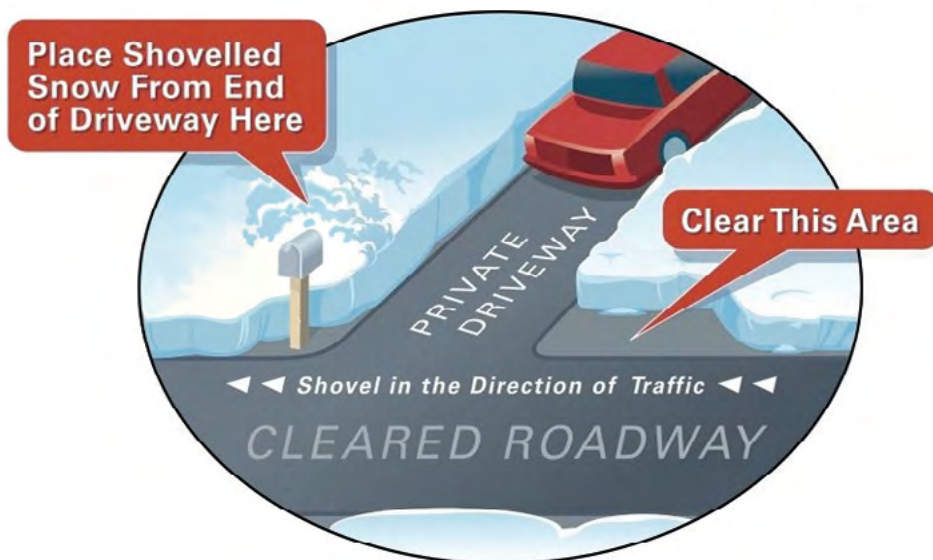
The second operation begins when the storm abates. It consists of widening the cleared portion of the most heavily traveled roadways and clearing all roads.

Unfortunately, each operation may result in a berm or windrow of snow across private driveways or encroachments to association roads. The association does not have the resources to keep private driveways clear. This is the responsibility of each individual resident. Reasonable effort is made to plow in a manner that will minimize the size of the berm.

It is important that there are no obstructions such as parked vehicles in the roadway or easement when snow removal is to occur. This hampers operations and prevents the complete clearing of the road. Cars parked on the roadways during snow removal will be towed at the owner's expense.

Other improvements need to be set back far enough from the traveled way to provide sufficient clearance for the snow removal equipment. As per our regulations parking is not permitted on the road or within the 10-foot easement.

Avoid the "Second Shovel"



The following rules are provided to assist in the orderly execution of the snow removal process:

1. As the placement of obstructions is particularly important for the safe and efficient clearing of snow from the common area roadways, owners are to refrain from trees hedges, pavement in the easement, or any other improvements close enough to the roadways so as to be damaged during the normal course of snow plowing. The Association, the contractor, or the employee performing snowplow duties shall not be responsible for any damage that occurs to these improvements.
2. Vehicles are prohibited from being parked on any street in the association. This helps to improve snowplowing services and keeps roads clear for emergency vehicles. If found on the roadways, vehicles are subject to towing at the owner's expense.
3. Do not park your vehicle at the end of your driveway within 10 feet of the road (easement). The association, its contractors, or its employees assume no responsibility for any damage that may occur if this rule is not followed.
4. Do not place snow from driveways on the common areas following a storm. Help keep your neighborhood safe and accessible for you, your family, and your neighbors.
5. The snowplow by its nature creates windrows or banks of snow along the sides of the road and across driveways. Clearing snow from driveways and entrances is the responsibility of the resident; the association cannot provide this service. The plow operators do not have control over the windrow of snow coming off the edge of the blade, and plow angles cannot be adjusted for the sharp turns required to clear driveways. To minimize the frustrating problem of the snowplow covering your driveway with snow after you have just shoveled it, please wait until the roads have been plowed. When shoveling, place as much of the snow as possible on the right side of your drive as you face the street. This reduces the chance of snow previously removed from the driveway easement being pushed back onto your drive.
6. Leave room for maintenance vehicles and plows — stay back at least 200 feet and do not pass on the right.

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SENIOR LUNCH

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member

November's lunch, which took place on November 9, turned out to be a record breaker. Over 30 attendees! A lot of regular faces but some new peeps as well.

To refresh everyone's memory, these lunches take place on the second Wednesday of the month in the Oak Room. The cost is a modest 5 bucks and you must get a ticket a few days prior at the admin office. Our community manager, Phyllis Haase, organizes the event and cooks the meal with the help of Sue from the office.

On the menu this month was a salad to start, followed by pork roast, rice, broccoli and cornbread. Dessert was a frosted brownie-like cake. Everyone seemed to enjoy the meal. I know the group at our table was happy. We also received a Godiva Chocolate Bar to take home with us.

After lunch, Phyllis spoke for a few minutes updating us on events and work being done on the roads and the lake. She also



formally introduced Chief Toryak who fielded a few questions.

If you haven't attended yet, you should consider giving it a try. We always enjoy ourselves and have met some great people. The event always wraps up in less than 90 minutes.

Hope to see some newbies at our December lunch!



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Out & About

Things to Do and See in the Poconos

by Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee Member

The leaves are down! Finishing leaf season is always a relief. It's now time for winter sports and events. There are so many ski and tubing events that I am not including them in this article; look online for your favorite winter events, locations and costs. Please check newspapers and websites for up-to-date information.

Here are some of the other upcoming events around the area. As always, I take my information from internet sites. Call to confirm dates, times and costs.

I love seeing the Snowmen of Stroudsburg occupy our fair town each winter. Painted by local artists, the life size snowmen inhabit various locations and they are rotated through those locations every few weeks. You can find a map of the snowmen locations on line and at various businesses in town (such as Grandpa Joe's Candy Store, Kitchen Chemistry and Canfield's Pet and Farm Supply). The artists and the Snowmen are listed on the website as well: gocollaborativestbg.com.

A growing tradition in the area are festival of lights events. The West End Festival of Lights runs through December 23rd, and is available Thursdays through Sundays. This is a walking experience and can include food crafts and other experiences. The cost is \$6 per person.

Raising the House hosts a drive through lights display at Mauch Chunk Lake Park from 6 to 10pm on Fridays, Saturday and Sunday through December 23rd. The cost is \$20 per car.

I have heard from a number of people that the Winter Light Spectacular at the Lehigh Valley Zoo is just that: spectacular. This event starts November 12th and runs through January 1. The cost is \$17 per adult and \$15 per child but they are cheaper if bought in advance online and group rates are available. You can also check online for dates and times when Elsa or Belle or Cinderella or Anna appear for live performances.

A Christmas Carol will be playing at Shawnee Playhouse on Fridays at 2 PM, Saturdays at 2 PM and 8 PM and Sundays at 2 PM through December 18th. Tickets range from \$16 to \$29.

Shawnee Craft Brewing Company hosts live music at the Beer Garden or Tap Room on Friday and Saturday nights and Sunday afternoons. It is advertised as free and family friendly. The 9th Annual Ugly Sweater Party is on December 17 from 7 to 10 PM at the Shawnee Craft Taproom and is listed as free. Enjoy live entertainment while wearing your favorite ugly sweater.

Shawnee is pretty busy this time of year. The Messiah Sing-in Community Concert will be at 7:30 on December 22nd. The price is a donation of \$10. The Breakfast with Santa will be at the Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort on Saturdays from 9 AM to 11 AM through December 17. The cost is \$19.95 for adults and \$11.95 for children ages 3 to 11.

There will be a breakfast with Santa on December 17th from 10 AM to 2 PM at the Pocono Mountain Harley-Davidson in Tannersville. The cost is \$5 plus a new unwrapped gift for Toys for Tots.

You can have pictures with Santa at Country Junction in Lehighton on Saturdays through December 18th. Call (610) 377-5050 for prices.

Check out Special Santa train rides originating from the Jim Thorpe train station and the Honesdale Train Station. Jim Thorpe's Olde Time Christmas runs on Saturdays and Sundays through December 18th, and begins with a tree lighting Ceremony on December 2nd. There are lots of activities, some of which involve a fee. Enjoy the strolling musicians and carolers.

Temple Israel of the Poconos has a Chanukah Community Candle Lighting and Dinner on December 18th. Dinner is at 5 PM and there will be dancing and face painting as well. The Temple Lunch and Learn occurs weekly on Tuesdays through June 27. Rabbi Bickhardt leads a discussion of the weekly Parsha and this is followed by a kosher lunch. This is free and is scheduled from 11 AM to noon.

If you want to attend an event with a special purpose you can go to The Garden of Giving in Saylorsburg and help harvest and pack produce for local food banks. This happens Saturdays from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM through December 31st.

Have fun! Let me know about your favorite events; I'll include them in the future.

Chill Grill Farewell

by Michael Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member

As was announced last month, the Chill Grill has closed permanently. Jennifer will still be providing her specialties including empanadas and custom cakes as well as catering services. Check this space for more info next issue when Jennifer provides additional details.

Jennifer Penna posted this note on social media. I wanted to share for those who may have missed this:

"Good morning. I just wanted to make an official announcement. Some of you may have already heard and to some it may be a shock. We decided to close The Chill Grill. It's been a hard last year and with rising inflation I didn't have it in my heart to raise prices so high just to survive. But don't be sad. I'm happy I brought some life back into our little community store and I'm excited to see what it will be next. Thank you to everyone who showed me love, and support and allowed us to serve you for 6 years. It's been great. I will still be offering my services. Stay tuned for updates. Continue to follow my CG and Jenpanadas page on fb and ig.

Thanks Again

It's been Real

Peace and Love ❤️"

Navigating Your Finances

by Bettyanne Nevil, Communications Committee

With inflation the way it is, we are likely heading into a recession. I thought we could all use ways to bring in extra cash. You may need it to make ends meet, fund your savings, or even to build up your retirement and the children's college fund. Whatever you use it for, here are some ideas.

One of the easiest ways to add income is to sell your time. Come to think of it, isn't that what we do at any job? It could be hard to be realistic about what to charge. Yes, your knowledge, experience, and time are valuable. Just remember the point here. You are probably not a professional. You do not want to charge more than someone is willing to pay.

Let's say you want to offer wash and fold laundry. You get to stay home. Do not need a babysitter or a car for that matter. Customers could supply laundry products. Your contribution is your appliances, the operating cost, and your time. Some people would love to use your service. But, if you are overpriced, you won't get as many customers as you would if you were more reasonable.

Do you know how to crochet, knit, or sew? Not only can you make items to sell, you can offer to teach others how to do it. You can offer to walk dogs. You can clean up yards that dogs use. Why not try training dogs? Take pets out to socialize. You could even offer to cook dog food or make dog biscuits. Remember when everyone was making masks? You could make dog bandannas. You are only limited by your own ideas.

Are you good at decorating? The holidays are upon us. Why not offer your service? Hang lights. Wrap gifts. Wear a costume and offer yourself for hire. Santa, elf, or the grinch. Do you play an instrument? Are you good at gaming? Do you enjoy gardening? Teach cooking or meal planning.

All of these skills can bring in money. You can help others learn to navigate social media. Teach how to post on YouTube or TikTok. How to protect themselves online. How to navigate job listings. Write résumés.

How about baking? If you love to do it, why not sell some breads, rolls, cookies, pies, or cakes. Offer to serve at holiday parties. Or just set up and break down. You know how to do something that someone needs.

If you don't think you can market yourself, think again. You probably already promote things. Have you ever seen a movie that you enjoyed and encouraged others to see it? Have you raved about a new restaurant? Have you posted pictures of your meals? Tell everyone you know what you are offering. It's that easy.



Happy Friendsgiving to All!

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member

The First Annual Penn Estates Friendsgiving took place at the Oak Room on November 12, 2022 from 5 PM to 7PM. By all accounts it was a huge success. Over 100 attendees!

There was no fee and reservations were not needed. Everyone was requested to make a contribution to the Olsen Christmas Wish but not required to do so. This is a charity started 15 years ago by the Stroud Area Police Department to provide gifts to children in need. Penn Estates will be now be donating in excess of one thousand dollars to this charity as the result of this event. Yay for Penn Estates!

Phyllis Haase, our community manager, organized this dinner with the assistance of the admin staff. She did all the cooking and did an impressive job.



We had salads, two types of turkey, yams, mashed potatoes, stuffing, baked pasta, string beans, rolls. Everything was spot on! There was a huge occasion cake and coffee to finish the meal off.

Phyllis was very happy the way this turned out and promises it will be an annual event. It always makes my heart feel good to see the generosity of our community.

Happy Holidays to all!



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KIDS HALLOWEEN PARTY



photos by David Montalvo

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Public Safety Department Moves to Second Phase

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

The transition phase of our new Public Safety Department was to initially deploy an unarmed department to become a hybrid department (armed and unarmed officers) by 2024 and have emergency medical responders (EMRs) by 2025. We are pleased to announce that the deployment of a hybrid department with three ACT 235 Officers took effect in October of 2022, well before our targeted date. The remaining Officers will begin the certification process in the fall of 2023.

Lethal Weapons Certification, officially known as ACT 235, is mandatory for all privately employed persons who utilize a lethal weapon in their work performance. Our Officers must obtain their Pennsylvania Act 235 certification prior to advancing their position.

To become a Pennsylvania Act 235 certified officer, they must apply and be accepted into the Pennsylvania State Police Lethal Weapon Training program. The application process requires that they pass a psychological exam, physical and visual exam, and criminal background check.

Once completed, the results will be reviewed, and the applicant will receive an approval or denial letter to attend training. Once the approval letter is received, the candidate may then proceed with enrollment with one of the local colleges to complete the program.

The process generally takes six months to complete. Regardless of having received similar training or having similar experience in another state, each applicant must complete the training program to be certified.

Carrying a firearm for the purpose of employment is regulated completely separate from regular conceal carry. In fact, having a concealed carry permit does not allow an employee to carry a firearm for employment purposes, and having passed ACT 235 does not allow you to carry a firearm while not working.

We look forward to continuing to improve our community in the next phase of Officers being certified in EMRs with the targeted date of 2025.

Kwanzaa

by Sandy Black, Contributor

Dr. Maulana Karenga, professor and chairman of Black Studies at California State University, Long Beach, created Kwanzaa in 1966. After the riots in Watts in Los Angeles, Dr. Karenga searched for ways to bring African Americans together as a community. He founded US, a cultural organization, and started to research African "first fruit" (harvest) celebrations.

Karenga combined aspects of several different harvest celebrations, such as those of the Ashanti and those of the Zulu, to form the basis of the week-long holiday. Kwanzaa 2021 would take place Sunday, December 26, 2021 through Saturday, January 1, 2022.

The name "Kwanzaa" is derived from the phrase "matunda ya kwanza" which means "first fruits" in Swahili. Each family celebrates Kwanzaa in its own way, but celebrations often include songs and dances, African drums, storytelling, poetry reading, and a large traditional meal.

On each of the seven nights, the family gathers and a child lights one of the candles on the Kinara (candleholder), then one of the seven principles is discussed.

The principles, called the *Nguzo Saba* (seven principles in Swahili) are values of African culture which contribute to building and reinforcing community among African-Americans. Kwanzaa also has seven basic symbols which represent values and concepts reflective of African culture. An African feast, called a *Karamu*, is held on December 31.

The seven principles, or *Nguzo Saba* are a set of ideals created by Dr. Maulana Karenga. Each day of Kwanzaa emphasizes a different principle. They are:

- **Unity: Umoja (oo-MO-jah)** - To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.
- **Self-determination: Kujichagulia (koo-gee-cha-goo-LEE-yah)** - To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves.
- **Collective Work and Responsibility: Ujima (oo-GEE-mah)** - To build and maintain our community together and make our brother's and sister's problems our problems and to solve them together.
- **Cooperative Economics: Ujamaa (oo-JAH-mah)** - To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.
- **Purpose: Nia (nee-YAH)** - To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness
- **Creativity: Kuumba (koo-OOM-bah)** - To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.
- **Faith: Imani (ee-MAH-nee)** - To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.



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HEALTH & FITNESS

A Hearty Winter!

Yolanda Sarrabo CPT. BCS NASM, Contributor

The leaves have fallen and winter is pushing through. It seems many have gotten a start in getting their workout just by tackling the clean-up of leaves. Winter and exercise is a slow-move concept for many. When the temperature drops the idea to stay fit tends to fall to the wayside. Why is that? How do you combat it? Let's delve in.

The Science. During the winter months, our bodies lack the vitamin D that we absorb through the spring and summer months. Vitamin D supports building calcium that is important in building bone. When we lack this nutrient, it limits the ability in supplying the needed oxygen to our muscles.

Now What? It's cold outside. I don't feel like going to a gym. I hear the complaints. But guess what? You can make a way from your home! Even small strides make a huge difference. I believe in the importance of movement and just because its cold outside doesn't warrant the "I can't because it's cold" attitude. If your bones creak and are stiffened, the best way to resolve the problem is by moving.

Hearty Winter Home Equipment. If there's no room to store multi advanced exercise machines, then here are a few go-to ideas when adding exercise at home in your day-to-day: Resistance Bands / Dumbbells / Yoga Mat / Weighted Ankle Weights. If the expense is too much, you can use 3-liter bottles filled with water for an inexpensive alternative to weights.

What Else? I'm sponsoring a team to participate in MudGirl on June 3, 2023. MudGirl is an organization that raises funds for breast cancer and other women's related cancer research. A registration fee is involved.

In January I'm starting a paid training service. For details, reach me by email chronicfitness18@gmail.com

Don't forget to keep moving and have fun in the process. Cheers!

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



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How America Reinvented the Celebration of Christmas

by Sandy Bonet, Contributor

Long before Christianity, December was a significant month. Many cultures celebrated the winter solstice as a turning point when the worst of winter was behind them and the darkness would begin to recede.

The Norse in Scandinavia celebrated from December 21 through January in recognition of the sun's return. Families would bring home large logs, set them ablaze, and feast until the last sparks went out.

In much of Europe, December was when most cattle were slaughtered, and wine and beer had fermented and were ready for consumption. So, they partied.

Farther south in Rome, winters weren't so harsh, but they still observed a holiday called Saturnalia throughout December and Juvenalia on December 25. Saturnalia honored the god of agriculture, while Juvenalia was a feast to honor the children of Rome and the infant god Mithra.

In all of these cultures, evergreens were an important of decorating during these celebrations.

Christmas in the Early Days of Christianity

We all know that Christmas is celebrated on December 25. But this wasn't always the case! For two millennia, people from around the world have been celebrating Christmas day as the birth of Jesus. But the Bible doesn't mention a specific time or date for Jesus' birth at all!

During early Christianity, Easter was the central holiday. Christians believed that Jesus was born on January 6, but Christmas wasn't even celebrated. The first recorded celebration on December 25th was in 336 thanks to the Christian emperor Constantine. A few years later, Pope Julius chose December 25 as the official date to celebrate the birth of Jesus.



Why did Julius make this change? Well, the common belief is that he chose the new date to help adopt and absorb the pagan festivals that occurred during the same time. This would then attract the masses to Christmas instead. It seems his plan worked. The Christmas traditions in these early times were much like the pagan ones from the solstice and Juvenalia, which were now absorbed into the celebration of Christmas.

The Uniquely American Christmas Holiday

As we often do, Americans took the holiday and ran with it. Although we did not embrace Christmas until the 1800s, once we did, we reinvented it to suit our large and multi-cultural country.

The early New England Puritans frowned on boisterous Christmas celebrations. It was just too much celebration for their Puritan sensibilities. In 1659, the Massachusetts colonists briefly criminalized observance of the day, and Christmas remained a regular workday in much of New England and Pennsylvania.

Other parts of British North America, however, celebrated with gusto, with costumed revelers going door to door and receiving small gifts of food and drink. It was a rowdy, boisterous affair.

Two 19th Century authors and a German prince were among those who were instrumental in developing an image of Christmas that has evolved into our modern celebrations.



Best-selling author Washington Irving wrote *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, gent.*, in 1819. The popular series of stories set Christmas in an English manor house and transformed the celebration into a peaceful, warm-hearted, family-centered holiday that brought everyone together regardless of wealth or social status.

Simultaneously, in 1843 Charles Dickens published *A Christmas Carol* in England, and its message about Christmas charity struck a cultural chord. Children's emotional needs were also reconsidered during this time, and Christmas became a day to "spoil" little ones.

Another major influence was the German Prince Albert who came to England when he married Queen Victoria in 1840. By the 16th century, Germany had established the tradition of bringing Christmas trees into the home. (Many believe that the reformer Martin Luther was the first to add lighted candles to the tree, a precursor to Christmas lights.) Naturally, Albert wanted to bring some of his homeland tradition with him, so he had three decorated Christmas trees scattered about in Windsor Castle. The tradition caught on quickly and soon made its way to the States.

Today, most Americans blend religious and secular customs with their own family traditions, often incorporating food, decorations and rituals from places they or their ancestors once called home. Roast turkey and ham are popular for Christmas dinner throughout the country, but depending on the region, so are tamales, goose with red cabbage, crawfish jambalaya, roast pork or "seven fishes" seafood salad.

As each new wave of immigrants comes along, some of their customs get added to the mix. For example:

- In the American Southwest, luminarias — lanterns made from brown paper bags weighted down with sand and illuminated by a lit candle — are displayed on Christmas Eve.
- Many Mexican Americans celebrate Las Posadas, a procession that re-enacts Mary and Joseph's search for a place to bed down in Bethlehem.
- Swedish Americans hold St. Lucia festivals, and in Puerto Rico there are parrandas, where friends go from one house to the next singing traditional songs, "surprising" friends and waking them with their music.
- Santa was kind of a real person. A real monk named St. Nicholas was born in Turkey around 280 A.D. The legend goes that he traveled the country giving away his wealth, and became known as the protector of children. Good ol' Saint Nick entered American culture thanks to Dutch immigrants who celebrated Sinterklaas, but he wasn't popularized until the 1822 poem "Twas The Night Before Christmas." Then, in 1881, political cartoonist Thomas Nast drew on the poem to create the jolly red image of Old Saint Nick we know today.
- Non-Christian holidays celebrated at roughly the same time of year as Christmas — most prominently the African-American Kwanzaa and the Jewish Hanukkah — blend into the American broader "holiday season."



As with so many aspects of U.S. cultural life, Christmas in the United States has evolved over the last two hundred years to reflect the values of our uniquely diverse and ever-changing population.

Eats Around Town

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee

Volare

A new upscale Italian restaurant recently opened in Tannersville that I think will become a favorite destination for us. Volare is just off Route 611 on the corner of Route 715. It was opened by Penn Estates resident Cesar Idrovo who owned and ran a restaurant, also called Volare, in NYC in the west village for over 30 years. They closed during Covid and lucky for us he retained his chef of many years.

We started with a very



appealing looking Antipasto Freddo which was very fresh. We also shared a Polpetta Ripiena which is basically a huge meatball filled with vegetables in a rich tomato sauce.

I ordered Osso Bucco made with a pork shank (instead of the usual veal shank) with a fettuccine type pasta. It was the best osso bucco I have ever eaten!

My tablemates ordered a Shrimp and Asparagus Risotto and Roasted Salmon with Red

Peppers, assorted roasted vegetables and crispy roasted potatoes.

We thoroughly enjoyed our choices. Even the bread they served was special (specially baked for them locally).

We were absolutely too stuffed for dessert but Cesar said that we must try their Tiramisu which is a specialty of the house. It was epic. So creamy and enough for the three of us.

Presently Volare is BYOB. Their business took right off so reservations are suggested. They are open for dinner Wednesday through Sunday.



Poetry Corner

submitted by James Ruffini, Communications Committee Member

New Year's Days by Celia Standish

The New Year's days are white with snow,
The winds are laughing as they blow.
Across the ponds and lakes we glide,
And o'er the drifting snow we ride,
And down the hills we gaily slide,
For it is winter weather.

Each rushing stream is warmly dress'd,
An icy coat upon its breast,
And on each branch of every tree,
Packed in as close as close can be,
The next year's leaflets we can see,
All nestled close together.

The North Wind by Dorothy Gradon

The Snow Queen comes on dazzling feet,
And brings the sparkling snows.
The clouds fly fast with icy sleet,
And the North Wind blows.

Robin is singing a brave little song,
The sweetest song he knows;
But winter nights are dark and long,
And the North Wind blows.

Squirrels are sleeping in hollow tree,
Seeds are asleep below;
Baby is cozy as cozy can be,
Let the North Wind blow!

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Michael's Kitchen

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member

This is the time of the year when Farmers Markets are overflowing with irresistible looking offerings. Here are some recipes that hopefully will inspire you to stock up on all the bounty the season has to offer.

Easy Roasted Vegetables

If you can't control yourself and overbuy, no worries. Peel any mixture of root vegetables and cut into a uniform size. Place on a rimmed baking dish and lightly toss with a tbsp or 2 of olive oil. Season lightly with salt and pepper and roast in a preheated 450° oven for 30 to 40 minutes until tender, turning once. If you add softer veggies such as peppers or green beans and broccoli, wait 15 minutes into the cooking time before adding them or roast them separately for less time.

Vegetable Korma

(makes 4 servings)

2 tbsp vegetable oil
2 sliced onions
2 tbsp chopped ginger
2 tsp curry powder
1 can (15 ½ oz) diced tomatoes
6 cups cauliflower florets
½ cup yellow lentils
¾ tsp salt
1 cup hot water
1 bag (6 oz) baby spinach
1 can (15 ½ oz) drained chickpeas
1 cup plain yogurt
½ cup chopped honey roasted almonds

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onions and ginger; cook 3 minutes. Stir in curry, tomatoes, cauliflower, lentils, salt and water. Simmer, covered, 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in spinach until wilted, then chickpeas and yogurt. Top with almonds. Serve with basmati and naan.

Zucchini & Summer Squash Parmesan

with Spicy Grape Tomato Sauce

(makes 8 servings)

Sauce

3 tbsp olive oil
6 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
2 Italian frying peppers, seeded and chopped
2 hot Italian peppers, seeded and chopped
2 containers grape tomatoes, halved
4 tbsp tomato paste
½ tsp each dried oregano, dried basil, salt
1 cup good quality marinara sauce or Italian seasoned crushed tomatoes
Sauté garlic in oil until golden; add peppers and cook a few minutes. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, oregano, basil and salt. Simmer, covered, 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in marinara sauce or crushed tomatoes.

Zucchini and Squash

2 large zucchini
1 large summer squash (if they are not as large as the zucchini use 2)
3 eggs, lightly beaten
2 cups unseasoned bread crumbs
vegetable oil
1 lb fresh mozzarella, sliced
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1. Trim ends of zucchini and squash; slice lengthwise into 1/4-inch planks. Dip in egg and dredge in bread crumbs.
2. Heat oil in large skillet until shimmering. Sauté vegetables about 2 minutes per side until nicely browned, in batches. Add more oil if skillet gets too dry.
3. In a 13 by 9 by 2-inch glass baking dish layer as follows. Cover bottom with some sauce, ½ vegetables overlapping if necessary, ½ of the sauce, ½ of the mozzarella. Repeat layering. Sprinkle with grated Parmesan.

4. Preheat oven to 350°. Cover dish loosely with foil and bake 40 minutes. Remove foil and bake additional 15 minutes. Let this rest at least 15 to 20 minutes before serving.

Note: The veggies release water so there will be a lot of liquid in dish. Ladle out (about ¾ to 1 cup) liquid from the corners of the dish and save. I served with spaghetti which I tossed with the reserved liquid.

5 Way Veggie Cincinnati Chili

(makes 8 servings)

2 onions, chopped
3 medium zucchini, diced
3 carrots, peeled and diced
1 red sweet pepper, seeded and diced
1 green pepper, seeded and diced
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 can (28 oz) peeled tomatoes in puree
1 can (8 oz) tomato sauce
¼ cup hot Mexican chili powder
2 tsp sugar
1 ½ tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp ground allspice
1 can (15 ½ oz) kidney beans, drained
1 pkge(12 oz) spaghetti, cooked following package directions
8 tbsp shredded sharp cheddar cheese
48 oyster crackers
4 scallions, trimmed and sliced

1. In a large nonstick pot, cook onion over medium-high heat, stir occasionally for 5 minutes. Add ¼ cup water as needed to prevent sticking. Add zucchini, carrots, peppers, and garlic. Cook 5 more minutes, stir occasionally.
2. Add tomatoes and puree, breaking up with a spoon. Add tomato sauce, chili powder, sugar, cinnamon, salt and allspice. Stir to combine. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, for 30 minutes. Stir occasionally. Add beans and cook 15 more minutes.
3. Serve chili over cooked pasta. Garnish each serving with 1 tbsp shredded cheese, oyster crackers and scallions.

Un-Stuffed Cabbage

(makes 4 servings)

Meatballs

1 lb ground beef
2 tbsp dried onion flakes
2 tbsp chopped parsley
½ tsp ground allspice
¼ tsp salt
1/8 tsp black pepper
Sauce
1 lb cabbage, thinly sliced
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp black pepper
1 can (28 oz) crushed tomatoes
1/3 cup raisins
2 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp dried onion flakes
3 cups cooked brown rice

1. Heat oven to 350°. Coat a rimmed baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Meatballs: In a bowl, combine ground beef, onion flakes, parsley, allspice, salt and pepper. Form into 28 meatballs, using about 1 tbsp of mixture for each. Place on prepared baking sheet and bake at 350* for 15 minutes.
3. Sauce: Coat a large nonstick skillet with cooking spray. Add cabbage, salt and pepper; simmer over medium-high heat 8 minutes, stirring often. Stir in tomatoes, raisins, sugar and onion flakes. Bring to boil; reduce heat and simmer, covered, 10 minutes. Add meatballs and simmer 5 minutes.
4. Serve meatballs and sauce over cooked rice.

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What We're Streaming

Guilty Pleasures or Hidden Treasures?

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

Brrrrr. We just had summer in November followed the next day by the beginning of below freezing temperatures. It is time to bundle up with a good book, movie or series. (Or maybe all three?) I do so love a good book, with the aroma of paper and the feel of pages turning as the part that has been read expands and the part that is unread narrows.

However, at the end of the day, it is difficult to turn pages while petting my companion animals and my old eyes tire more quickly than in the past. Then it is time for a good series to enthrall me. How about you? What is your favorite couch potato past time? What is your favorite series?

Magpie Murders

Masterpiece Theater on PBS

recommended by Sharon Kennedy

Do you like Agatha Christie? Do you enjoy Sherlock Holmes? Magpie Murders is a mystery within a mystery, with twists and turns worthy of Agatha Christie.

The series begins with Susan Ryeland (editor) receiving the draft of a famous mystery writer's most recent book in the Atticus Punt series. I can totally relate to her careful preparation to curl up in a chair, with blanket, manuscript, and drink in hand, ready for a night long read.

However, when she reaches the last page of the manuscript, she finds that the final chapter is missing. The intricate web of mystery clues is left hanging without a conclusion as to "who dunit" in the Atticus Punt book.

Susan Ryeland and Alan Conway (the fictional author of Magpie Murders) have a contentious relationship to begin with. Now the conclusion to this book is missing! Did he withhold it on purpose? Was it stolen? She soon learns that Alan Conway just died under somewhat suspicious circumstances. (Was it suicide or accident or murder?) Susan Ryeland becomes an unintended detective seeking to find the last chapter of Magpie Murders.

While searching for the last chapter, she becomes embroiled in uncovering the circumstances of Alan Conway's death. After all, Alan Conway based many characters in the Atticus Punt series on people in his own life. The last chapter of the book may contain clues to the author's death. The TV series weaves the two mystery stories side by side.

Alan Horowitz is the real-life author who wrote about the fictional author Alan Conway who supposedly wrote the Atticus Punt mystery series. Phew! Sounds complicated? Yes! But Alan Horowitz somehow pulls off the complicated intermingling of stories in a way that can be followed.

At the end of each of the episodes, there is a short discussion by Alan Horowitz as to the challenge of accomplishing this screen adaptation of his book. This series has 6 episodes and is on Masterpiece Theater on PBS.

Watcher

Netflix

recommended by Paul Quillin

There's a limited Netflix TV series based on a 2018 article written for New York Magazine by Reeves Wiedeman, which was itself based on a true story. It chronicles the experience of Derek and Maria Broaddus (named here Nora and Dean Brannock). Upon moving into their Westfield, New Jersey home in 2014 they received threatening letters signed by a stalker who went by the pseudonym "The Watcher", hence the title. There's a good cast of characters. Here are the main players:

- Naomi Watts as Nora Brannock
- Bobby Cannavale as Dean Brannock
- Isabel Gravitt as Ellie Brannock
- Luke David Blumm as Carter Brannock
- Jennifer Coolidge as Karen Calhoun



The story begins when the Brannocks attend an open house and Nora meets an old friend, Karen, who happens to be the realtor for the Westfield property. After having a few odd experiences, the family decides to buy the house. However, Dean has to take out almost all of the family's savings to afford the home and the tight financial squeeze it puts him in becomes an element in the unfolding story. Another element is the cast of neighborhood characters and they are all Characters. Mia Farrow plays one of these neighbors and she, along with her husband, made me think of Grant Wood's: "American Gothic".

Several weeks after the family moves in the daughter Ellie hears music coming from an empty room and then an ominous letter arrives from "The Watcher," who threatens to kidnap the two children, Ellie and Carter. At this point Dean and Nora decide to go to the police, but the detective they speak with believes the whole thing is just a prank.

At one point Dean meets up with a previous owner who tells him about his son going to a neighbor's house where he saw men in cloaks drinking something unspeakable (you will find out what if you watch). Dean also learns about another former owner who was found guilty of committing a family massacre, It turns out he too had received Watcher letters.

The elements keep coming. A basement tunnel. A secret bedroom where (I won't tell you who) was still living.

As I mentioned, the quirky players and how they interact and cast suspicion on themselves and each other will keep you guessing. If like me, you enjoy playing armchair detective there are plenty of clues for you here. So, give it a go because neither the identity of The Watcher nor the reason for sending the letters has ever been uncovered.

The Last Kingdom

Netflix

recommended by Sandy Bonet

At first glance, The Last Kingdom looks like a cross between History Channel's *Vikings* and HBO's *Game of Thrones*. But once you watch the first season or two (there are a total of five) you'll find it's a show that can stand on its own without the comparisons.

The Netflix hit is based on Bernard Cornwell's *The Saxon Stories* series of historical novels. Unlike *Game of Thrones* and the *Vikings*, The Last Kingdom has some degree of historical accuracy. It frequently refers to The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, a scholarly collection of annals in Old English, chronicling the history of the Anglo-Saxons.

Ethnically, the Anglo-Saxons actually represented a mixture of Germanic peoples (The Saxons) with Britain's preexisting Celtic inhabitants (The Britons) and the island's subsequent Norwegian, Swedish and Danish invaders (collectively called Vikings).

If you are not interested in British history, the show has all the violence, sex, betrayal, villains and good guys it takes for today's TV. And oh yes, a lot of good-looking people in various stages of undress.

Using a combination of historical and fictional characters, the show tells the story of the difficult and bloody path to bring about an uneasy alliance among these diverse cultures. That alliance ultimately resulted in the English nation. The Last Kingdom has a contemporary perspective on faith and religion, which imposes its own intolerance on the kingdom (and especially on Uhtred, a steadfast pagan who refuses to observe Christian rites), but it also allows for complex characters, like King Albert, who are able to see beyond religion to realize the great potential for a new island nation.

Give it a try. All five seasons are streaming on Netflix.

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 pepoaharmony@gmail.com.

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