



Living in Harmony with Nature

Harmony

Penn Estates Property Owners Association

April/May 2019

Notice and Call to the Annual Membership Meeting

by PEPOA Board of Directors

The Annual Meeting of the membership will be held on Saturday, May 4, 2019, in the Oak Room at the Penn Estates Community Center. All property owners in good standing (defined in the Bylaws as: "A Member who is in compliance with the Declaration of Covenants, Bylaws and Rules, and who has paid all financial obligations owed to the Association") as of March 20 2019, are eligible to vote and are strongly encouraged to attend and participate.

Members not in good standing as of March 20, 2019, may attend the meeting but may not participate in the proceedings nor vote.

Eligible Members may vote for the Election of Directors and for proposed amendments to the Bylaws either (1) in person by Ballot at the Annual Meeting or (2) by properly completing and returning the Directed Proxy Ballots included in the Annual Meeting package mailed to each property owner.

To be valid, Directed Proxy Ballots must be received by the Association's Certified Public Accountant at the address designated no later than 48 hours prior to the Annual Meeting (10:00am on Thursday, May 2, 2019).

Members in good standing will be provided the opportunity to speak for two (2) minutes as part member comments. The President will conduct the meeting in accordance with Modern Rules of Order. Additionally, input/question cards will be available at the Registration Desk for all Members in good standing.

At the time noted on the Agenda, the Board of Directors and PEPOA Management will respond to questions asked. It is requested that participants adhere to established procedures so that everyone wishing to do so can participate to the fullest extent possible.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the Penn Estates Community Center on May 4th. Please arrive early as we will begin promptly at 10:00AM.

**Saturday, May 4, 2019
10:00AM**

Penn Estates Community Center

Annual Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order and Officer Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Introduction of Directors, Legal Counsel and Accountant
4. Determination of Quorum by Judge of Elections
5. Approval of 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes
6. 2018 Audited Financials Available
7. Announcement of Directed Proxy Ballots by Judge of Election
8. Individual Candidate Presentations (5 minutes each)
9. Special Issue Voting – Bylaw amendment
 - a. Presentation of proposed amendment
 - b. Public comment on Bylaw amendment (2 minutes per person)
10. Complete Ballot – Vote
11. Public Comment – Questions & Answers
12. President's Report
13. Report on Balloting – Election Results



Looking for something to do?
Check out the Gamut Art Gallery in
downtown Stroudsburg. See page 8...

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Valentine's Day Dance

by Maria Montalvo, Recreation Committee Member

Our first annual Valentine's Day Dance held on February 16 was a blast! A big thank you to the Recreation Committee for putting everything together. The homemade food and desserts were a hit.

DJ Dennis had everyone on the dance floor. He played all the good hits and did not turn away any requests. He even had his Karaoke equipment set up. Of course, our resident singer, Chuck Krause had to seize the moment and serenaded his wife. The party ended with the DJ performing a song for everyone. We look forward to having him back for the St. Patrick's Day Dinner and Karaoke Night!

If you were unable to join us this year, we hope you make it to the next one!



Jason W. Possinger

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President's Message

by José Padilla, President

Hello Neighbors!

I trust that everyone is enjoying the lovely winter weather! I am so over these snow and ice events and I'm looking forward to a beautiful spring this year.

Recently we received the Community Association Institute's for the Delaware Valley 2018 Association of the Year. It was very proud moment for all of us. To me this could not get any better! This award was the pinnacle of a very good year with all the improvements we made to our community. Our Community Manager, Phyllis Hass, has worked relentlessly on improvements the entire year and it has paid off for us.

This past week we received from Senator Mario Scavello, a Resolution of Congratulations from the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I quote "By steady adherence to the principles of fairness, reliability and integrity, it has become a leader in the community and a model worthy of emulation. Over the years, those in leadership positions as well as its members, have contributed in a tremendous way to its growth and development." This is Penn Estates!

Please be aware that on May 4 the Annual Meeting is scheduled and there will be some bylaw changes that will require us to vote on them. As you may be aware, the bylaws can only be changed at the annual meeting by a majority vote. Unlike our Rules and Regulations can be changed at the monthly Board of Directors meetings.

The Covenants Ad-hoc Committee has met with the association attorney and reviewed their progress and he stated that they were on the right track in finalizing the edited versions of our covenants for both Pocono and Stroud Townships. This is a very lengthy process and once again, I will remind everyone that this is a monumental task that requires long hours, hard work and dedication for its completion. Upon completion and with the Board approval, all these rewrites of draft covenants will be submitted to the Association's attorney for legal review.

At the last "Breakfast with the Board" on February 16, which was open to ALL residents, we attempted to clarify and answer many items that were brought forward. It was only lightly attended. Several new faces were there, and we were able to clear up some misinformation.

In addition, I was made aware of several items that had fallen through the cracks and although I could not rectify these on the spot, I made sure that they were completed by the following week. Our next "Breakfast with the Board" will be scheduled for either the middle of May or early June.

Once again, I would like to remind everyone that **we need volunteers to participate in all our committees.** Volunteers are always needed and there are rewarding and memorable benefits that cannot be taken away from you. It is up to the current Board members and committee members to recruit relentlessly to replenish our ranks as members resign from them. I have said it before, we are nothing without our volunteers!

As the Annual Meeting approaches, I would like to thank everyone who supported the Board of Directors this past year. I would like to take this opportunity to also thank my fellow board members. We don't always agree on everything, but we do always put the community first as it is our fiduciary responsibility. Remember the Board of Directors are in service to all of Penn Estates.

Spring is Here!

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From Phyllis's Desk

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

2019 Amenity Badges - Get a Jump on the Summer Rush

Members who have paid their 2019 **Annual Assessment Fee in full** and are in good standing may obtain their 2019 Photo Amenity Badges at the Administration Office, Monday-Saturday from 8:00 to 4:00.

Beginning May 16, 2019, stickers will be issued to members who have entered into a **payment agreement** and are current with their obligations to the Property Owners Association.

Members who received their Amenity Badge in 2018 may bring the badges for the unit to the Administration office to receive a 2019 sticker, at no cost. Stickers will not be issued unless the badge is present. Those that have misplaced their badge may purchase a replacement for \$5.

All persons five years of age and older shall display a current photo or guest ID to access and use any recreational facility. Members will receive up to six photo amenity badges for those residing within the home.

Members or residents with photo ID badges may purchase a daily pass for their guest(s) at the cost of \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. They also have the option to buy a seasonal pass (Memorial Day to Labor Day) for \$50. Each pass grants admission of one guest per day to the amenities. Members or residents must remain with their guest(s) while using the amenities.

The change that occurred in 2018 from non-identifiable badges to photo badges has allowed for increased security, by verifying that those using the facilities are members of Penn Estates and are in good standing. We also saw a cost savings to the membership as the badges will be used for multiple years by placing a tamper-resistant sticker for 2019 and future years.

Wishing our Penn Estates family a safe and enjoyable summer!

Safety Committee Update

by Ken Nevil, Committee Chair

The Safety Committee has continuously been progressive in their ideas for our community safety. The committee meets the first Saturday of every month at the Community Center and has a great group of members that have our community safety in mind.

Previously, we have funded missing persons identification kits as well as fire and emergency decals, to assist firefighters in locating children and disabled persons that might be inside a residence. We have participated in our annual Trunk or Treat night by providing glow sticks to the children so they are more visible.

Currently we are exploring sponsoring expos to be held at the community center, to educate our residents regards safety items such as fire extinguishers and home alarms, including door video systems that can be viewed by the homeowner's cell phone. Also planned is a demo for alarms for the elderly in our community that are worn as a necklace which can summon help by the press of a button anywhere within your home.

The safety committee pledges to continuously provide progressive thoughts and ideas in order to keep our community and citizens safe.

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



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Harmony

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304 Cricket Drive, East Stroudsburg PA 18301

To submit an article or contact the Editor:
pepoaharmony@gmail.com

- EditorMichael Tyrrell
- StaffDebra Cellentano, Jane Harris,
Julie Harter, Katherine Hernandez,
Matt Jacobsen, Sharon Kennedy,
Robin Nicholson, Dorritte Tyrrell,
Jennifer Nicholson
- ContributorsEvelyn Infante, David Montalvo,
Melissa Penta, Michele Valerio,
Nina Hernandez, Lisa Ortiz,
Stephanie Joy Lewis, Ting Qian
- Board LiaisonBettyanne Nevil

For advertising information:

Community Newspaper Publishers

237 Phyllis Court, Stroudsburg PA 18360
PHONE: (570) 476-3103 E-MAIL: mail@cnpnet.com

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Candidates for the Board of Directors Election

Sean M Reilly

Hello! My name is Sean Reilly. I am a candidate for the Board of Directors of Penn Estates Property Owners Association. I have enjoyed living here with my wife Jodie for 22 years. I believe the future of Penn Estates is bright, safe and secure and continues to be valuable.



PERSONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Education-Bachelors and Masters degrees; environmental consultant/lobbyist for 25 years, science teacher five years

Retired- Director of New a Jersey environmental microbiology laboratory 19 years – investigations and facilities management

Currently- President of Home Health Science llc: inventor of a patented scientific test kit (moldcheck.com) 20 years experience in mold investigation and education through the internet.

MY PEPOA VOLUNTEER WORK

Board of Directors – 10 years, also served as VP; Treasurer and President Committees: real estate committee, wildlife and forestry committee, finance committee, government relations committee, buildings grounds and roadways committee, communications committee, architectural review board, PEUI and tax equity task force. In total I have served continuously on committees or the board for 16 years.

My board leadership platform interest and focus will be on The following:

ROADWAYS – We have recently begun a robust road rebuilding/resurfacing program. We have completed Penn Estates Drive with full depth reconstruction of 2 miles at a cost of \$1.3 million. We have now begun the task of heavy repaving of our main collector roads and storm water pipes at a pace of 2 to 4 miles per year.

Since 2016 we have invested a combined total of \$2,483,000 cash for repaving of Penn Estates Drive and 10 various deteriorated roads. In 2019 we have budgeted to invest another \$727,000 on our storm water pipes and roadway paving plan.

Financing-We have no outstanding loans. We have been able to afford this large scale repaving plan and storm pipe replacement plan by combining a portion of our annual dues(\$368,755) and our Capital Improvement Fund fees of approximately \$110,000 per year and year end surpluses and borrowing from her own capital cash reserves, interest free. This year, (2019), we will withdraw \$ 272,000.00 from our Capital Reserve Fund. This will bring the fund down to our minimum emergency reserve requirement of \$500,000. This drawdown of capital reserve will in all likelihood require another annual dues increase of \$50 dedicated to road funding.

We will then have to slow down our annual pace of road resurfacing to about \$500,000 per year into the future.

Our community manager and legal firm are having good results, pressing delinquent owners very hard to get them to pay up. This effort will add to these Reserve funds and limit dues increases.

I will continue to watch this program and its cost and quality very carefully.

RECREATION/ AMENITY FACILITIES

For many years we have discussed the condition of our aging buildings , grounds and amenities. Well this past two years has been a blitz of renovation activity in the Community Center Building Complex and Admin.offices. We have repaired the damaged crawlspace joists, installed a gym, opened a multipurpose room, added a new recreation center with game tables, and added all new foyer furniture, rugs, painting and lighting.

This fall we begin the first phase of rebuilding the deteriorated, cracking, rusted, bent tennis courts and fencing, including the two Basketball half courts. This year, 2019 we plan to finish these courts and begin to renovate the full basketball courts. The only remaining recreation items that have been on the planning table

are refurbishing the Highland Lake Swimming Beach area, and planning a walking/jogging track.

BACK GATE TRAFFIC SNARLS

Several years ago we installed a new entry gate software system to make it easier for our guests and service providers to get in through the rear gate versus having to go to the front gate and get out of the car and register in person.

Well, Our effort at creating a more convenient experience has created a chronic rush hour crush and weekend traffic jams at the back gate. Our preregistered guests are now stuck in a long line of unregistered guests and contractor trucks and delivery vans and coincidentally hundreds and hundreds of delinquent owners with suspended gate cards ,who must use the guest entry lane, thereby jamming the line up further . This overload, forces traffic to back up onto Cranberry Road and block pass through traffic and creates a hazard for emergency services to get into Penn Estates.

The only short term relief for this problem is to remove the delinquent owners from the convenience of using the rear gate entry and direct them to the front gate which has a much lighter traffic flow then the rear gate. It also has more stack up standing room for cars if there is any overload .

SHEDS AND THE PROBLEM WITH THE DEED RESTRICTION

The association has been issuing permits for sheds for 20 or so years, considering it a permitted structure under our covenants. As it turns out, unbeknownst to the PEPOA – ARB (when they adopted the shed regulations) that court cases have held that a shed is a structure which has a roof and walls and is therefore also considered a building. Since the covenants only allow one building on the property, a shed would not be allowed on the property, because a house and a shed would constitute two buildings on the property.

I support the boards efforts to modify the cover covenants to allow a shed to be built in Penn Estates and grandfather the old existing sheds.

ROADSIDE AND ON LOT PARKING RULES

The board has just recently adopted new rules relative to parking on the road and on the grassy shoulders and on the lot's approved driveway . Let us take some time to see how this new permit procedure works for contractors and guests and parties over the next year, with an eye toward reviewing it to see how it has worked.

PENN ESTATES SPEED REVISION- RULE CHANGE

Board of Directors has recently changed the signage and the speed limit to 25 MPH at all times on Penn Estates Drive. This was done to avoid confusion caused by the various reduced speed zones along the roadway eliminate the exceedingly high fines for speeding. I find the 25 MPH is hard getting used to for most of us long time residents, but it has already made the ride more leisurely and safe. As one Director noted, it only takes about 2 minutes more to go gate to gate. That's two more minutes to enjoy the Deer.

Notice of rule change- The only complaint I have about this new speed limit, is the lack of public input and sufficient notice of the pending rule changes. I have recommended to the Board, that in the future all rule changes ,except in the case of an emergency ,be given 30 days notice before taking effect AND include a broad notice -education effort through all our communications outlets so that members and tenants do not feel blindsided.

VOLUNTEERING

All meetings of Committees, except Appeals and ARB hearings, are open to members in good standing. Stop in and listen in and consider joining.

Proposed Bylaw Amendments

The proposed bylaw amendment will be presented to the membership for their acceptance. Bylaw change must be approved or rejected as a single vote to avoid conflicts within the document.

Rationale for the Change: The bylaws require a qualified resident to be interviewed by the Nominating and Steering Committee for their approval to be placed on their slate for the election. If the committee does not approve the candidate, they have the option to collect 50 signatures to proceed with the election process.

The board has taken into consideration the concerns of prior candidates as to the fairness of the process and the conflict with the deadlines to be included in the Harmony newspaper. As the membership should solely be the deciding factor as to who is seated on the board.

The proposed change will allow all qualified residents to be included in the election process without requiring the approval of a committee or obtaining 50 qualified signatures.

Section D to be deleted in its entirety:

Section D: Nomination of Directors

~~Except when filling Board vacancies caused by resignation or removal, candidates for the Board of Directors will be nominated as follows:~~

- ~~1. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of qualified individuals as nominees 60 days prior to the Annual Member Meeting, naming a minimum of one candidate per opening on the Board.

 - ~~a. Any Association owner, who qualifies as required in Section C above, shall be considered for recommendation as a nominee provided the Member submits a nominating application to the Nominating Committee prior to the deadline.~~
 - ~~b. (b)Nominees shall be invited to participate, in person at, or by submitting a written presentation for, a Candidates' forum scheduled by the Board.~~
 - ~~c. A qualified individual may also choose to run for the Board by following the petition process. Each such nomination shall be accompanied by the signature of fifty (50) Members in good standing. Only one signature per property is permitted. The petition must be submitted not later than six (6) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.~~~~
- ~~2. All nominees must also meet the following requirements to be eligible for nomination:

 - ~~a. No nominee may be a Nominating Committee member or spouse of a Nominating Committee member.~~
 - ~~b. All nominees must state their qualifications and solicit votes by submitting a written biographical sketch intended to be included with the ballot mailed to the Members.~~
 - ~~c. All nominees shall also be, and remain, Members in good standing of the Association and must be and remain a Qualified Resident.~~~~

Proposed language:

Election and Term of Office

The Association shall conduct an annual election to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors.

1. Candidate packets containing information pertinent to those who decide to run for the Board of Directors shall be available by January 2 of each year. Completed nominating forms for candidates must be submitted to the administrative office no later than close of business February 1. If the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline for submission will be close of business on the first business day to follow February 1.
2. Candidates shall submit the nominating forms authorized by the Board of Directors. Each nominating form shall be verified for accuracy of information by Community Manager with the assistance of the Judge of Elections, as needed.
3. A completed Disclosure Form designed by the Board, containing a common set of questions, shall be required of all candidates and published prior to the election in all available Association media outlets.
4. All candidates shall be, and remain, Members in good standing of the Association and must be and remain a Qualified Resident.

5. Order of placement on the election ballots shall be by lottery at the regular March Open Board Meeting.
 1. All votes in the elections of Members to the Board of Directors shall be cast only by written ballot, which shall be returned directly to the Judge of Elections, who shall be responsible for counting and preserving all ballots.
 2. Ballots shall be sent to each Member in Good Standing as determined on the record date.
 3. After the completion of balloting and at the start of the Annual Meeting, the Judge of Elections shall deliver the election results in a sealed envelope to the Secretary of the Board to be opened and read before the membership at the start of the Annual Meeting. The candidates receiving the largest number of votes, for the existing vacancies, shall be deemed to have been elected and shall be seated at this time.
1. Any Member in Good Standing may challenge a candidacy and such challenges shall be sent directly to the Judge of Elections whose decision shall be final
2. The counted ballots will stay in the possession of the Judge of Election for a period of one (1) year.
3. Members in good standing shall elect Board Members in person at an Annual Meeting or by directed proxy, with the results of the election announced at the Annual Meeting. Directors shall hold office for their elected terms and until their respective successors have been selected and qualified.
4. Directors elected by the Members in good standing shall serve staggered three-year terms.
5. Directors shall be limited to two (2) consecutive terms by election for a full six (6) years or a portion thereof. After passage of one full year from the time of service on the Board of Directors, a member shall again be eligible for election to full consecutive terms or for appointment.
6. In the event that the number of qualified candidates is less than or equal to the number of director seats up for election, ballots and/or directed proxies for the election shall not be mailed to the membership and the presiding officer shall declare the candidates elected by acclamation at the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting will be conducted regardless of whether an election is required or not. Qualified candidates will not assume Directors powers until the commencement of the organizational meeting of the Board of Directors.

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A Professional Juggler

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

As the Community Manager most days I have learned to become a professional juggler; trying to keep all items in check, from staff, vendors, residents, projects, daily work load and the general public.

Many times, there are residents that express their displeasure with the Association for factors that we do not have input or control over. I am sure while you are reading this article you are thinking of a challenge you have faced with a neighbor, possibly a loud muffler on their car, the leaves they blow onto your yard or the music playing loudly while you're resting or trying to enjoy a peaceful day. These are just some of the examples that may bring tension to your living experience and the relationship with your neighbor(s).

At one time or another we all face conflict and must deal with it rather than avoiding it. When you see your neighbor, ask them if they have a moment to talk. Stay calm, and present your concern in a manner that is not argumentative. Explain how their action is affecting you and/or your household and how you would like it if they could assist you with rectifying the situation. This will help them, as they may not know that their action is bothering you and it will help you release the frustration so you don't become the "bad" neighbor.

Sometimes, being a manager means you also have to deal with the tough issues that can cause you to lose sleep. There is the occasion that a resident or guest may not be satisfied with the level of service they received from a staff member, their manager, or myself. While these issues are never easy, they don't have to be so hard. As a manager, working hard to set clear performance expectations is a top priority. Rest assured that we take all input received very seriously. If you identify a problem, the sooner you advise us of the situation, the sooner we can rectify the issue. This will ensure that your experiences are positive and that you are actively and properly engaged with the Association.

I receive complaints from residents, frequently, that may be addressed at the Association's level; such as a car without a license plate or a pile of rubbish. The expectation is that the complaint is received and that we can immediately rectify the situation although this is not always the case. Some complaints can be resolved quickly, while others may involve more lengthy measures that would include investigating agencies and morph into legal matters.

Fortunately, resolving most conflicts often requires little more than providing relevant information, advice and an opportunity to be heard.

As a Community Manager of a Large-Scale Association, there's nothing like the satisfaction of helping an individual whether it is a resident, guest or staff member accomplish their need or request for them to obtain a level of satisfaction.

Assisting a resident through their association living experience to be the best it can be while ensuring proper management of the governing documents is the ultimate goal. Together we can live happy and satisfied lives in our community if we understand what the rights, privileges and obligations of community association living entail.

It's important that we all understand that management and the Board has a legal responsibility to enforce, apply and govern fairly and not unilaterally. We have the responsibility to strike a balance between the needs and obligations of the community and those of individual members and residents.

Camelback for All Seasons

by Jennifer Nicholson, Communications Committee Member

Now that the ski/ snow tubing season is winding down, Camelback is getting ready to transition into its spring and summer activities. I am always shocked at how many locals have never been to Camelback despite its proximity. I think that people know of it and think of it as a tourist destination but not many local know of the year-round offerings at the mountain.



Usually around the beginning of April, Camelback opens its Mountain Coaster and Adventure park. The Mountain Coaster is a cart on a long winding metal track that zooms you down the mountain using just gravity (no motors). Don't worry, there is a handbrake to control your speed. The Adventure Park also includes activities like ropes courses (adult and kid versions), climbing wall, Euro bungee,



Segways, a brand new Mountain Pipeline Slide and Zip lines. The Mountain slide is a new and improved version of the old Alpine slide. You take a chairlift to the top of the mountain and then speed down in a little wheeled cart that rides along a halfpipe down the mountain. There are two zip lines, one that is 1000' long and one that is 4000' long. They are both dual zip lines so you can race alongside your friend or family member. The views alone are worth the ride,

Towards the end of May they start opening Camelbeach on weekends. Later in mid-June it is open daily. Camelbeach is the outdoor waterpark with slides of all sizes, a wave pool, kiddie water park, regular pool, Wave Runner surfing, and my personal favorite- the Blue Nile River (what I call the Lazy River). In the Nile River you can just plop down in a tube and let the current take you around the river over and over. If you are a fan of waterparks then a season pass is the best bet. We are not super fans of waterparks but we get the summer season passes simply because it is so close and so much fun. On summer days when the kids are sick of doing the same old things... we take to short drive to Camelback and have a blast. And of course, on those days when it's raining or still too cold out for the outdoor waterpark, you can always go to Aquatopia (the indoor waterpark).

I have lived in the area most of my life and remember when Camelback was only for skiing. Now it truly has activities for all 4 seasons. People travel from all over the world to vacation at Camelback yet so many locals never go and then wind up traveling over the summer to go to a resort somewhere else. So, if you find yourself bored this spring/summer and you don't feel like driving far, don't forget that we have a huge mountain full of activities right near us.

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Eats Around Town

by Julie Harter, Communications Committee Member

La Cocina Dominicana

I recently went for brunch with a friend to a place that I've been wanting to go for a long time. This place is the La Cocina Dominicana restaurant, at 1158 North 5th Street in Stroudsburg. I think I have a new favorite breakfast! We both ordered the Los Tres Golpes, which means "the three hits." It consists of fried Dominican Salami, fried wedge of cheese, boiled and mashed Yucca, and marinated onions.



This brunch was so filling and delicious that we were silly with salivation. We were in such good moods afterwards that we kept talking about the food we just ate until it was time to eat again. I can't wait to try their scrumptious sounding lunch and dinner menu items.

Go and check out La Cocina Dominicana for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Their hours are Tuesday-Saturday from 11am-8pm, and Sunday from 12pm-8pm.

Minisink Hotel

I've got a burger and beer/cocktail place for you all! Pub goers should check out the Minisink Hotel, at the corner of Post Office Road and River Road in Minisink Hills, PA. What a hoppin' place! I started right away with a Bloody Mary, which was deliciously spicy, and an order of their BBQ wings that were nice and crispy. This held me over while I waited for them to prepare more food.



Now, when you ask for a menu, be prepared to get up from your chair to walk around. It is not a game of musical chairs, but to see the menu you must look on the walls and behind the bar. A pretty fun concept and a good way to get to know everyone around the bar as you weave through to read everything.

I decided to order their Reuben. I devoured the whole thing because it was so fresh and delicious. My hubby ordered their special burger of the night and he was not disappointed at all.

This is a big stop for skiers traveling from Shawnee Mountain, since it is on the way to the highway. I understand that it is pretty busy most nights with locals and travelers alike. When I spoke to some regulars, they said that they have never been disappointed in the quality of the food and it is always a good time.

So, go check out the Minisink Hotel Bar and Restaurant. Their hours are Monday-Sunday, 11am-2am.

Nina's Corner

by Nina Hernandez, Style Contributor

Starting your Vegetable Garden from Seeds

It's that time again. One of my favorite things to do when spring is approaching is to get my seeds ready for planting. Starting your own seeds is not only less expensive, it's also a fun, rewarding and a great way to get a jump start on the gardening season. I personally like to keep it simple in my garden. Soil, seed, water and sun.

First purchase your vegetable seed you will like to grow this season. I personally like to use Burpee seeds. For soil, I use Miracle Grow Vegetable for potting. You can use recycled pots –yogurt container, egg cartons for example, but be sure to poke holes in the bottom. Fill your container with soil and plant your seed nor more than a half an inch deep.

Place your containers by the window where the sun rises in the morning and will get at least 6 – 8 hours of sun. Water every day. Keep an eye on the soil which can dry up pretty quick in small containers. Repot your plants in a large container once you see that the roots are overcrowded. When the weather starts warming up and the temperatures stays above fifty at night, that's when it's time to move your vegetable plants outdoors. Hope you'll give growing your own vegetable a try. I'm glad I did. Happy Gardening!



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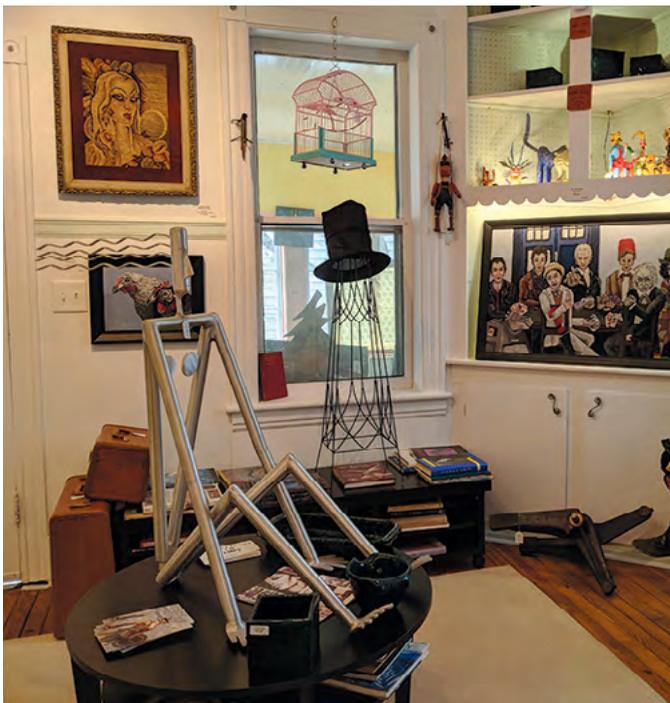
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Things to do in the Burgs

by Robin Nicholson, Communications Committee Member

Among the lovely art galleries in Downtown Stroudsburg there is one that stands out among the rest. The Gamut Art Gallery located at 109 N 8th Street is truly a new and unique type of Gallery. At Gamut you will not only find beautiful paintings and sculptures, you will also have the pleasure of experiencing an eclectic mix of unique antiques, crafts, re-purposed, vintage and one of a kind unusual items spanning the early 1890's to modern day.

The Gamut Gallery features pieces you will not see anywhere else from new local artists. As you explore the gallery you might



stop to admire a beautiful display of works of art and be fascinated to discover these paintings are actually created painstakingly from dryer lint (yes I said dryer lint!).

You can mill about as long as you like and find out interesting history and background of the endless vintage and unusual items. Given the diversity of the things to see, children and adults of all ages are transfixed as they explore the Gallery.

Gamut has hosted local boy scout troops and schools teaching local



The Gamut Art Gallery

youth the history of some of the vintage items. The Gallery also has surprisingly affordable art works, antiques and vintage items that make for the most special and unique gifts or the perfect work of art for your home. Chat with the friend-



ly Gallery curators (Jim and Mary) as you enjoy an adventure exploring the gallery, find some unique gifts and treat your home to a new and unique work of art! Or, just let Gamut inspire you!

The Gamut Art Gallery is open Friday 1pm-5pm and Saturday and Sunday 12pm-6pm. Monday-Thursday by appointment. You can also check out Gamut on Facebook and online at www.gamutartgallery.com



Hiking Buttermilk Falls

by Michele Valerio, Contributor

Buttermilk Falls in New Jersey is a bit of a drive but worth the trip. The Falls are located on fairly remote area on Mountain Road in Layton NJ but what is great is that the Falls can be viewed right from the parking lot. They are spectacular, 90 feet in height and are the tallest Falls in NJ. Spring is my favorite time of year to explore waterfalls since the water levels are usually at their fullest.

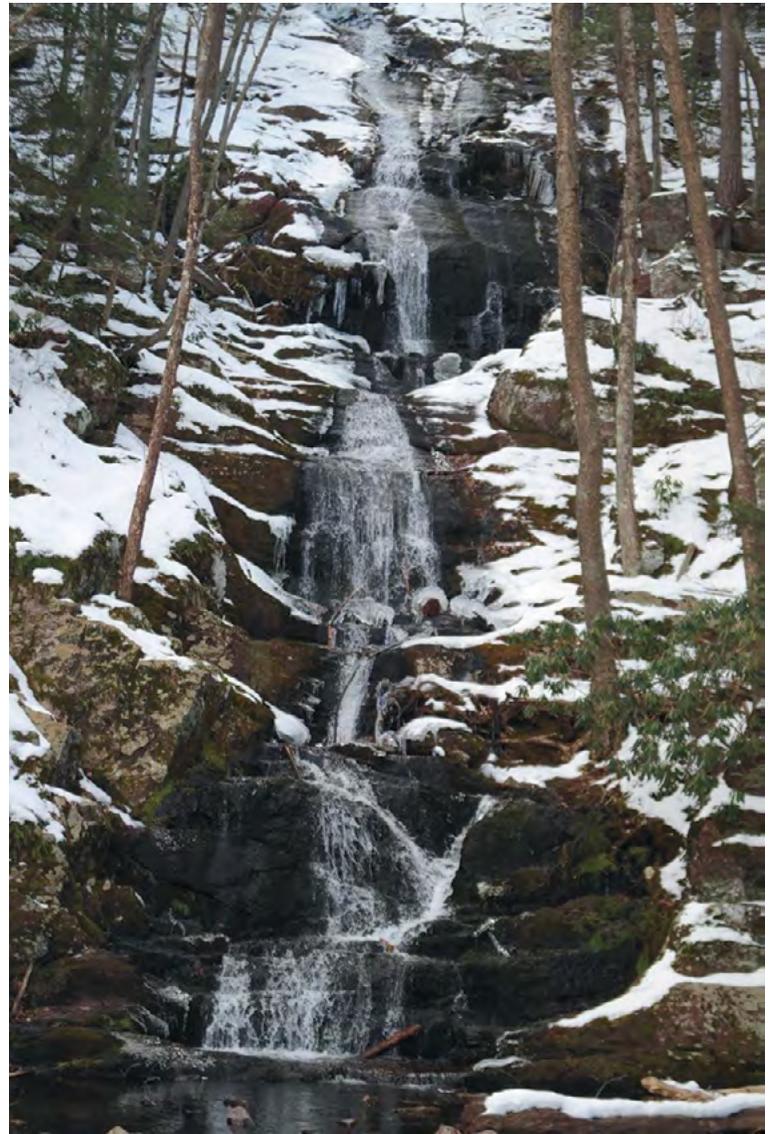
There are a number of ways you can hike Buttermilk Falls. The super short way is to just climb up the stairs around the falls and enjoy. Please be aware that this is a steep 4 story climb but the Falls are right along the wooden stairway. You can continue on the BLUE trail at top, but be aware it is quite steep right from the start and more than a stroll in the woods. Consider stopping at Tillman Ravine on the way to the Falls and doing a couple mile hike around there, and then stopping at Buttermilk for a look.

The Medium hike is Buttermilk Falls Trail to an unmarked woods road to Hemlock Pond and return; roughly 5 miles. Slightly more difficult is a 6.4 loop to Rattlesnake Mountain where there are some nice views. Optional add-on: Silver Spray Falls (Hidden Falls) trailhead is about .5 mile from Buttermilk Falls (walk north along Mountain road, trailhead is unmarked, there is a pull off area with room for 1, maybe 2 cars). Then it's about .25 miles from the trailhead to the falls. Cross the stream or you'll miss it.



Trying to locate these falls is part of the fun, and people often don't find them on the first attempt. I keep missing them every time I have attempted to find these smaller Falls. There are trail maps on the Delaware Water Gap National Recreational Area website.

If you want something to do after viewing the Falls, check out Millbrook Village on Old Mine Road - about 20 minutes away. On summer weekends, several buildings are open to the public and Millbrook Village Society and other volunteers demonstrate the folkways of that 19th century era.



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EVENING & WEEKEND APPOINTMENTS ALWAYS WELCOME



Super Bowl Shenanigans

by **Bettyanne Nevil**



The Penn Estates Recreation committee hosted our annual Super Bowl party at the community center this past Super Bowl Sunday. Everyone started to gather around 5PM to watch the pre-show and then cheer on their team on the two large flat screen televisions in the Oak Room.



It was a BYOB event and was free for residents in good standing. The recreation committee went a different route this year, making almost all the food. Game watchers feasted on meatballs, hoagie dip, nacho dip, potato salad and macaroni salad among other treats. Chips and subs were purchased.

The committee members enjoyed cooking together and it may become a thing. Keep on eye to the marquee, Facebook pages and emails announcing our many events.

Senior Lunch Group

by **Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member**

Our Penn Estates monthly Senior Lunches for 2019 are off and running! In January the theme was Super Bowl. Many were not all that interested in football, but everyone were avid fans for the Super Bowl themed chow: chips, mozzarella sticks, potato skins, various cold subs and the holy trinity of deli salads (potato, mac and cole slaw). The sandwiches were from Jersey Mikes who do subs right! The icing on the cake, pun intended, were football decorated cupcakes. We all enjoyed the event but sadly, no hearts and minds were changed as far as football.



In February, the tables were festively decorated for a Valentine's Day fete. Phyllis Haase, our community manager with assistance from our Community Relations Manager, Sue, cooked and served us a very hearty lunch.

On the menu - a cheese appetizer, salad, roast pork with stuffing, mixed vegetable and rolls and butter. Desserts were Valentine themed cupcakes, strudel and various pies and whipped cream. A tremendous amount of food was served. Everything was delicious.



For March, we will have a road trip to the Monroe Career and Technical Institute where the culinary students cook us lunch. We did this last years as well. This school is out the back gate on Laurel Lake Road in Bartonville. I never realized it existed till last year.

Just a reminder, the cost for these lunches is \$5 bucks and tickets need to be purchased the Monday prior. They normally take place at noon in the Community Center and generally last an hour and a half. As I mentioned in the last Harmony, it is a very welcoming atmosphere.

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Join the Dance Party!

by Ting Qian, Contributor

If you hate exercise but want to keep fit, come to Penn Estates' Zumba class. It's a happy place to be - a dance party where everyone is having a good time!

I am a Zumba enthusiast. I have been taking Zumba classes for more than a decade now. When I heard that Penn Estates started our very own Zumba classes, I immediately signed up, thinking, wow, this might be a great opportunity to meet some neighbors.



The first new neighbor I met on my first day at Zumba was a gentleman whose name is Charles. He told me that what he loves about Zumba is the music and the movement. He likes to move!

Movement indeed is the key in a Zumba. Zumba is a Latin-inspired dance workout created by Alberto 'Beto' Perez who is originally from Columbia. He founded Zumba Fitness in 2001 with two others, based on dance movements drawing from Perez's South American background.

So what are the health benefits of joining this dance?

First of all, the dance moves are designed to enhance flexibility and coordination. The high and low intensity intervals make Zumba an excellent cardio workout, although it probably won't come across as such. It strengthens the core, building muscles in the arms, legs, and glutei. For many, it relieves stress at the same time.

Every class is an inspiring new experience to me. With upbeat Latin music and an instructor guiding the group, you can totally indulge yourself in it and let your movement take you.

Fernanda Urgelles was our instructor. She's a certified Zumba teacher. She's humorous, passionate, and loves teaching! As she tells us: "Every class feels like a party! and helping people to reach their healthy goals makes it a very fulfilling experience to me." Fernanda is currently licensed to teach Zumba, Zumba® Toning, Zumba Chair and Zumba Gold®, has been a ZIN™ Member since 2015. If you join her, she guarantees you will have a blast!

The first Zumba session of 2019 is anticipated to start soon. Your new year's resolution doesn't have to include a hardcore workout. Can it be to join a dance party in your own neighborhood?



The Psychology of Exercising

by Yolonda Sarrabo, Contributor

What Is It about the term let's exercise that make many people uptight? Is it that you want the results without doing the work? Well that sounds about right. As the fitness industry continues to provide creative methods in approaching the public with a variety of coaching client options, nowadays, you don't have to commit as much time in an actual gym. The gamut is full in the variety of ways one can exercise, and where, at widening their fitness journey. Yet, even with the choices: online training, one to one coaching, or local boot camps, the work needed to bring about results is still trying for many.

Commitment

My initial heart-to-heart with clients starts with "Why do they want to be fit?" Sometimes it's not about getting your body right for the summer season or losing weight for that special occasion. Frankly, your walk with being overall fit and healthier, and totally committed to undergoing a full life change is because it's the right thing to do. There's nothing about exercising, dieting, or being healthy that is easy. **You have to put in the work - period!** Turning a daily 10-minute walk to 1 mile is a progressive approach to making that needed change. Only you can answer those dreaded questions when truthfully answering the lifeline on how smooth this ride is going to be because sometimes the truth hurts, or could it be the truth holds you accountable to making those steps to definitive change? Hum?

Are you lazy?

Do you make excuses?

Is your health failing?

Do you use food as a tool to cover other things happening in your life?

Are you unsure of how to move forward battling body changes?

Harsh questioning but any fitness quest has to include and ask these important questions. Addressing that elephant in the room is necessary for moving forward.

Results

Usually, many who want the benefits of exercise get discouraged because it can be a daunting process and the transition takes time. If we don't see results in day one many shut the door for further commitment. Seeing the results is also a sign that you're doing it right. I will agree, but I will also say making changes like including an exercise program in your day to day is about receiving longer results.

Consistency and including a sensible plan to your busy lifestyle is enough to slowly change your mind about the fitness and exercise process. Slow and low usually turns out a masterpiece in the end, but again it takes work. The process and steps it takes to do this is really a lifestyle change. Sometimes when we're too analytical in getting fit, it takes away the fun that you could be having.

If you find a routine you like, try incorporating it in a weekly set up. Now you're halfway there in moving into a positive and committed fitness journey.



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Debra's Bookshelf

by Debra Cellentano, Communications Committee Member,
Author and Avid Reader

He Will Be My Ruin

by K.A. Tucker

This book! OMG THIS BOOK!

He Will Be My Ruin will keep you on your toes and up late reading because you just need to know!!! You think you know but you don't - trust me!

Celine discovers her best friend has killed herself but she doesn't believe it and she goes to great length to discover the truth and this is all I'm saying.

KA Tucker is amazing. I love a great suspense book but usually I'm not a big fan of "who done it" books but this one - it has everything. You must read. I promise you won't be disappointed. I couldn't stop reading this one. I've been on a KA Tucker roll lately. Her stories never fail and this one sure won't.

Get it. Read it. And hang on for the ride.

Until It Fades

by K.A. Tucker

I just finished *Until It Fades* by KA Tucker this morning. It sucked me in and I finished it within 24 hours. It is a sweet story that is sort of a different type of book for KA Tucker, as she admits in her acknowledgments.

Catherine has had a hard life. She had something happen to her in high school that made her the talk of her small town. She eventually builds a quiet little life for herself and her daughter that she's okay with. Her relationship with her parents is awkward but at least she now has one.

That quiet life changes after she saves the life of a famous hockey player named Brett Madden. There's talk all around town and when it's finally revealed that she's the hero the press is all over her.

When Brett finally shows up on her door the sparks fly. Their connection is immediate - and I'm not talking insta-love just that spark, you know what I mean. Brett is just the perfect guy. He's considerate and caring and makes sure that Catherine and her daughter are protected.

This book is swoon worthy for sure and you'll love it. There's a few surprises in there but if you are looking for a really good story pick this one up. I believe it's out on July 4th. *ARC (Advanced Review Copy) provided by NetGalley for my honest and unbiased opinion of Until It Fades*

Out&About

Things to Do and See in the Poconos

by Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee Member

So, I am developing incredible biceps from chopping ice! This winter has been marked by so little snow and so very much ice! Writing this article in anticipation of spring is a breath of fresh air and hope for future sunny day activities. I hope that you have all survived this winter in safety, warmth and comfort.

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

Tuesday evenings seem to be a popular time. Shawnee Concert Series runs on Tuesday nights from 7-8 pm in the main lobby of Shawnee Inn. It is listed as free. Call 800-742-9633 for information. Would you prefer trivia challenges? Blue Mountain Resort hosts Trivia Tuesdays from 6:30 to 9. Reservations are required and need to be made by Monday. Call 610-826-7700. Or, stay nearby home and enjoy Tuesday evening bingo at Penn Estates. I never envisioned myself as a bingo player, but I have enjoyed several evenings of this weekly social event. Great fun!

Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) in Dingman's Ferry offers many events throughout the year. Some events are free or really inexpensive. Other events (such as Family Camp Weekend or the Knitting Weekend) can be quite pricey, but include lodging and meals. They host scouting badge festivals, guided hikes, medicinal plant walks, and many other events. Earth Day is on 4/27 and their plan sale is on 5/11. You can see all their events on their website or call 570-828-2319. Kettle Creek Environmental Education Center also hosts varied activities throughout the year. They are hosting the Monroe County Earth Day event with food and speakers and activities on 4/27 from 10-3. Call 570-629-3061 for information. Jim Thorpe's Earth Day celebration is also on 4/27. There will be a raffle, children's activities, performances and (for a fee) train rides. Or you could sign up with Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort to volunteer for River Road clean up.

Would you like to tackle that marathon that you always dreamed of doing before you are too old to do so? PEEC has a 5K "walk, run, crawl" event on 5/4. The cost varies from \$25 to \$35 depending on when you register. Stroud Regional Open Space and Recreation hosts a Levee Loop Trail walk on June 1. (They also run summer camps for tots and school age children, and other activities such as swim lessons and karate lessons). The Shawnee Mountain Color Run is on 5/5. It is reported as a relatively flat course, accessible for strollers and/or wheelchairs. Plan on being doused with color as you go through the course. The annual Pocono marathon, Run for the Red, is on 5/19. You can choose among a marathon, a half marathon or a 5K. Do you need some help getting ready for your run? A store in Stroudsburg offers help in fitting your shoes and helps with training for half marathon and has "Forward Motions" groups. Check out Ready, Set, Run on the internet website or their Facebook page. Would you rather watch others race or walk? The Pocono 400 is on June 2nd, with activities throughout the weekend leading up to the race. The St. Patrick's Day parade in Stroudsburg is on 3/24/19.

How about some wine? Walley Wine Fest (benefiting Lake Wallenpaupack's fireworks) is on 4/6 and 4/7 at Silver Birches Resort. Call 570-226-4388 for details. Wine Me Up Wine and Tapas Festival is at Blue Mountain Resort on June 1 and 2. Only those 21+ in age will be admitted. Call 610-826-7700 for details.

Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm in Stroudsburg hosts special events throughout the year. Their Annual Farm Animal Frolic is Saturday (10-4) and Sunday (12-4) the weekend of 5/18. The cost is \$8 per adult and \$5 per child ages 3-12. Of course, there are a variety of seasonal events as we approach Easter. Most are not advertised as yet. Country Junction in Lehighton has their Easter Egg Stravaganza on 4/13, 4/14 and 4/20. Many restaurants have special buffets for Easter and for Mother's Day.

Our area is great for music festivals throughout the year. Keep an eye out for many late spring and summer festivals. For example, the Milford Music Festival is the weekend of June 21-23. Bands play throughout the town in just about every open space, porch, bar and restaurant. Apparently, they do a similar type of event for dance troupes. Dancefest in Milford is on 5/17 through 5/19 and July 12 and 13.

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

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Your Home Shouldn't be Camera Shy

by Stephanie Joy Lewis, Contributor

Many residents throughout the country, state, Monroe County, and even Penn Estates, enjoy home video surveillance systems, having installed them on their properties. Some people pay commercial companies for installation and monthly monitoring service, while others have bought their own system, installed it (or had someone else install it), and avoid the notable monthly fees of the big providers. It is surely all personal preference.

My family opted to go private this past year by purchasing some select items from one of the companies that offer such systems. We chose the Ring, although this is not a statement regarding their ranking over any other company. That said, here is why we wanted to have home video surveillance and what we like about what we have. We have the doorbell as well as non-doorbell cameras in other locations. They all work with the system, and you can add to your devices at any time, and pick and choose from a nice variety.

Home Protection: Many people get home video surveillance systems to better protect themselves from crimes on their property or, perhaps more accurately, to have proof of the crime should such misfortune befall them. It may be that the mere discernable presence of a video surveillance system may deter a would-be perpetrator. This home security purpose was only part of our thinking when we first got a system. Crime concerns were not the only reasons – in fact, we live in what we feel is a relatively very safe community, vis-a-vis that which exists outside of our gates. As such, there were other contributing reasons.

Pet Care: A big consideration was our beloved canine family member. We have a big dog, and we wanted her to enjoy more outside time than she might otherwise get if she could only get exercise via walking one of her humans. All the walkers in our home either work full time or have school full time, so we wanted to be sure Fluffy was nonetheless well-exercised. Our system allows her to run around outside without one of us standing outside with her! (Remember, unless your dog reliably stays on your property, you would have additional considerations.) We can view her at will from whichever side of the property she is investigating. We can also have her activities recorded, in case we need to check on something later. We can also check on the kids if they are outside, although they admittedly are not outside enough.

Deliveries: Another ability we gained is that of noting any package deliveries, be it by UPS or a private party. When anyone comes to the door, our Ring's doorbell device motion sensor dings our phones (or laptop) and we can choose to view. It is also recorded for later, should we need. If we were busy and not paying attention to phone (or turned off notifications), we can go into our Ring account and view our camera's history. It has recorded all motion-sensored initiated video recordings as well as those recordings made when we engaged in an ad hoc live view.

This came in handy when a neighbor's delivery was not received at her door, but documentation stated it was left at the door. Wondering if it came to wrong house, she asked if we had received. While we had no knowledge of her package, I wanted to know if perhaps it had been delivered to our home and perhaps removed by someone. I looked up the day's history and in fact no one had come to our door that day. It turns out it was one of those glitches where it was sitting at the post office still (that is where it had been "delivered" to) and she got her package weeks later. Looking at history is very simple because it is in chronological order, listed by date and time.

Remote viewing: Another helpful use is the vast remote usability of the system. If I am in Florida and I want to see if it is snowing yet at my house, I can open up a live view. If I want to see if Grandma got home from her foray to Walmart, I can open up a view and see if her car is in the driveway. If she hasn't but I see it has started to snow, I can now call her and tell her she may want to finish up her shopping foray and get home before the roads get bad. Of course, my phone or smart device will notify me if someone comes to my door (or within the set range), and I can view him or her live, even from Florida.

Speaking of Grandma, a friend of mine wanted a system like this because of a situation that occurred with his mother-in-law. An elderly lady, living alone in her own home, had already suffered a frightening event. Apparently, one evening, this 92-year-old loved one decided to go outside. She collapsed or fell to the ground. The next day, a neighbor passing by, found her by pure luck. She had lay on the ground overnight, in the elements, and well into the morning in a very hot climate. Thankfully, she made out fine, but scary it was. Now, with a camera on the doorway and surrounding area, should this fine lady take a walk outside, her daughter will be notified by Ring from wherever she is and can make sure her mother gets safely back home as well. I would imagine that this could be helpful for those with toddlers, as an additional back up measure of awareness should a wee one slip outside while parent is preparing lunch, not realizing someone forgot to lock the door.

Neighborhood forum: The Ring also has a neighborhood sharing forum/app. Users can post their videos of events they think their neighbors (can be miles away) would like to be aware of. Addresses are not provided, but only a measure of the distance that event occurred from my home. That neighbor can also post a comment as can other. I often view others' videos outside the gates of trespassers that have come onto their properties. So far, I have seen no crimes reported within the gates. (Note that some find the App to be controversial, so not everyone chooses to use it.) Videos of bears on property are also common, and I even got a view of my first bear on my property after 15 years in Penn Estates!

Choices in device purchasing: While it is hard to keep up with the growing types of devices manufactured by our company of choice, to share a few, I'd start with the doorbell. You buy each one separately, so you don't need to buy what you don't want. We didn't have a doorbell, so we added the battery-operated one (versus the other, which is hard-wired). The batteries are rechargeable.

The doorbell notifies and records on motion sensor alone. It also chimes live, notifies and records when someone presses the doorbell. It also has a feature allowing you to talk through it to your visitor. I often speak to my deer visitors when they approach and their amazement I, s visible.

We also have Ring cameras at strategic spots on the property. These too are motion-sensored and battery operated and you can speak through it as well. There is a Flood Light camera as well. Another option is the solar panel unit one can connect to their device to avoid having to recharge the batteries.

Price: Because you can pick and choose your devices, we liked the cost saving measure of that allowance and Ring was by far less expensive than our prior system. Non-doorbell cameras are far less expensive than the door bell and so can be a great starting point.

It is important to note that a subscription is not required to receive notifications and have the ability to live view your property and enjoy the two-way audio. However, to have stored recordings from a device, you must buy a monthly or yearly subscription form the company to record and store to their system. By device, it is \$3/month or \$30/year, but with multiple devices, there is a \$10/month, \$100/year option for unlimited devices. A subscription provides for 60 days of all recordings – during which time we are free to download any or all for long term preservation. For those who are unable to install their own system (me), Ring offers installation services as well.

Whether one wants home video surveillance or not, like everything else, is a personal choice. And as competition brings us more options to choose from, as well as price points, there seems to be something for everyone who leans towards that form of security.



Michael's Kitchen

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee

Spring vegetables are wonderful on their own as side dishes. Fresh tasting, vibrant colored and crisp veggies are also a perfect addition to many pasta dishes. I am certainly not a vegetarian and love my meat, fish and poultry. Meatless meals are a nice change occasionally; here are some favorite pasta recipes that should put some "spring" in your step! The pasta shapes mentioned are just suggestions. Use what you like.

An added bonus is that these dishes are super easy. The lasagna may seem a bit more work intensive but it yields 12 servings, probably enough for a second meal. The pesto is sufficient to dress 2 lbs of pasta and can be refrigerated for a few weeks so that is a twofer as well. Great spread on chicken, pork or fish. If you have meat lovers in your house and want to satisfy them, add cooked sliced sausage or flaked salmon to the first three pasta recipes.

Mini Rigatoni with Peas and Mint

[makes 6 servings]

1 bag (10 oz) frozen peas
1 lb mini rigatoni
½ cup mint leaves
½ tsp garlic salt
1 lemon
½ cup heavy cream
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 cup grated Parmesan
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to boil. Add peas and cook 3 minutes. Remove peas to a large bowl with a slotted spoon.
2. Cook rigatoni according to package instructions.
3. While pasta is cooking, finely chop half of the mint and add to to peas along with garlic salt and zest of 1 lemon. Add the cream, olive oil and ½ cup of the cheese to the bowl with pea mixture. Mash with a potato masher until the peas are mashed but still somewhat chunky.
4. Drain pasta and transfer to bowl with peas mixture. Stir pasta until cheese melts and creates a creamy sauce.
5. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle remaining cheese over the top and garnish with remaining mint.

Casarecce with Spring Pesto

[makes 2½ cups pesto - enough for 2 lbs pasta]

1/3 cup shelled pistachio nuts, toasted
1 bag (6 oz) baby spinach
2 cups arugula
2 cups parsley leaves
4 scallions, coarsely chopped
2 cloves garlic
¾ cup extra virgin olive oil
¾ cup shredded Asiago cheese
1 tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
1 lb Casarecce pasta

1. In the bowl of a food processor, add nuts, spinach, arugula, parsley, scallion and garlic. With processor running, gradually add olive oil until fully incorporated. Place in a bowl and stir in Asiago cheese, salt and pepper.
2. Cook pasta following package instructions. Drain and reserve ½ cup cooking liquid. Place pasta in a large bowl and stir in 1 ¼ cups pesto. Add water by the tablespoon if needed to loosen sauce. Serve immediately. (Reserve remaining pesto in a container with a tight lid for future use. Store in refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.)

Bucatini with Buttery Spicy Brussels Sprouts

[makes 4 servings]

12 oz bucatini
5 tbsp butter, cut into cubes
¾ lb Brussels Sprouts, trimmed and quartered
4 cloves garlic, chopped
¼ cup chopped onion
1 tsp red pepper flakes
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
juice of 1 lemon
2 tbsp chopped parsley
Asian Chili oil, optional

1. Cook pasta following package instructions. Drain and reserve 1 cup of pasta water for sauce.
2. Meanwhile, melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add Brussels and cook 4 minutes or until lightly brown and tender. Stir in garlic, onion and red pepper flakes. Cook 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Add drained pasta and enough of the reserved water to create a sauce. Toss to coat pasta with sauce. Place in a large pasta bowl and stir in cheese and lemon. Stir in parsley and serve.
4. Serve with Asian Chili oil for drizzling, if desired.

Mushroom & Spinach Lasagna

[makes 12 servings]

Sauce

½ stick unsalted butter
½ cup all-purpose flour
6 cups milk
¾ tsp salt
¼ tsp black pepper
¼ tsp ground nutmeg

Filling

2 tbsp unsalted butter
1 onion, chopped
1 ½ lbs white mushrooms, coarsely chopped
½ tsp salt
1/8 tsp black pepper
1 pkge (10 oz) frozen spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
2 carrots, peeled and coarsely shredded 1 ½ cups shredded Parmesan cheese

12 oven ready no boil lasagna noodles

1 ½ cups grated Parmesan cheese

Sauce. In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add flour and stir until blended. Cook 1 minute. Gradually whisk in milk. Add salt, pepper and nutmeg. Simmer gently 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Set aside to cool.

Filling. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion, mushrooms, salt and pepper. Cook 6 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and stir in spinach and carrots.

Construct Lasagna. Heat oven to 375*. Spread 1 cup white sauce over bottom of 13 X 9 X 2- inch lasagna pan. Set aside 1 cup of sauce. Stir remaining sauce into mushroom mixture.

Arrange 4 lasagna noodles on top of sauce. Spread with half of the mushroom mixture. Sprinkle with ½ cup of cheese. Repeat layering ending with lasagna noodles. Spread 1 cup of sauce over top.

Cover with foil. Bake at 375° for 45 minutes. Remove foil and sprinkle with remaining ½ cup cheese. Bake 15 minutes more or until browned and bubbling around edges. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Spring Reset for Students

by Katherine Mills Hernandez, Communications Committee member

Spring affords renewed clarity in our thinking, energy, and vision. For students and teachers, this is a great time to take a close look at how the academic picture is shaping up for each child’s school year. For parents, it’s an excellent time to reset some at-home work habits for kids.

In the spring, there is usually enough time left in the school year to pull grades up (if needed) or fortify successful habits in order to end the year on a high note.

Whether star students or ones who regularly strive to catch up, our children can easily become sidetracked from academic integrity when the sun shines warmer,

the days are longer, and all their friends are gathering outside for socializing and game time. They can use some support at home to preserve quality quiet time for school work and study.

But adults want to enjoy the spring, too, so we have to figure out a way to provide needed structure for our young scholars without infringing on our own need for evening walks in the orange glow of the slowly setting sun, or lingering on the deck long after dinner catching up with our spouses and loved ones.

It helps to have some efficient strategies that support our kids while honoring our own down time, like... Have students do homework in the kitchen while we prepare the evening meal Let students do homework in the kitchen or dining room (with dessert) after dinner If kids get home before us, have them do homework before we arrive and then “show and tell” it when we get home

Work out with our young scholars whether they focus better right after school with a snack or after dinner, and then make that the “regular” school work time and schedule all other activities around it

Keep non-education-related digital devices out of the work space Keep TV, radio, and other noise-producing equipment off during HW time Take it outdoors! Read outside on the deck (or take care of calls or digital tasks) while kids do homework nearby

Another helpful tip is to “bundle” our activities, so we and our kids can have down time together. For example, the HW + meal prep suggestion above allows us and our kids both to fulfill a chore while in each other’s company but focused on our individual tasks. Later, we can both relax and unwind in our own ways—whether separate or together.

Hitting the “reset” button on after-school academic pursuits in springtime will pay off in big ways as the school year wraps up. With all the warmer weather activities and extra-curricular activities, it can be easy to lose our grip on academic integrity, otherwise.

Let’s enjoy the warmer weather, and engage in all the pleasures it brings, while also contributing to an end of term report card that we and our children can feel *really good* about!



Real Estate Update

by Lisa M. Sanderson, Contributor

Spring is here! The weather and the calendar might not know it, but home-buyers are definitely thinking spring! They are online, waiting for homes to come on the market and buying them up fairly quickly. It has been an unusually active winter selling season. The distinct lack of inventory from most of last year through now has created a backlog of would-be homeowners anxious to find something. This is good for sellers - we know demand drives prices! Home values are creeping up and this year is proving to be the best in years to maximize sale prices.

As we cycle through tax season, though, it will be interesting to see how the changes in people’s tax return amounts affect house purchases. We know that many are seeing less money in their refunds and since some people count on this money for closing expenses, we could see a small dip in sales activity. But that could just be me being a worrywart.

Penn Estates Statistics - At the current absorption rate, we have about a 3-month supply of inventory in Penn Estates – solidly in the Seller’s Market range. The average sale price this year is trending about \$6/square foot higher than last year at \$86.25/sf. So far this year, it is taking about 81 days to market and find a buyer for a home. This number continues to drop as we sell the stale inventory that’s been sitting around. All good news!

Information has been gathered from the Pocono Mountains Association of REALTORS’ Multiple Listing Service on February 28, 2019.

	Active Listings	Pending Sales*	Closed Year to Date	Closed 2018
Total	29	17	10	102
Foreclosures	0	2	1	13
Short Sales	0	0	0	2
Low List/Sold	100,000	48,400	92,500	46,000
High List/Sold	255,000	229,900	260,000	293,000
Avg. List/Sold	163,141	140,347	155,630	134,814

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



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