

# Living in Harmony with Nature

Penn Estates Property Owners Association

April/May 2016

# Notice and Call to the nnual Membership Meeting

By PEPOA Board of Directors

Pursuant to the Bylaws, the Annual Membership Meeting of the Penn Estates Property Owners Association will be held on Saturday May 7, 2016, 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 April 7, 2016, are eligible to vote and are strongly encouraged to attend and participate.

Members not in good standing as of April 7, 2016, may attend the meeting but may not participate in the proceedings nor vote.

Eligible Members may vote for the Election of Directors and for five (5) 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 (10:00 AM on Thursday May 5, 2016).

The meeting shall be conducted according to the set Agenda shown below in this Notice.

Members in good standing will be provided the opportunity to speak for two (2) minutes as part of new business, so long as time permits. In accordance with the Bylaws, 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 in 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 7, 2016. Please arrive early as we will begin promptly at 10:00 AM.

# Saturday, May 7, 2016 10:00AM

**Penn Estates Community Center** 

#### **Annual Meeting Agenda** Saturday, May 7, 2016

- Call to Order and Officer Roll Call
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Appointment of Judges of Elections
- CPA Report concerning the number of Directed Proxy Ballots
- Certification of a Quorum Judges of Election
- **Meeting Procedures**
- 7. Welcome and Introduction of Directors
- Approval of 2015 Annual Meeting Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- 10. Election of Directors Nominating & Steering Committee Board Liaison
  - a. Candidate Introductions and Presentations (5 minutes each)
  - b. Election Vote by Directed Proxy and in-person Ballots
- 11. Vote on five Bylaw amendments Secretary
  - a. Presentation of amendments
  - Question/answers (2 minutes each)
  - Bylaw amendments vote by Directed Proxy and in-person Ballots
- 12. President's Annual Report
- 13. Report on Balloting
- 14. Committee Reports distributed prior to the meeting
- - a. Disposition of Surplus 2016 Operating Funds (Resolution #1)
  - Apportionment of Annual Assessment (Resolution #2)
  - Other New Business
  - Community Input (2 minutes each) Q&A cards
- 16. Adjournment

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# MEET THE CANDIDATES

#### **Oak Room**

Saturday, April 30, 2016 3PM

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The official publication of the Penn Estates Property Owners Association 304 Cricket Drive, East Stroudsburg PA 18301

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#### **Board of Directors Election Process**

#### **By PEPOA Board of Directors**

Following is the process approved by the Board of Directors for conducting the upcoming election of Directors. This is the same process that has been in use for the past several years.

#### **Annual Meeting Mailing**

- A Directed Proxy will be sent to all members regardless of standing with the Call to Meeting Notice not less than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the Annual Meeting/Election. Mailing will include other material as stipulated in Bylaws Article III Section C.
  - a) The mailing will also include an unstamped envelope addressed to the CPA for the purpose of mailing Directed Proxies to the CPA. Envelope must have a place (on back) to note Lot, Section and Name for verification of standing by CPA. Envelope will include CPA's address in Return Address so that all undeliverable ballots are returned to CPA.
- 2) The list of "members in good standing" will be provided to the CPA of record by PEPOA Management on the record date established by resolution of the Board of Directors.
- B) Directed Proxies will be mailed by members in good standing to the CPA of record.
  - a) The CPA will verify a member's standing against the list provided by PEPOA Management using information on the back of the envelope.
  - b) If the envelope does not contain appropriate identification, the CPA will open the envelope and obtain lot and section from the Directed Proxy.
  - c) Once confirmed as a "member in good standing," the CPA will register the Directed Proxies on a spreadsheet using only lot and section to identify member.
  - d) The CPA will register Board election votes, bylaw amendment votes as well as receipt of signed Directed Proxies, which will count toward establishing a quorum.
- 4) Directed Proxies received from members "not in good standing" will be set aside and stapled together as will any returned Directed Proxies that cannot be identified. These Directed Proxies will not be counted.
- 5) The Board Secretary will meet with the CPA during the 48 hour period prior to the annual meeting to account for the proxies.
- 6) The CPA will retain all Directed Proxies for one year from the date of the annual meeting at which time they will be shredded by the CPA.

#### **Day of Annual Meeting**

- 1) Verification at check-in requires a valid state photo identification to obtain a ballot(s). Cross reference verification will be made against the "Members in Good Standing" list.
  - a) If a Directed Proxy was received in the mail, ballot(s) will not be provided for that property unless the Member wants to revoke his/her Directed Proxy.
  - b) Should any member wish to revoke his/her Directed Proxy, s/he will sign a "Revocation of Proxy" form.
  - c) The CPA will be notified and will remove the appropriate Member's vote from the spreadsheet. The Member will then receive the corresponding ballot.
  - d) If a Directed Proxy has not been received, a ballot(s) shall be provided to the listed deeded owner of the property as long as identification has been provided.

#### **Casting of Ballots**

- 1) The Election will be conducted in accordance with Modern Rules of Order:
  - a) Nominations and/or Report of Nominating Committee
  - b) Discussion of candidates
  - c) Casting of Votes
  - d) Report of Judges of Elections
- 2) a) Ballot Boxes will be opened at 10 AM and will close after all ballots are cast.
  - b) Each member must personally deposit their ballot. To ensure the validity of the election, ballots cannot be given to another member for deposit prior to the casting of votes.
- 3) The CPA of record and two members of the Nominating & Steering Committee (from different households) will serve as Judges of Elections by annual resolution of the Board of Directors.
  - a) When ballot boxes are closed, the Judges of Elections will tally ballots and add totals to the Directed Proxy totals tabulated by the CPA.
  - b) If ballots bear more than a simple mark in the proper boxes, the clear intent of the voter will be the guide. Erasures and strikeovers will not void any ballot if the voter's intent is clear. If the clear intent of the voter cannot be determined, the ballot will be set aside and not counted.

#### **Proposed Bylaw Amendments**

At the March 4, 2016 Board Meeting, the Board of Directors accepted the following proposed Bylaw Amendments as part of the ballot at the May 7, 2016 Annual Meeting.

There is another proposal for a Bylaw Amendment submitted by member petition that is not supported by the Board of Directors. A copy of the petitioned proposal is available for members to review, during normal business hours, at the Administration Office.

The Board of Directors urges you to carefully review and consider these amendments and their impact on your Community. Adoption of these amendments can only be accomplished by a favorable vote of sixty-seven percent (67%) of the Members voting in person or by directed proxy.

> Proposed changes are in bold print.

#### **Amendment #1**

Article I, Section E <u>Definitions</u>

Add to the list of definitions:

"Conflict of Interest"

A situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit, not otherwise available to the general membership, from actions or decisions made in their official capacity.

"Recuse/Recusal"

The act of abstaining from participation in an official action due to a conflict of interest.

#### Amendment #2

Article IV, Section 1. (E) Election and Term of Office

#### **Bylaw currently states:**

- 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.
- 2. Directors elected by the Members in good standing shall serve staggered three-year terms.

#### **Proposed Bylaw Amendment:**

- 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.
- 2. Directors elected by the Members in good standing shall serve staggered three-year terms.
- 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.
- 4. In the event there are not enough candidates to fill all open positions an incumbent may be requested to remain on the Board until an interim position can be filled.

#### **Amendment #3**

Article IV, Section 1. (F)

Creation, Removal and Filling of Mid-term Board Vacancies

#### Bylaw currently states:

- 1. A Board position may be declared vacant because of (a) the Board member's written resignation accepted by the Board; (b) a deemed resignation of the Board member by a vote of two-thirds of the remaining Directors for reasons of inability to perform Director duties or absenteeism; or (c) involuntary removal for cause by two-thirds votes of Board members in good standing present at a Special Meeting called for that purpose.
  - a. A Board member shall be deemed to have submitted a resignation from the Board if the Director is absent without good cause as determined in the discretion of the Board, from three (3) successive regular Board meetings or from a total of four (4) regular Board meetings during any calendar year.
  - b. Cause for removal at a Special Meeting of the Board members shall be (a) declaration of unsound mind by order of courts; (b) facts showing a Director being initially or currently ineligible for Board membership; (c) being found guilty of a misdemeanor or a felony offense under any state or federal jurisdiction.
  - c. The Board shall give immediate written notice of the grounds of involuntary removal for cause. They shall also give notice of a special Board meeting, in writing, to the Director in question. The special Board meeting notice shall also include the alleged cause(s) for removal of each Director involved. The Director shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at the special meeting and to defend against grounds asserted. Involuntary removal for cause may not be repeated for the initial offense if a Director is voted not to be removed.
  - d. When a Board vacancy occurs, the Board shall appoint from nominees proposed by the Nominating Committee an interim successor Director by a majority vote of the remaining Directors. That succes-

(continued on next page)



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#### **Proposed Bylaw Amendments cont.**

sor Board member shall serve only until the next annual election at which time the Members shall choose the Board member's replacement for the remainder of the term. If the vacancy shall have arisen seventy-five (75) or fewer days prior to the next Annual Meeting, no appointments shall be made.

#### **Proposed Bylaw Amendment:**

- 1. A Board position may be declared vacant because of:
  - a. The Board member's written resignation accepted by the Board;
  - b. A deemed resignation of the Board member by a vote of two-thirds of the remaining Directors for reasons of inability to perform Director duties or absenteeism; or
  - Involuntary removal for cause by two-thirds votes of Board members in good standing present at a Special Meeting called for that purpose.
- A Board member shall be deemed to have submitted a resignation from the Board if the Director is absent without good cause as determined in the discretion of the Board, from three (3) successive regular Board meetings or from a total of four (4) regular Board meetings during any calendar year.
- 3. Cause for removal at a Special Meeting of the Board members shall be
  - a. Declaration of unsound mind by order of courts;
  - b. Facts showing a Director being initially or currently ineligible for

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- Board membership;
- c. Being found guilty of a misdemeanor or a felony offense under any state or federal jurisdiction.
- 4. The Board shall give immediate written notice of the grounds of involuntary removal for cause. They shall also give notice of a special Board meeting, in writing, to the Director in question. The special Board meeting notice shall also include the alleged cause(s) for removal of each Director involved. The Director shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at the special meeting and to defend against grounds asserted. Involuntary removal for cause may not be repeated for the initial offense if a Director is voted not to be removed.
- 5. When a Board vacancy occurs within 60 days after the election, the runner up who had the highest number of votes shall automatically fill the vacancy until the next election. Should that person not accept or there be no such candidate, then the Board shall appoint from nominees proposed by the Nominating Committee an interim successor Director by a majority vote of the remaining Directors. That successor Board member shall serve only until the next annual election at which time the Members shall choose the Board member's replacement for the remainder of the term. If the vacancy shall have arisen seventy-five (75) or fewer days prior to the next Annual Meeting, no appointments shall be made.

#### **Amendment #4**

Article VI, Committees

#### Bylaw currently states:

#### Section A. General

All committees function in an advisory capacity to the Board and provide assistance to the proper function of the Association. The Board shall prescribe the duties of all Committees. The Board shall publish the names of all Committee Members after their appointment. Members of designated committees are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. The required Standing committees of the Association are:

- 1. Appeals
- 2. Architectural Review
- 3. Finance
- 4. Nominating and Steering

The Board of Directors may add other Standing and Ad Hoc committees and Task Forces at its discretion. The Board of Directors will maintain a list of authorized committees.

Section B. <u>Participation of non-Members on Committees and Task Forces</u>
In the discretion of the Board, immediate adult family of a Member residing in the Member's household may participate in the meetings and activities of a committee or task force, but shall not be permitted to vote on committee business.

#### **Proposed Bylaw Amendment:**

#### Section A. General

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Member's household may participate in the meetings and activities of a committee or
task force, but shall not be permitted to vote on committee business.

#### Section C. Voting By Committee Members

- 1. Owners of the same Lot serving on the same committee A lot with multiple owners shall only vote one (1) vote.
- 2. To ensure a fair decision, a minimum of three voting members are necessary for a quorum in a meeting where a vote is required.
- Committee members must recuse themselves from all decisions where a conflict of interest exists.

#### It's Time to Meet the Candidates

#### By Lucy Jacobsen, Chair Nominating and Steering Committee

On Saturday, April 30, 2016, from 3pm to 6 pm, the Nominating and Steering Committee will be holding the annual Meet the Candidates forum at the community center to introduce the candidates for the Board of Directors. This will be the first time you can come out and meet and hear what the candidates have to say.

There are three open positions and eight candidates, so it is very important for you to hear their views. Each of the candidates will have five minutes to introduce themselves and discuss their platform. Once all candidates have spoken, there will be a Q and A session so that attendees will have a chance to ask questions and have them addressed by one or more candidates. Index cards will be available for you to write your question and have it answered. Only questions on the index cards will be asked and answered.

Upon completion of the forum, food and beverages will be served to all who attend the forum. Due to in the importance of this meeting, no one will be admitted after 3:30 PM, so as not to disrupt the allotted time to the candidates.

Please make every effort to attend, and be on time. Remember, the residents vote for the members of the Board of Directors. This is the time to have your voice heard.

# **Nominating and Steering Committee Wants You**

#### By Lucy Jacobsen, Chair Nominating and Steering Committee

On April 9, 2016 the Nominating and Steering Committee will be holding its annual Volunteer Recruitment Event. This is the perfect time for residents and their families to come out and meet members of the various committees within Penn Estates. The event will be held at the Community Center from 3 pm to 6 pm and food and beverages will be served to all who attend. A special welcome beverage will be given to all who volunteer for a committee.

In order to volunteer as a voting member, you must be a deeded homeowner in good standing and over the age of 21. A family member can join several of the committees as a nonvoting member.

Please come out and meet the committee chairs, committee members and board members so you can learn about the functions of the committees and decide which one is best for you. It's going to be a fun day. See you on April 9th, 2016.

#### **Real Estate Update**

#### By Maureen Shindle, Contributor

I am happy present you with the Real Estate statistics pertaining to PEPOA properties. The statistics below refer to the activity in 2016 and current Active Listings. The market is abuzz with buyers and inventory is lower than last year causing a sellers' market. As the school year end approaches, more buyers will be searching for a home. If you've been thinking of selling your house, this could be a good time to put it on the market.

Information has been gathered from the Pocono Mountains Association of REAL-TORS' Multiple Listing Service for the period of January 1, 2016 to February 29, 2016.

Category	<b>Active Listings</b>	<b>Pending Sales</b>	2016 Total Sales
Total	58	19	20
Foreclosures	14	11	9
Short Sales	2	1	2
Lowest List/Sold Price	\$34,900	\$24,500	\$18,500
Highest List/Sold Price	\$449,900	\$219,900	\$139,900
Avg. List/Sold Price	\$121,210	\$96,024	\$70,468
Avg. Days on Market	160	143	146

2016 Sales to Date include sales from 1/1/2016 to 2/29/2016. Average Sale Price of these sales is \$70,468 which is 99% of the Average List Price. Of the 58 Active Listings, 14 are foreclosures and 2 are short sales.

Foreclosures represent 45% of the sales for Penn Estates to date. On average, ten (10) properties were sold per month. Based on this rate, there is currently a six (6) month supply of active listings. Pending Sale information reflects only list prices as sold information is not available until the sale is final.

DISTRESS SALES: Defined as sales of properties that are bank-owned (foreclosure), or short sales (where sellers sell for less than what they owe their mortgage lenders), distress sales made up 45% of the transactions for 2016 year to date. This number has a huge impact on our market because of the drastically reduced prices they allow.

About the Author: Maureen Shindle is a 14 year resident of Penn Estates and Past President of PEPOA Board of Directors and a REALTOR® with Keller Williams Real Estate in Stroudsburg. Comments and questions welcome at mpshindle@kw.com or mpshalancedliving@kwrealty.com

#### Hallet Road Bridge Closure

On March 8, 2016, Penn Estates was informed by PennDOT that the Hallet Road bridge will be closed indefinitely. Contact PennDOT at (610) 871-4100 with any questions.

#### Penn Estates front gate access from Routes 447 and/or 191

This route is for vehicles less than 10' high

- At the traffic light intersection of Routes 447 and 191, head North on 447/191.
- Travel 6/10 of a mile; turn left at Analomink Post Office on to Cherry Lane Road.
- Follow Cherry Lane Road to Metzger Road; turn left on to Metzger Road.
- Turn left on Hallet Road.
- The Penn Estates entrance will be on the right in approximately 1 mile.

#### This route is for vehicles over 10' high

- From Rt. 611 at the traffic light at the Tannersville Inn/Warner Road & Cherry Lane Road intersection:
- Turn on to Cherry Lane Road for 2.7 miles.
- Turn right onto Bog Road for 1.3 miles.
- Turn right onto Hallet Road.
- The Penn Estates entrance will be on the right in approximately 1 mile.

#### To Leave Penn Estates via Routes 447 and/or 191

- Turn left out of the front entrance onto Hallet Road.
- Turn right on Metzger Road.
- Turn right on Cherry Lane Road.
- This will lead to the intersection of Cherry Lane Road and Rt. 447 at the Analomink Post Office.
- Turn right for 447 South towards Eagle Valley.
- Rt. 191 is on the right at the first traffic light.



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#### **Leif Abbey**

My name is Leif Abbey and I have been a homeowner in Penn Estates since 2003. I am a small business owner of a local property maintenance company known as Med Scrubs. We have been proudly serving the Pocono area since 2005. When I am not busy with my company, I work as a substitute teacher for Stroudsburg Area School District where I enjoy educating the K-4th grade children. I also volunteer for the Penn State Cooperative Extension as a Master Gardener where I help educate the



public on best practices in consumer horticulture and environmental stewardship. My education includes a Bachelor of Science from the New York Institute of Technology.

My reason for running for the Board is that I want to be a bona fide representative of the people of this community. When an issues arises that requires my vote, I will make decisions that have the best interest of the homeowner in mind. As residents of Penn Estates, we are fortunate to live in a nice gated community with a relatively low crime rate For some reason, however, our community has acquired a negative reputation over the years. I tend to believe that when visitors come to our community they see a community with a lot of homes that are in various stages of decline and disrepair. A contributing factor, is the high number of foreclosures in our community. It has been all to common to drive around and see all those white papers taped to the front doors of homes. We need to levy fines against the lienholders of the foreclosed properties that are not maintained and in violation of our bylaws. The banks and mortgage companies can certainly afford to pay those fines. I understand that there are some disadvantaged homeowners that may need assistance in the upkeep of their properties. With this is mind, I am planning to spearhead a committee of "Neighbors Helping Neighbors. "This committee will consists of community volunteers who will devote time to help needy homeowners (e.g. disabled, elderly,) maintain the general appearance of their properties. This is a service that will only be available to qualified homeowners. I also think that we should strictly enforce our bylaws or if necessary, make amendments to them that mandate more rigorous compliance to property upkeep and community rules.

In the financial area, I want to be involved in the negotiations of our contracts with subcontracting services such as security, maintenance, and construction. If there is money to be saved , I will find it. When our current contracts expire, I will help to initiate a very competitive bidding process with the prospective contractors and negotiate the highest quality service or product at the lowest possible cost. I would also like to see if we can possibly reduce expenses in other areas as long as they will not negatively affect the quality of life of homeowners. I am totally against any increases in our association fees. We have virtually no control over the rising costs of other living expenses such as, electric, cable. and water, but If I can prevent an increase in our fees, I will seize the opportunity! If we can save money, then perhaps we can the use the savings to reduce our dues or improve our amenities. Maybe, we can construct a small fitness center in one of the buildings near the pool. If we work together, all things are possible.

My vision for Penn Estates in that maybe visitors will drive around our community in awe of how nice it is and wish that they could someday live here. We need to make the necessary changes to improve our community's reputation, amenities, and appearance to increase our falling property values. We can not just sit by and wait for the real estate values to rebound on their own. We need to do our part to push them upwards. The proverbial, "Train to New York" is obviously not coming to the Poconos...or at least not anytime soon. The sooner we realize this, the better. If you elect me to the board of directors, I will work to protect and further the interest of the homeowner, not just "Penn Estates." Together, we can make this community great again!

Thank you for your support. Leif Abbey

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#### John M Baraniuk

Hi my name is John Baraniuk. My wife of 13 years and I have been living in Penn Estates for the past 10 years. We originally came from a gated community in NNJ where I served on the security committee. When we moved here to Penn Estates I hoped to join a committee similar to the one I belonged to in NJ. I joined the Public Safety Committee which is currently the Community Safety Committee. I have served as the current chairman for the past 4 years. 2 years ago I reestablished the Penn Estates



Neighborhood Watch where I serve as the coordinator. Currently I have 10 members and welcome more.

I received volunteer of the year award for 2010 for the time I put in meeting with the Monroe County Coordinator for the 911 house numbers, so that Penn Estates was not left out from this change. Each time I met with the county coordinator, I would meet with our community manager and board members keeping them updated.

I work for JCP&L currently for the past 16 years. I was upgraded in my dept. to 2<sup>nd</sup> class meter services working with residential and commercial electric meters. I also report to work when large storms hit creating a high volume of outages. I'm also a volunteer firefighter and a past fire company chief in NJ for 34 years and also was a part time fire warden for the NJ Forest Fire Service for 18 years.

In my spare time I enjoy fishing, volleyball, and watching nascar.

If elected to the Board of Directors I would like to accomplish the following:

For the safety and recreation of our kids in the community, look into setting up a temporary ice skating rink in addition to the other projects currently being reviewed by the Recreation Committee. To assure all homes in the community have the proper 9-1-1 house numbers so our security and emergency personnel can find your homes in an emergency, especially at night. To increase our awareness of how our security services are being performed and seen at a respectful level. I would try to enhance communications with security for feedback and suggestions for helping make our community safer. I will look into possible ways to lower our utility bills in the community. To better utilize our maintenance staff during the winter season, suggest splitting their shifts during large or excessive snowstorms. When there is a need for additional help utilize part-timers to assist, so that our maintenance staff would get the proper rest after working long hours and would be refreshed as they returned back to work. To review and update our written emergency preplan and also the resources that are needed for our community in the event of a disaster or emergency situation, like in Hurricane Sandy and previous weather disasters. For the board to have an open and direct communications working closely with the current heads of Police, Fire and First Aid so we can assist and help make their response to Penn Estates safe and swift.

I want to encourage the residents of Penn Estates to get involved in the community, such as volunteer on a committee where you can make a difference just as I have.

#### **PEPOA Weekly Activities**

-	Mah-Jongg Dart League	
-	Bookmobile	•

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#### Sandra S. Bonet

In May of 2015 I moved to Penn Estates from my hometown of Columbus, Ohio in order to be closer to my daughter and son-in-law who live in Hoboken, New Jersey. Penn Estates was the perfect choice for me because of its commitment to living in harmony with nature, the cultural and age diversity and the security offered by a gated community.

Because I believe in the importance of community involvement, I volunteered for membership on the on the Penn Estates

Home Owners Association Appeals Committee for which I currently serve as recording sectary. I attend the Board meeting monthly in order to learn more about the challenges and opportunities inherent in keeping Penn Estates operating successfully.

In January of this year, I retired from a career that included advertising and television writing, TV station program direction, clinical nursing in various care settings and health care management both clinical and administrative. Although I continue to do some consulting in the health care management field, I now have more time I can use to give back to the community. For that reason, I have chosen to run for the Board.

Although I am relatively new to the community, I believe I can offer a fresh perspective on community issues and provide an effective balance with those who have a long history of service to Penn Estates.

Over the years, I have learned a lot about how organizations function and how human behavior impacts their ability to be successful. I have served on the Boards of several organizations in other communities, managed the operations of companies with over 100 employees and been accountable for budgets in excess of 10 million dollars. I would like to put this business management experience to work for Penn Estates.

I am a graduate of the Ohio University Scripps School of Journalism and the Northern Arizona University School of Nursing. I hold a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Golden Gate University in Northern California. I am unmarried and live by the lake with three rescued Maltese-mix dogs who, truth be told, generously allow me to live in their house.

#### **Gary Conforte**

My name is Gary Conforte and I have lived in Penn Estates for the past twenty-three years with my lovely wife Valerie and raised two wonderful children Gary James and Gabrielle.

I am a retired telecommunications professional with twenty-five years experience in project management, operations and engineering on Wall Street.

For the past six years I have been a member of the Board of Directors of Penn Estates. I have been the Recreation Committee liaison for the past six years.

Due to my permanent disability, I have been home the past fifteen years.

Six years ago I decided to run for a position as a Board member in Penn Estates and achieved that goal.

I have been an active PTA member and school volunteer in the Stroudsburg Area School District for more than fourteen years

I feel that I did a good job the last six years and feel I can give the people of Penn Estates three more good ones. This is why I am rerunning for the Penn Estates Board of Directors.

I was never in favor the PE Drive road assessment and the money spent just trying to get a Grant never happened, instead we managed to save the money to get this project done.

Remember that I am also a homeowner and will try and not raise the dues; we have not raised the dues in the past six years since I've been a Board member and will try to keep it that way.

My main concern this time around to beautify Penn Estates, take a ride around and look at how the development has gone downhill, we need to have pride in ownership.

I would like stop the unnecessary spending and projects. Just take care of the day to day operations and the emergency repairs.

Remember the Board is spending your money and mine, so I feel what you feel.

There are many things in our community that need to change. I will try my hardest to make the necessary changes that need to happen if reelected to the Board.

Get out and **VOTE** this is the only way to make changes happen.

You cannot complain if you do not **VOTE**.



My name is Keesha Bruno, and I am running for Penn Estates Board of Directors. My husband, two girls and I have made Penn Estates our full-time home for the past 13 years. We fell in love with the sense of security and tranquility the community had to offer. I have a career in the healthcare field. I consider my occupation to be the work of the Lord. I make it my goal to aid in the healing process both physically and spiritually. I have been instrumental in my career for providing clinical care, and



assisting with the development of outpatient clinical practices. I have also contributed to my field as a mentor for students, new hire, residents, and fellows. I was an asset to my clinical practice by assisting with updating administrative policies, interviewing of new hires, coordinating availability of new equipment, and supplies, as well as implementing new clinical practices, standard of care, and orientation materials for my peers. I participated weekly in educational programs, and assisted in developing an annual symposium in our specialty, as well as assisting in research, and submission of abstracts to the World Conference. My hobbies include spending quality time with my family and friends, running, bicycling, swimming, and watching comical and mystery series.

My goal as a volunteer is to make a difference, find solutions, and stand up for what

is right. I perform every task as a volunteer with pride, integrity, honesty and impartiality. For the past 5 years, I have been a proactive volunteer in Penn Estates, serving as a member of Finance. Architectural Review Board, Long Range Planning committee, and as Chair of the Appeals committee. As a member and chair of said committees, I was able to assist with the new logo, branding, and revisions to the PEPOA Bylaws, Rules and Regulations. I was fortunate to have been awarded volunteer of the year by my peers. Through my volunteer experience, I have gained a working knowledge of the Associations processes on many levels. I take pride in our community, and have a vision for future improvements.

As a Board of Director, my goal would be to make the community better through: inclusion, not exclusion; to acknowledge residents suggestions and concerns, instead of being dismissive; to treat residents like our neighbors, for whom they are, and not like strangers; to improve community spirit; to update and create new amenities; to enhance the value and appeal of our community and properties. These are not easy and/or simple solutions. However, there has to be a willingness by all to acknowledge the need for improvement or change before the process can be initiated. Our community needs leaders that do not have personal agendas. Leaders with the intellectual

and creative ability to problem solve, and do what is right. The common goal is to move our community forward. I can be counted on to do what's right for you, me, our family, and the entire Penn Estates community.



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#### **Oleg Gorshkov**

I am currently a seated member of the board and have shown excellent participation, teamwork, and ability to help make difficult decisions. If elected, I will continue to serve property owners in our community with honesty, analytical thinking, and integrity. As most of you already know, my background can benefit our community in significant ways.

benefit our community in significant ways.

I am a Certified Public Accountant with a consistent track record of uncompromising ethics that instills confidence and

trust. Working on wall street as an auditor through the booming economy of the early 2000's and navigating rough waters as a risk manger during the great recession, I have always been a top performer in my field while working in competitive environments with large institutions such as Morgan Stanley, SmithBarney, and Deutsche Bank.

I began my career as an aspiring CPA in the early 2000's. By 2007 I successfully completed all four parts of the CPA exam within the 90th percentile while working as an Audit Manager at one of the largest banks on Wall Street. Analyzing and auditing financial statements and internal controls for the Asset Management business within the bank.

In 2009, shortly after Morgan Stanely's acquisition of Citibanks SmithBarney arm, I transitioned to a front office role on the newly formed Capital Markets trading desk of MSSB. During my tenure on the trading desk I was responsible for various integration projects that required detailed analytical thinking of projected future growth, capital market stabilization and real estate market volatility.

While piloting through Wall Street, I began to grow my CPA firm. Taking on various



clients and offering a wide array of services. My firm began to provide accounting, taxation, auditing, consulting, and financial services to both business and individuals. My company strives to give the same attention to all clients, no matter their size. The firm currently remains on the cutting edge of tax law and financial trends. All our staff are well-informed and continually adapting to the ever-changing world of tax law and financial reporting. Currently, I have transitioned out of the corporate banking world and into private practice as a full time CPA with a loyal support staff. Our firm stresses strong client relationships while providing tax services, auditing, bookkeeping, and financial reporting. We emphasize the "personal" touch giving clients the individual attention they deserve. Our company is large enough to provide expertise in many areas, yet small enough that our partners and staff are accessible and readily available to serve.

Currently, our firm is responsible for auditing financial statements of several condo-

Currently, our firm is responsible for auditing financial statements of several condominium and cooperative associations. The knowledge obtained while performing such projects has proven to be a great asset to this community. My goal, if re-elected, is to lower annual dues as I have seen other property owners associations do the same. Using my audit experience in home owners associations, I have already identified several measures which can help reduce membership dues without sacrificing level of service.

Ever since the real estate market boom of the early-mid 2000's I have always had an interest in Real Estate. In 2005 I purchased my first property. The timing was not the best but I stuck with it through rough times and continued paying my mortgage as I agreed with the mortgage bank.

By 2014 I had an investment interest in more than 10 properties across two states with every intention to revitalize the community in which these homes are located. Most of the properties I own were distressed and in serious need of repair.

#### **David Juliano**

I moved to Penn Estate 20 years ago originally from New York City. I am married and have a wonderful wife Drina, who is Chairperson of Recreation Committee and Community Day, and is a licensed Realtor, and loving son James who just turned eleven. We love where we live since it is a family oriented community. I work in the Computer Industry for the past 20 years and maintain many state contracts such as; government, schools, hospitals, banks, and casinos. I have been involved on



the Recreation Committee, Finance Committee, ARB and the Harmony Committee and PEP. I also was involved as the Chairperson the last 6 years of Community Day.

Penn Estates in the last 3 years has seen forward progress. In order to keep the momentum things have to happen in a way that you achieve success a little bit at a time. Since being on the Board the last 3 years we have been having forward progress to get Penn Estates where we need to be and see the results of our hard work. Progress, like

most other things, does not and cannot happen overnight; it isn't realistic.

By being on the Board My Voice has been heard and I haven't finished I have a lot more to do. I have seen a lot of change since I have been on the Board and a lot of it pertaining to saving money and not wasting money. I am proud that I can say that I served on the Board that will be getting Penn Estates Drive paved this year. I am not a follower, I stand out and people know that about me. I will be fighting for the rights of the homeowners.

We are a community of over 1600 homes. We are strong, we are proud, and we need everyone on the same page, moving in the same direction to make sure we stay the course that has been set. We need everyone to get involved on some level; this is your community don't just watch what happens, get involved and make things happen. Look at where we are with a very small group of dedicated volunteers, think of where we can be with everyone onboard. The time is here, the time is now; we can make it happen.





#### **Jody Perkin**

My name is Jody Perkin and I am a candidate for our Board of Directors. Some may recognize me from around the community, and others may recognize that I sat on the Board from 2011 to 2014. When my term ended I elected not to re-run because of changes at work that required my undivided attention.

I am no different than anyone else living our community; here is a bit of my personal story:

In 2006, when we saw a small herd of deer in the yard of the home we eventually bought, it became clear that Penn Estates was special. 'Living in Harmony with Nature' and the sense of security of a gated community were very appealing ideas. I don't think anyone could have predicted this was the height of the real estate market and the bubble was about to burst. I am full- time resident-owner first and foremost; something I do not take for granted because I almost lost my home.

Like most people I go to work, pay the mortgage, the taxes and dues. Because of the economic collapse caused by greed on Wall Street in 2008 I was affected, as were many of our friends and neighbors. In March my department informed us that we being re-organized and more than half of us would be eliminated - two months later, 1100 of us were out of work. Unemployment doesn't cover the bills. Out of work for six months any savings we had were drained, I could not afford to be picky & had to take the first job offered for the health insurance. To make matters worse, I remained underemployed for six more months with a commute that was eight times longer. We were months away

from losing the house and fighting with the bank daily to get a modification done; paying bills became a juggling act. I know how difficult it can get, I've actually been there and I understand what it is to struggle.

#### What I bring to the table

I have over 25 years' experience in leadership and management, customer service and sales, in the private and public sectors, for small companies and a Fortune 100 company, union and non-unionized environments, and I acquired some useful skills along the way - contract negotiations; recruiting; policy development; dispute resolution; workplace training and investigations; budget preparation; and managing difficult people. I have a Bachelor in Business Administration and a Master of Science in Human Resource Management & Labor Relations, and I earned them both while working full-time.

I enjoy giving back and have supported organizations where there has been a personal impact. As a former Board President and Board Secretary, I have worked with all our committees on some level; understand the governing documents; understand the nuances of the budget, how our dues fund the overall activities of Penn Estates including our administrative, maintenance and support activities; and how our volunteer committees help shape everything we do. The fiscally prudent actions of the PEPOA Boards on which I served adopted the initial capital reserve study, laid the ground work for the funding and reconstruction of PE Drive, and provided for the installation of the new playground equipment by the community center. Was everything 100% perfect 100% of the time? No. We are all human, we all err, but if we learn from our failings then mistakes are nothing more than opportunities in unusual packages.

#### What is my goal?

1. To ensure our residents are treated fairly, with respect and dignity; 2. To listen to your concerns, be an objective voice representing the whole, not the few; 3. Ensure we are attending to the projects that affect the membership most, in the most cost effective manner possible; 4. Continue to improve PEPOA's financial health without sacrificing services; and 5. Strive for continuous improvement in all we do. We need to work together as a community with the available resources we already have.

I don't make promises I cannot deliver; so my only promise is to listen, be fair and objective, and to serve you without a personal agenda.

#### Don't leave it to chance, here's why you should vote

In a community our size no Board can please all of the members all of the time, it is unrealistic. We, the members, have the responsibility of electing those who will best serve the interests of all of us, not special interests of a select few; the Board is responsible to all the members for its decisions and actions.

So select wisely. While a person running for the Board may be your friend, are they really the best person for the job? Will they serve the interests of the entire community without prejudice and personal agenda? Ask questions about the candidates, pose questions to the candidates, and evaluate their qualifications before you make that choice. Whoever is elected will be making policy and financial decisions for you and me, and every other property owner. Look and see who has a proven record of serving you. I know what's required because I've done the job successfully.

If you are a deeded owner then either vote in-person at the annual election on May 7, or vote by directed proxy which will be mailed with the election packet. Remember to

vote for the director openings and vote for the Bylaw amendments. The manner in which you vote isn't important, that you vote is critical.

So who do you want as your voice?

"There are many ways of going forward, but only one way of standing still."

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt



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#### STROUDSBURG WINTER FESTIVAL

By Robin Nicholson, Communications Committee Member

On Presidents Day weekend, the Borough of Stroudsburg rekindled its annual Winter Festival that had been on a three-year hiatus. The tradition of the Winter Ice Festival was previously organized by the Jacob Stroud Foundation; that group has been non-op-



erational in recent years. This prompted Main Street business owner Barry Lynch (owner of Jock 'n Jills, The Delaware Room, The Hideaway and Sarah's Corner Café) to revive and reorganize the tradition.

Approximately 30 local businesses participated on that blistery cold weekend. The event began on Friday evening and continued through Saturday and included events such as wine tasting and cookie exchange walk. For many the highlight of the festival was the stunning Ice Sculptures by the storefronts in town.

Businesses on Main Street had a custom-made ice sculpture that represented them in the most beautiful and distinctive way (from cupcakes, to diamond rings). The frosty



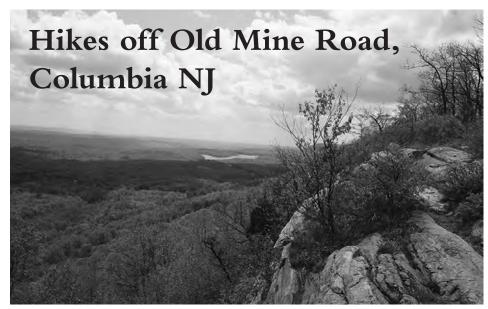


temperatures preserved beautiful ice sculptures that lined Main Street for a few extra days for the community to view and appreciate as they strolled down Main Street.

There was also an impressive animal ice sculpture garden in Court House square where many had the unique experience of watching the impressive creation by chainsaw and blow torch from Ice Sculptor John Hanson of "Sculpted Ice Works."

So many were thrilled to have the tradition of the Winter Ice Festival back and enjoyed the unique and beautiful experience while supporting and promoting local small businesses. Until next winter!





By Michele Valerio, Contributing Writer

Old Mine Road is a road in New Jersey and New York said to be one of the oldest continuously used roads in the United States of America. At a length of 104 miles, it stretches from the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area to the vicinity of Kingston, New York. There are a number of great hiking trails you can get to from Old Mine Road in the Delaware Water Gap Area. To get to Old Mine Road, take I 80 East, exit at the Visitors Center and then follow the signs for a U turn back onto I 80 going West. Once you are heading west you need to take Exit 1 almost immediately and then take a right to the light. The first section of Old Mine Road is a single lane and it feels as if you are wedged between the Delaware River and the mountain as you drive that first mile or so.

The first trail is Harvey Springs trail which you can access from the Douglas Parking lot which is about 5 miles North on Old Mine Road. For more information please see this website link. http://www.nps.gov/dewa/planyourvisit/garvey-springs-trail.htm

This is a short trail that goes up to the Appalachian Trail that then leads to the glacial SunFish Pond. It is great to hike up to the pond for lunch and enjoy the highest lake in New Jersey. This trail also goes out to Raccoon Ridge if you continue about 2 miles North

on the Appalachian Trail. Don't go to far north on the AT or you end up in Maine.

The next trail, which is about 7 miles in from the light, can be found across the road from the parking lot is called the Coppermines Trail. It is a rather steep 2 mile trail that you can take up and back. From the trailhead, head into the woods on the red-blazed Coppermines Trail. Just past the trailhead, you'll come to a fork. Bear left and follow a branch trail that parallels a cascading stream and leads in 750 feet to the sealed-off entrance of the lower mine – a relic of Dutch explorations for copper in the 1600s. If you would like a more ambitious hike, continue until the end where you will see a small wooden bridge and the connection to the Appalachian Trail. (White blazes) from there cross the road and head up the AT about one mile until you get to the ridge line. There are spectacular views of NJ farmland and a rather steep drop off so be careful up on the ridge. If you continue

another mile north you will find the Catfish Fire Tower. Retrace your steps back to the car.

Buttermilk Falls (in the Delaware Water Gap) is a picturesque 200 foot waterfall right by the road. It is the tallest waterfall in New Jersey and cascades spectacularly 90 feet down the red shale face off the Kittatinny Ridge. The hike up is rather tough but there are wooden stairs and a landing. From the top of the trail you will agin intersect with the AT and can go south and loop around Crater Lake for a longer hike. Although you can access the falls from Old Mine Road, I would suggest using your GPS from I 80 or NJ-94.

You will need the Kittatinny Trails maps set for this area which can be purchased from the NY/NJ Trail Conference. Please make sure you bring water, food, rain gear and wear proper footwear when hiking. Be safe and have fun.



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#### **High-Tech Gadgets for Our Furry Family Members**

By Jennifer Nicholson, Communications Committee Member

The world of high tech gadgetry has finally grown to include our pets. No your dog can stroll down the street with its own equivalent of a Fitbit. You can keeps constant tabs on your tabby via GPS. You can video chat with your ferret and use your phone to check in on the pH of your fish tank. This wonderful world of pet tech gadgets does contain some silly things that are just for fun, but it also includes some very helpful tools that can assist you in taking better care of your pets physical and emotional health. When this new technology first comes out, the price tag may be alarming. But, as with all new gadgets, they come down in price pretty quickly. Some of these gadgets are downright affordable nowadays. I have chosen a variety of categories to summarize what's hot and new out there for your furry (or scaly...or feathered) family members.

Communication - There are a variety of devices that will allow you to visually check in on your pet at any time. Some of these devices will allow you to speak and interact remotely as well.

Petchatz (petchatz.com) - Petchatz mounts to the wall and allows you to call your pet from phone or computer and video chat. You and your pet can see and hear each other

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on color monitors. But it does not stop there. You can also dispense treats to your pet remotely and offer your pet a soothing scent from a variety of scent pads. My favorite part, however, is the optional Pawcall accessory. By pressing their paw to a pad,

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Pawcall allows your pet to call you! Is this a good thing? I don't know, but it is a pretty neat capability.

Petcube (petcube.com) - Petcube is a more simple version of petchatz but with some unique app capabilities that make it stand out. Petcube is a camera that lets you see and



talk to your pet, but your pet can only hear you. There is no video screen on the pets end. Petcube also allows you to play with your pet via a laser. The neat part is the social media they have created around petcube. You can download their app and interact with other pets. You can also have friends and family interact with your pet via your petcube. Probably the neatest part is the ability to interact with adoptable pets in shelters.

No More Woof (nomorewoof.com) - This one is still in development and the jury is still out on if it will work as it claims, but No More Woof claims to read your dog's thoughts (via

brain waves and computers) and instantly translate the dogs thoughts into English words. A ridiculous contraption attached to your dog's head and suddenly you will able to hear "want food" about 9,000 times a day.

#### **Health and Safety**

Fishbit (getfishbit.com) - Fishbit claims to be very easy to set up, just download the app, drop in the monitor and you are ready to go. You can check the pH, temperature and salinity on your phone or computer.

Whistle (pettracker.com) - Whistle offers two small devices that attach to your dog's collar. One is a GPS tracking device. Know your dog's whereabouts at any time by checking you r phone. You can also have it sent alerts to your phone if your dog finds himself outside of a safe zone that you designate. The second gadget that you can attach to

your dog's collar is an activity monitor. This will display your dog's activity level and track long-term stats on food, weight and activity level.

iFetch (goifetch.com) - This battery operated device is fantastic exercise and boredom relief. Your dog can now play fetch whether you are home or not. Your dog just drops the ball into the funnel and iFetch launches the ball. Your dog retrieves the ball and repeat... over and over and over.

Oppo Food Bowl (odditymall.com) - It's not battery operated or electronic. It doesn't have an app or require a computer. What makes this high tech is



**Oppo Food Bowl** 

the innovative design. The Oppo bowl is designed for dogs that eat...well, like pigs. If your dog eats every meal as if it's in an eating contest, it is not only uncivilized but unhealthy as well. Your dog swallows air that leads to bloating (and then usually works its way out the much stinker end) and could also choke. The unique design makes it impossible for your dogs to eat fast or to eat too much in one bite.

#### On the Move

Eyenimal Petcam (eyenimal.com) - Basically a GoPro for pets. Clip the tiny camera on

to your pet and watch/record an adventure through their eyes. They have specialized cams for cats (with night vision and smaller design) or dogs (sturdy and bigger).

U-pet Bubble (amazon.com) - Travelling with your pet never looked so space age. In a variety of colors and styles (backpack, roller suitcase style, messenger bag), the roomy interior and bubble viewing window makes this pet carrying bag the coolest I've seen.

Many of these items can be found in different versions and styles from a variety of manufacturers. There are many types of GPS trackers, petcams and interactive video devices. With varying manufacturers comes varying options and price tags. Explore and get your pet geeked out on the new technology.



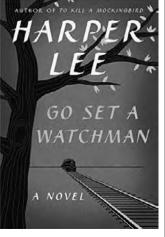
**U-pet Bubble** 

#### Reading Corner

By Evelyn Infante, Contributor

With the death of Harper Lee, I thought I'd write a review of Go Set a Watchman, Harper Lee's draft of To Kill A Mockingbird. Over many years, there has been enough praise for To Kill a Mockingbird that there is nothing more to say about this great work. But, Go Set a Watchman is another story.

There is a lot of controversy over the book because, among other criticisms, people say Atticus is a racist and that disappointed a lot of admirers of Harper Lee's To Kill A Mockingbird, where Atticus is a hero. While reading Go Set a Watchman I kept looking for Atticus' racist ways. I suspect readers got that impression from a



meeting Atticus attended where he discussed with his fellow neighbors how to stop the NAACP from coming to town, starting trouble, and interfering with the way of life in their part of the world. None wanted that organization to disrupt the status quo. This is a complicated book and Miss Harper tried to explain the mood in the south and Atticus' way of dealing with it at the time this story takes place.

Scout, Atticus' daughter, represents the feelings of an outsider looking in to a world she thinks is full of hateful people trying to hold onto a way of life that is wrong. The points of view on both sides explain how complicated race relations are especially to a people who know no other way of living. Change is hard and if change is forced upon people they will not change without a fight. The Civil Rights Movement taught us that. And while Atticus might not have considered himself a racist, we really don't get to hear from him on that matter.

His brother explains Atticus's behavior for attending that meeting in a most complicated way. After all, people are not one-dimensional. We are all complicated, some more than others. One needs to pay close attention to how Miss Harper weaves this story. It is not as straightforward as To Kill A Mocking Bird but just as satisfying.

I was left contemplating a most complex man that is Atticus Finch. And isn't that what a good story should do? Make you think? Personally, I loved this novel.

#### **Eats Around Town**

By Julie Harter, Communications Committee

#### Hickory Valley Farm Restaurant

My husband and I were running our errands last weekend and we got hungry so we stopped in the Hickory Valley Farm Restaurant in Swiftwater, home of "ham and eggs in the pan." We have visited there for breakfast before but figured we would try their lunch.

If you've ever been to Swiftwater then you most likely noticed the big pink piggy smoker in the front of the restaurant, not to mention their big sign. Their breakfasts have always been great and they serve everything in frying pans instead of plates. I recommend getting their smokehouse sampler with eggs. Known for their smoked meat specialties this is a yummy, mixed grille of sorts with bacon, kielbasa, sausage, ham, and links. However, on this trip we did lunch.

My hubby ordered a grilled cheese with tomato and their own, thick, smoked

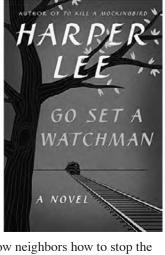
bacon on rye. It was loaded with plenty of bacon and cheese. I ordered the smoked brisket sandwich. Between the smoky flavor and the tender brisket this sandwich was definitely a hit. In fact, I had to stab my husband's hand with my fork to keep him from stealing off my plate, just kidding about the stabbing part.

This restaurant has a cute rustic décor and they also sell homemade jellies, local honey and other specialties.



S2015-03 Rescind Neighborhood Watch as a Penn Estates Program

This resolution was incorrectly reported as passed when it was tabled at the November 6, 2015 Board Meeting. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.



### Young Voices in Harmony

By Katherine Hernandez, Communications Committee

The Communications Committee is proud to introduce another young voice from the community. Leon, 13, shares with us his untitled piece about planning for his future.

We love featuring young writers and hope more of our young community members will consider submitting works for publication. We're especially interested in writing that represents your life experience, interests, and insights.

Young folks looking to have their work published should email our editor, Michael Tyrrell, at pepoaharmony@gmail.com or Committee member Katherine Hernandez at kmillshernandez@gmail.com.

Not sure if your writing is up to publication standards? Interested, but not sure what to write about? Attend our upcoming Writers' Workshop for young writers this spring. Keep an eye open for bulletin announcements and emails from PEPOA for details.

#### Future Plans

By Leon Levonyan-Radloff

Something that I really hope to be when I grow up is a computer engineer who makes, designs, and tests things for public use. An example of a computer engineer who inspires me is Steve Jobs, who made the Apple. He made a new computer that had better graphics. He also made the iPod and the iPad.

I want to have a successful company like Jobs, but I am interested in making a gaming computer. I will create a name for my computer, then draw on a piece of paper what

My computer will be comfy for gamers to use and also it would have a surround sound speaker system. I would also try to create gaming headphones that fit nicely on any type of head.

I have a friend back where I used to live before moving to Penn Estates that introduced me to computer science. We do want to work together on this project after we go through proper training in college. We enjoy working together and I thing we could become very successful if we work hard enough.

I want other kids to know that if they have an idea about a piece of technology that might help people in the future, they should go forward with it. But it's important to make your idea realistic. Also, when you have to start looking for a college, try to find one that will help with your idea.

#### **Parking Rules and Woes**

Q: Why don't we have enough parking?

A: Developers want to build the most homes possible to make the most money, so they often allot the fewest parking spaces required by law. Unfortunately, that leaves the association to deal with the shortage.

#### **Q:** Why can't we park on the street?

A: The association's roads are subject to local regulations that specify the space needed for access by

emergency vehicles. When cars are parked on the street, there isn't enough clearance for large emergency vehicles like ambulances and firetrucks to maneuver. It also inhibits the ability to safely plow the roads during snow events.

#### Q: Why do I have to register my car with the association?

A: Our registration system allows the manager to match vehicles with residents. In case of emergency we can contact you. It also allows the association to identify nonresidents who are parking in our spaces. Be sure your parking pass is clearly visible at all times.

#### Q: What gives the association the right to tell me where and how to park?

A: When you purchased your home, you entered into a contractual agreement with the association to abide by its covenants. Those covenants include bylaws that empower the

board to adopt and enforce rules they believe are necessary for everyone's good. The parking policy explains the parking rules and specifies procedures for enforcing them; not only is the board allowed developing the policy; it's legally obligated to do so.

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#### Michael's Kitchen

#### By Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee

I love vegetables and rarely a day passes without preparing some in my kitchen. Spring vegetables are a great transition from winter to summer. Think asparagus, peas, leafy greens such as chard. Here are some recipes that cover all the bases. A quiche for a festive brunch, an easy pasta for a quick dinner and a fave lasagna for entertaining. I guarantee they are all crowd pleasers.

Oh, and whatever you do, don't toss those chard stems. Rinse and dry completely. Toss with a bit of olive oil, salt, pepper and Parmesan cheese. Bake for about 20 minutes until tender.

#### **Spring Quiche**

#### (serves 8)

1 lb asparagus, bottoms trimmed and cut into 1/2-inch pieces

1 refrigerated prepared pie crust (½ of a 15-oz pkg)

4 eggs

34 cup half-and-half

3 oz Canadian bacon, diced

½ tsp salt

1/8 tsp nutmeg

1/8 tsp cayenne

½ cup flat leaf parsley, chopped

4 oz Gruyere cheese, shredded

- 1. Place a baking sheet on rack in lower third of oven. Heat oven to 425°.
- 2. Bring a medium-size saucepan of salted water to a rolling boil. Add asparagus and cook for 4 minutes. Drain and run under cold water. Blot dry with paper towels.
- 3. Unfold pie crust and fit into 10-inch tart pan with removable bottom.
- 4. In a large bowl, mix together eggs, half-and-half, Canadian bacon, salt, nutmeg, cayenne, parsley and ½ of the cheese. Scatter asparagus and remaining cheese over bottom of tart pan. Carefully pour in egg mixture. Place on heated baking sheet in oven
- 5. Bake at 425° for 40 minutes. Cool briefly on wire rack. Remove sides to serve.

#### Minted Pea Pesto and Cavatappi

#### (serves 6)

1 bag (14½ oz) frozen peas or fresh peas

2 cups fresh mint

1/3 cup olive oil

½ cup sliced almonds

1 tbsp lemon juice

2 tsp lemon zest

2 tbsp grated Pecorino-Romano cheese

½ tsp salt

1/8 tsp pepper

1 lb cavatappi pasta

- Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add peas; blanch 30 seconds. Remove peas with a slotted spoon and run under cold water until cool; set aside. Reserve water.
- 2. In a food processor or blender, combine 1½ cups of the peas, mint, oil, ¼ cup of the almonds, lemon juice and zest. Process until well combined. Transfer to a bowl and stir in cheese, salt and pepper.
- 3. Bring reserved pot of water to a boil and cook cavatappi following pkg directions. Drain and reserve 1 cup of the cooking water.
- 4. Add pesto to a large skillet and heat gently over medium-high heat. Add pasta, reserved water, and remaining peas and ¼ cup almonds. Toss to coat pasta and serve immediately.

#### Red Chard and Cremini Mushroom Lasagna

(serves 8)

2 tbsp olive oil

3 cloves garlic, chopped

1 lb red chard, stems removed, cut crosswise into 1-inch slices (don't toss those stems- see intro)

1 lb cremini mushrooms, sliced

½ tsp salt

¼ tsp black pepper

2 tbsp unsalted butter

¼ cup all-purpose flour

2½ cups milk

¼ tsp ground nutmeg

1/8 tsp cayenne pepper

12 uncooked lasagna noodles 1 container (15 oz) ricotta cheese

1 cup shredded Fontina cheese

1 egg, lightly beaten

2 cups shredded part-skim mozzarella

½ cup grated Grana Padano or Parmesan cheese

- 1. Heat oven to 400°. Coat a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
- 2. In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic, chard, mushrooms, ¼ tsp of the salt and black pepper. Cook 7 minutes, stirring occasionally. Spoon off excess liquid.
- 3. Meanwhile, melt butter in a medium saucepan over medium beat; stir in flour and cook 1 minute. Gradually whisk in milk. Bring to simmer and cook, stirring frequently, 3 minutes until thickened. Add remaining ¼ tsp salt, nutmeg and cavenne.
- 4. Cook lasagna noodles following package directions, about 10 minutes. Drain. Combine ricotta, Fontina and egg.
- 5. Spread ¼ cup of white sauce in baking dish. Layer as follows: 3 noodles, ricotta mixture, 3 noodles, 1 cup sauce, chard mixture, ½ cup mozzarella, 3 noodles, remaining 11/2 cups mozzarella and 3 noodles. Spread remaining ¾ cup sauce over noodles and sprinkle Grana Padano over top.
- Cover and bake at 400° for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 20 minutes. Cool 15 minutes before serving.

# Out About

#### Things to Do and See in the Poconos

By Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee

What a mild winter we had! Regardless, I am ready for sunny days and warm weather. By the time this is published, the forsythia should be sprouting out yellow buds!

Here are some of the other 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. I like 800poconos. com and njskylands.com for upcoming events.

This is the beginning of outdoor events. If you enjoy nature, PEEC holds numerous events throughout the year. For example, they will have an edible and medicinal plant walk on 4/10, an Earth Day event on 4/16 and a Girl Scout badge fest on 4/9. All that happens in just one week. So, go on their website or call for information. MCEEC also hosts many nature events, such as weekly bog walks on Wednesdays. They will have an Earth Day event on 4/23. On June 9th, they will host a canoe/kayak trip on the Bog Preserve (3 hours long). Call 570-629-3061 for information.

If you want a more active challenge, you might raft the white water dam release at Lehigh Valley Gorge. Call 800-944-8392 for cost and information. Or you could participate in the Run for the Red marathon, ½ marathon, 5k walk or two person relay on 5/15. That benefits disaster relief in Monroe County. Call 570-476-3800. Or you could really exert yourself and do the Wally Man Triathlon in Hawley on 6/11. Would you like to get your adrenalin fix while sitting down? How about a stock car racing experience at the Pocono Raceway? Call 877-786-2522 for dates and information.

Would you like something a little calmer? Stroud Regional Open Space and Recreation hosts monthly hikes, such as an Earth Day clean up at Yetter Park on 4/2 and a nature hike at Zaccarias Pond on 5/7. They also have yoga classes on Wednesdays and Fridays, a self-defense class for women on 4/5 and classes to learn to swim or to obtain lifeguard certification. SROSRC hosts programs for all ages, from preschool through adulthood

Festivals are a part of our region. On 5/21, Quite Valley Living Historical Farm has their 28th Annual Farm Animal Frolic. Call 992-6161 for information. Shawnee Mountain Ski Area is the site of the Celtic Festival on 5/28 to 5/29. During National Park Week, Steamtown National Historic Site will waive their fees for admission. Call 570-340-5200 for more information. Jim Thorpe Earth Day celebration with crafts and food, drumming and Native American related events will be on 4/23. That same day is the Pocono Comic Expo at Shawnee Inn. On 5/5, there is a free concert at the Sherman Theater by the USAF Heritage of America Concert Band.

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

### Tips for Feeding Hummingbirds

By Melissa Penta, Contributor

You can easily attract Hummingbirds to your yard with a basic feeder that contains a simple mixture of just sugar and water. There is no need to buy expensive pre-made mixture. To make your own hummingbird nectar, simply use one-part sugar for every four-parts of water. For example, for one cup of water, add a quarter cup of sugar. Here are the simple steps that I follow:

- 1. Heat the water on your stove; it does not have to get to a boil.
- 2. Remove from heat and immediately add the sugar.
- 3. Stir until the sugar is completely dissolved.
- 4. Cover and allow to cool in the refrigerator.
- 5. Once it is cooled, add to the Hummingbird feeder(s) in small portions.
- 6. Store the leftovers in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

Stick with white cane sugar only. Do not use artificial sweeteners, honey, Jell-O or brown sugar. There is no need to use food coloring – it is believed to be harmful to Hummingbirds. Your feeder should be bright enough to attract your guest.

You do not need a large feeder since you will not attract many Hummingbirds at



one time. Even though most feeders have multiple ports, our birds will likely be territorial when present and chase others away. Glass or plastic feeders that you can clean easily and thoroughly are best; metal has the possibility to rust if not cared for. You can buy



Hummingbird feeders from local farm or hardware stores.

Replace the mixture in the feeders every one to three days, depending on the temperature; if it is very hot, replace it every day. The mixture will spoil if it sits for too long, especially in the heat. Try not to place the feeder in the direct sun so that it lasts longer. Be sure to clean the feeders between re-fillings to prevent mold build-up. You can clean it with mild detergent or white vinegar – be sure to clean within the feeding ports with a small brush. Soak the feeder in a solution of bleach and water (1 tablespoon of bleach per quart of water) and rinse thoroughly every one-to-two weeks. The batch in your refrigerator should be used within two weeks. If the refrigerated mixture looks cloudy, toss it and make a new batch.

For our area, Hummingbirds can arrive in April. Migrating birds will especially appreciate the sugary treat for their journey. You can supplement the feeders with potted annual plants such as varieties of Salvia, Agastache, Cuphea, Pentas and Fuchsia. Some preferred perennials for Hummingbirds include native Honeysuckle, Bee balm, Jewelweed and Trumpet Vine.

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