

## President's Message

by Sandy Bonet, PEPOA President

In this era of techno-media, we have access to lots of opinions about anything and everything. The ongoing business and events in Penn Estates are no exception. So, let's start this new year by shining light on some of the shadows circulated on the community's rumor mill in 2020.

**RUMOR: The proposed changes to the Covenants are designed to give the Board more power over the residents.**

### FACTS:

- The Board decided to undertake the task of reviewing and updating the Covenants in order to 1) Respond to our members' requests to legalize sheds; and 2) Consider other areas where restrictions might be reduced.
- The proposed changes apply to nine elements of the Covenants. None of these changes give more power to the Board or Administrative Staff but lessen restrictions for the members.
- The Declaration of Covenants is a legal document, subject but not limited to the Pennsylvania Uniform Planned Communities Act, the Non-Profit Corporation Laws of the Commonwealth, and the Federal Fair Housing Act. As a result, we can't simply rewrite the whole document any way we want.

**RUMOR: The Board and Manager line their pockets with POA money.**

### FACTS:

- The Penn Estates POA is a non-profit corporation. We are required by law to recycle any and all excess revenue back into the organization. In distributing any overages, we are permitted to place an amount no greater than 15% of the total operating budget into the capital reserve account annually. Any remaining funds, if any, are placed in the operating budget as deferred dues.
- Financial reports are reviewed monthly by the Finance Committee and the Board and audited annually by an independent accounting firm. Audit results are presented to the membership at the annual meeting and posted online.
- Members who are interested in the POA's financial processes can ask to join the Finance Committee. The committee meets monthly for a line item-by-line item review of the financial reports.

**RUMOR: The proposed changes to the Covenants will allow a single Board member to "go rogue."**

### FACTS:

- There is no language in the changes that in any way enhances the powers of the Board in general or any individual Board member in particular.
- Board members are volunteers who are homeowners in good standing and

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**DOWNTOWN STROUDSBURG** received an extra dose of holiday cheer and festive lights courtesy of Netflix. The streaming provider chose the borough as one of six locations across the United States. The names of Netflix's holiday movies such as "Jingle Jangle," "Dolly Parton's Christmas in the Square," and "Alien Xmas," are among those seen lighting up the posts.

Photos by David Montalvo



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are elected by the membership according to the POA Bylaws, which are approved by the membership.

- Each Board member has a single vote. Motions are passed or defeated based on a majority vote of the Board members present at the meeting.
- Per Article IV of the POA Bylaws, Board Members can be removed for: 1) Inability to perform Director duties; 2) Frequent unexcused absenteeism; 3) Court declaration of an unsound mind; 4) Conviction for a misdemeanor or felony under any state or federal jurisdiction; 5) Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct that is signed by each Board member yearly.

Going forward in the new year, I hope your opinions, no matter what they may be, are based on *facts* - not rumors or social media posts.

"Well, it is just my opinion, but it's backed by the best rumor and speculation the internet can provide."

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**Did you know:**

- 12 homes are presently for sale in Penn Estates.
- 129 homes were sold in 2020.
- The highest-priced home sold for \$395,000 in 2020.  
(Information provided through Pocono Mountain Assoc. of Realtors MLS Service)
- 93% of buyers start their search on the Internet.
- The average age of today's buyer is 33 years old.

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## Black History Month Essay Contest

On behalf of the Communications Committee, I am happy to share Sandy Black's contribution for our Black History Month contest. For those who don't know Sandy, the Blacks are long-time residents. Sandy and her husband John raised their family here in Penn Estates. Sandy often contributes to the Harmony.

—*Michael J. Tyrrell, Editor and Chair of the Communications Committee*

## Black History Month

by **Sandy Black, Contributor**

Black History Month was created in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson a noted African American historian. It was celebrated for one week and was named "Negro History Week." Black History Month was first proposed by black educators and students of Kent State University in February 1969. In 1976 Black History Month was recognized and designated as a United States bicentennial celebration. The month of February was chosen for the celebration to coincide with the birthdays of both Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

Frederick Douglass, February, 1818 – February 20, 1895, was an American social reformer, abolitionist, writer and a statesman. He became a national leader of the abolitionist movement in New York and Massachusetts after escaping slavery in Maryland. Abraham Lincoln was an American statesman and lawyer who served as the 16th President of the United States from 1861 to 1865. He abolished slavery and bolstered the federal government while modernizing the economy.

Black History month means the celebrating and the articulation of a sense of pride in what it means to be a black individual. It is the reflection and appreciation of what has been achieved and accomplished by Black individuals. It is the celebration of barriers which have been broken down during the "Jim Crow" era and all that Blacks hope to accomplish in future years.

Black history celebrates black greats such as Martin Luther King, Jr. (civil rights leader and Baptist minister), Jack Johnson (boxer), Rosa Parks (credited with the start of the Civil Rights Movement), Langston Hughes (famed poet of the Harlem Renaissance), John Mercer Langston (first black man to become a lawyer), Barack Obama (first black President 2008-2016) and of course many more.

The black population of the United States in 1870 was 4.8 million. In 2018 the number of black residents had grown to 43.8 million. Black history has changed since 1870 and continues to not only change but continuously grow each day.

## Did You Know?

by **Phyllis Haase, Community Manager**

Do you know you are among the more than 60 million Americans who live in homeowner/condominium associations? We think most residents are happy living in our community—and we certainly hope you are among them—but how do these 60 million residents feel about their own associations? Are they happy with their elected boards? How do they feel about the rules?

The Foundation for Community Association Research, an affiliate of Community Associations Institute (CAI), sponsored a recent national public opinion survey to answer these and other questions. Here are some of the key findings:

- 71 percent of residents say they are satisfied with their community association experience. Only 12 percent express dissatisfaction, and 17 percent are neutral on the question.
- 89 percent believe their association board members strive to serve the best interests of the community; 11 percent say the opposite or they aren't sure.
- 86 percent say their professional managers provide value to their communities, while 14 percent say the opposite or they aren't sure.
- 70 percent believe their community association rules "protect and enhance" property values. Only 2 percent say rules harm property values, while about 29 percent see no difference or didn't know.

We'd like to think that we would do even better than the national averages. If you feel differently, please let us know what you think we can do to make our community a better place to live. If you're especially pleased about our community, share that too! As always, I welcome your comments; please share by emailing me at [phyllishaase@pepoa.org](mailto:phyllishaase@pepoa.org).

## 2020 Christmas Home Decorating Contest Winner



**Congratulations Ralph & Mary Chubbuck!**

## A Message from Sandy Bonet

### Goodbye to Brinson Howard

Brinson chose to retire here in Penn Estates at the end of his long career as a police officer for the city of Newark, New Jersey. He was committed to our community and gave countless hours of his time as a member of the Appeals, Finance and Buildings & Grounds Committees. Those who knew him remember his smile that could light up a room and his special gift for getting along with everyone.

Brinson put everyone at ease with his opening comment at almost any meeting or event, "Where are the doughnuts?" There is no doubt that a heaping plate of doughnuts was waiting for him when he got to heaven.

Brinson passed away in his favorite place, his home, on December 9, 2020. He will be missed.



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# From Phyllis's Desk

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

**COVID-19:** The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted every facet of life swiftly and without anticipation. Events large and small were canceled, our office had restrictions, and we had to move much of our operations online quickly. Our daily routines, friendly get-togethers, and holiday gatherings were all put on hold. Many have been left wondering what the future holds.

We have shown that we are resilient and capable of creating innovative ways to increase community strength:

- Our Maintenance Department had immediately enhanced cleaning requirements and are continuing to do so.
- Our Code Enforcement Officer continues to ensure compliance, maintaining resale certificate inspections, and patrolling within the association to keep the association safe and aesthetically pleasing for all.
- Our Administrative staff continues to assist members with their daily needs.

## Santa in Penn Estates

Thank you Stroud Township Volunteer Fire Department for chauffeuring Santa around our beautiful community. While here, he looked for safe landing spots for Rudolf and his reindeer for Christmas Eve. Santa distributed goodies during his tour of Penn Estates. It was a pleasure seeing so many smiling faces, both young and old. Thank you again, Santa and STVFD!

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

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Administration Building .....	570-421-4265
Penn Estate Utilities (Sewer/Water).....	800-860-4512

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## Make Payments Online

We have engaged in Payee Express's services for our member's convenience, which will allow you to make payments on our website. Check it out!

## 2021 Annual Registration

Have you completed your annual registration for 2021? The registration form is due February 15; make sure you submit it to ensure that you continue to have automated gate access and amenity privileges. The annual registration form is required as per the Association policy and governing documents.

You may wonder why you must complete a form annually and what is the big deal if we know what you drive or who lives in your house. Once the form has been submitted, the owner must update any changes within 48 hours of occurrence, i.e., a new car(s), change of individual(s) residing in the home.

We use the information you provide in case of an emergency. Possibly Fido got loose, and now we can reunite him with you. Perhaps a neighbor calls and identifies an unknown vehicle in your driveway; we can look at the registered vehicles and check to see if it is or isn't yours. If you suffer misfortune at your home and the authorities need to know who the occupants are, we can look it up. As the unit owner, if you are not available, who do we contact in case of an emergency? These are excellent reasons for us to help you.

As a bonus, completing the forms and tracking of the data provides the Association with a clearer picture of our population. This is vital to the Association for planning and developmental purposes to our infrastructure and expansion. Although our efforts will not be exact, it will provide us with a rough estimate.

Information is knowledge, and the Association always wants to be the best it can be for you, your family, and your guests!

**Running for the Board:** As a reminder, as per the bylaws, for those qualified candidates interested in running for the Board of Directors, board packets are due to the Administration Office by **February 1 at 4:00pm**.

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## Harmony

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## Poetry Corner

by James Ruffini, Communications Committee

### Sunrise

We spent all night on the beach,  
Until the sun spread from the horizon  
Across the sky,  
A slow pool of light.

### The Heaven

My beloved angel, I am your angel.  
Inspiration is a quiet, suspended wind.  
Love, as a word, robs us of true meaning.  
Love twenty times over  
Does not capture the heaven  
That flows between us.

### Night

A body's profile in a sweater.  
Firewood burning, its scent in the air  
Like someone walking in a room  
Then leaving, her perfume tinged  
With the conversation you might have had.  
I cannot help but think  
Of the blue of your eyes.  
The darkness tucks me in.  
First words elusive  
As a curl of smoke.

*Editors Note: Communications Committee member James Ruffini enjoys writing poetry. Besides showcasing James's poetry, we would like to include the work of other Penn Estates poets. Submit your poems to pepoharmony@gmail.com*

## LIVING IN PENN ESTATES

# Our Very Own Essential Workers

by Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee

Some of us are lucky to work from home. Some are waiting for vaccines and the economy to open up. All of us have had our life changed in significant ways during this pandemic, sometimes with great sorrow and loss, sometimes with balancing work and home schooling.

Other folks work to keep us going. Health care workers are overwhelmed. Grocery store workers are often harassed and disrespected while working to keep us fed. Postal workers and other delivery services are often overwhelmed by the sheer volume of online sales.

We should treat each and every one of these people with great respect and appreciation. Unfortunately, all too often we do not.

There are unsung heroes right here in our community. I am writing this on January 3, 2021 at 10pm. The snow began at about 8:30 this morning. The plows were out shortly after that and the roads were clear and only wet by midday. But this evening saw another round of freezing rain and snow. As I sit here in the warmth of my home, I see the plows going by frequently once again. Do our maintenance people ever sleep?

I have been amazed with the job that the maintenance staff do every day. The pools this summer were pristine every time I went swimming. The roads are free from litter. The leaves were removed from Penn Estates Drive. The decorations are up for holidays. The roads are cleared from snow, over and over again.

The administration building is closed for a couple hours in the middle of the day for disinfecting. Guess who does the disinfecting? Yup, the maintenance staff. And then they remove dead deer carcasses when we don't slow down enough to protect our wildlife.

They wave every time they drive by as I walk my dogs, which is a daily act of kindness. It is not part of their job description.

So, I say "THANK YOU" to our unsung heroes.

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# Interview with Janine Wang

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Editor  
Communications Committee Chair

Two years ago, our residents Ting Qian and Janine Wang, mother and daughter, contributed an article “A Weekend of Basket-Weaving” for *Harmony*. Published in the Holiday 2018/New Year 2019 issue, it illustrated their unique experience and thought journey through their weekend weaving workshop at Peters Valley School of Crafts. Today, we have the opportunity to interview Janine Wang, who was since inspired by what she learned, and followed her passion to take the basket-weaving to the next level.



## A Weekend of Basket-Weaving and Beyond

Janine is a native New Yorker with an architectural background. She holds a BArch from Cooper Union, and MFA in furniture design from Rhode Island School of Design. Her work has been exhibited at many galleries and museums including the Center for Art in Wood, the American Association of Woodturners, Arrowmont School of Craft, Peters Valley School of Craft, and the State Museum of Pennsylvania. She’s currently working in Philadelphia as a furniture maker and often devotes her time to teach and lecture to help inspire others.

*Here is a Q&A session between our Harmony contributor Ting Qian and her daughter Janine Wang...*



**Q: How does living in nature connect and inspire you to do what you do?**

**A:** Growing up in New York, and commuting freely during my middle and high school years caused me to develop a deep sense of freedom and empowerment at a young age. I was enveloped in the opportunities and experiences abound, and developed a comfortable confidence in the urban environment. The funny thing is, though the city fabric was so lush, nature was a rare thing, and I remember always being considered one of the more “wild” kids in whatever friend group I was in. I could

ride a bike, scooter, skate, wasn’t all that afraid of sitting on grass, getting dirty, or climbing trees. I was al had cherished these tiny slivers of “nature” for so long, that I was not able to take the real deal for granted. I’ve gone on countless hikes, even gotten good at snowboarding over the last 10 years of living part of my time here. For a city girl it was almost unimaginable. It changed my life. ways encouraged by my Manhattanite friends to take on this persona, even though I was only from the wild lands of Queens. The nature we knew best were the sculpted hills of Central Park, the man-made ponds and carefully placed boulders and “rambling” paths. When my family moved to Penn Estates, and I discovered what real nature was, I had cherished these tiny slivers of “nature” for so long, that I was not able to take the real deal for granted. I’ve gone on countless hikes, even gotten good at snowboarding over the last 10 years of living part of my time here. For a city girl it was almost unimaginable. It changed my life.

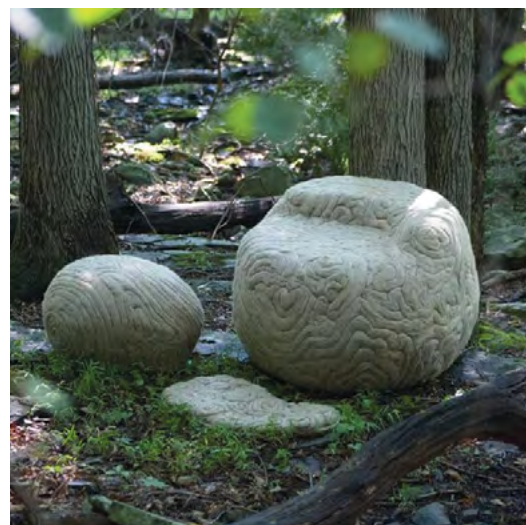
**Q: What attracted you to get into basketry and woodturning?**

**A:** It was a long journey. I really struggled in architecture school, trying to justify the difference between the drawings and designs we were learning to make, versus the made world in front of me. I knew that skyscrapers were made by people, designed by people, and built by people. But though the architect might be the closest to “author” of a building, they were not the ones building it. And though they might in theory know how to build everything, their hands on knowledge was nearly nonexistent. I don’t know many architects who can frame a wall.

In a particularly bad year, in which I was suspended from architecture school for subpar academic performance, I worked for a furniture maker, Takeshi Miyakawa, and it was there I realized what I wanted to do. Whether through woodturning, or through basketry, the magic of creation through ones own hands, especially at a professional level, was such a superpower that I knew this is what I had to do.

**Q: How do you inspire others?**

**A:** What I have found most empowering about living closer to nature is everyone’s immediate power to change their own environment. Watching my neighbors cultivate immense gardens despite the deer, climbing up and replacing a single tile on the roof, watching you (mom) my parents single handedly take down moldy damaged walls and install floors and ceilings and wood stoves was a class of comfort and confidence in the environment that isn’t common in cities.



I’ve done a few projects inspired by nature. “Snug Stones” was inspired by the freedom of finding your own place in a landscape. I actually did the photography of the piece here in our own backyard in Penn Estates. Another project, “Holding on in the Aftermath” in collaboration with the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Art, used sick Ash trees felled in their park to spread awareness of the Emerald Ash Borer epidemic.

I live in Philadelphia now, and helped teach a woodworking and woodturning class of local city teenage girls last year. At the start of the first day, we asked, “Who here has used a hammer before?” One girl raised her hand. She was also the only one who had used a drill before. When we first showed them how to use the machinery, they all backed away from the movement and the noise. I remember one of them incredulously asking, “We’re gonna do whaa?” By the end of the 10-week class, though, the difference was amazing. They’d made so many things they were proud of and used at home. They walked in with confidence, tied up their hair, and got right to building.

It just takes doing things to believe you can do the next thing. Sometimes, you just need a chance to start, or to look at someone doing it to make it feel possible. I really enjoy making furniture because living with something handmade is a constant reminder of the potential for change. When you can build, you can solve all your own problems. Feelings of helplessness is something we all struggle with. A building skill like woodworking helps make that go away.

**Q: Did you do basketry weaving and woodwork during quarantine? How does that help to cope with the pandemic?**

**A:** I did. I entered back into it really shyly, ultimately out of desperation. I was jobless, cut off from my studio, cut off from my family, my stimulus check never came, and unemployment took six weeks of waiting for some reason. Like the majority of us, I found life was on pause in an agonizing place. I’d been practicing



my basketmaking on and off since learning it, and incorporating it into my work, for joy. When the stress of isolation and waiting was too much, I ordered basketry supplies, and began weaving, for pain. Unlike a lot of other things, basketry is a craft you can do in your own home, with no overhead and very accessible tools, so it was perfect. It played a huge role in keeping me calm, sane, and productive. When you’re creating something, you are undeniably moving forward.

I also sent some of the people I miss these little impromptu basket-weaving kits during this time, accompanied by long, rambling videos of me talking to them, catching up about the quarantine, about life at large, and a lot of basketry. That helped me feel connected to them from so far away, an unexpected added bonus.

(continued on page 7)



# Amendments to the Declaration of Covenants

Dear Members of the Penn Estates Property Owners Association,

**All members should have received the mailing for the Amendments to the Declaration of Covenants that includes the following documents:**

1. A cover letter explaining the process
2. Proposed amended amendments lessening the conditions
3. Assignment of Declarant Rights
4. Consent Form agreeing to the amendments

The transition of Cranberry Hill Corporation to Penn Estates Property Owners Association took place from 1990-1996. The settlement agreement was executed for presentation to the U.S. Middle District Court for Hearings and Approval.

I would like to explain some of the documents.

The Assignment of Declarant Rights was recorded in 1998, which you received in your packet in the mail. The document speaks to **Section V**. Cranberry Hill Corp (CHC) delegated certain responsibilities to the Association for the operation of the Community. **Section VI** speaks to the transition from the control of the Penn Estates subdivision by the developer to control by the Association.

Attached to the Assignment of Declarant Rights is the current Declaration of Covenants that is currently in effect as of this date. You will notice the Declaration speaks to 34 conditions; adjacent to each condition, you will find the acronyms CHC, PEPOA, or CHC & PEPOA, which denotes which provisions were assigned to the Association or Cranberry Creek Corporation or shared by both.

Out of the 34 conditions, Cranberry Hill Corporation retained eight (8) conditions, PEPOA was assigned 21, and five (5) are shared between CHC and PEOA.

As you may know, a set of "Protective Covenants and Restrictions" (the "Original Declaration") is currently included in the chains of title for all of the residential units in the Penn Estates planned Community as recorded with the Monroe County Recorder of Deeds in Monroe County.

At the request of the membership, the Board of Directors amended sections to allow for accessory structures. Further, they addressed eight (8) other conditions to lessen the restrictions as it stands in the current Declaration.

As noted above, Cranberry Creek Corporation, the developer or as referred to in the document as the Grantor, assigned rights to PEPOA. Out of the 34 conditions, 12 conditions reflect the mere amendment from Grantor to the Association, 13 conditions remain unchanged, and nine (9) are being proposed to be amended.

## The nine conditions proposed to be amended:

- **Condition No. 1** allows for accessory structures. Your current Declaration prohibits such use.
- **Condition No. 4** eases the permitting process. Your current Declaration requires some permits to go before the Architectural Review Board.
- **Condition No. 5** carifies accessory structures are allowed. Your current Declaration does not speak to accessory structures.
- **Condition No. 6** allows for setbacks for the proposed accessory structures. Your current Declaration does not.
- **Condition No. 16** allows for temporary structures. Your current Declaration prohibits such use.
- **Condition No. 18** lessens the restriction on tree removal. Your current Declaration restricts the permitting process.
- **Condition No. 20** clarifies conditions on firing where the current language is not clear.
- **Condition No. 22** allows for electric trolling motors. Your current Declaration prohibits motors.
- **Condition No. 29** allows for additional options for stormwater management where your current Declaration prohibits less expensive best practices to the mitigation of stormwater.

I have heard a range of rumors from "we are signing away our rights," "It's an attempt to make us compliant with the PA UPCA, which we are not a part of." or "It allows board members to go 'rogue' by permitting individuals directors to bring suits against members, even if the board at large is against it."

While these statements may be interesting to read on FaceBook, they are

untrue. Members already have a Declaration of Covenants you are required to adhere to. The proposed document lessens some of the restrictions. The PEPOA is required to follow the UPCA; however, there are some sections we are excluded from due to the date the Act went into effect.

My favorite: "It allows board members to go 'rogue' by permitting individuals directors to bring suits against members, even if the board at large is against it." I am not certain how anyone even came to that conclusion. Board motions require the majority of the board to approve the action. A single board member cannot take such action.

An Irrevocable Consent Form was also enclosed in the mailing. Please have all owners of the Unit sign the form and return it to the Administration Office.

For the proposed Declaration to become effective, the new Declaration must receive the written approval by Lot Owners to whom a minimum of sixty-seven percent (67%) of the votes in the Association are allocated.

If you still have questions, please email them to me at [phyllishaase@pepoa.org](mailto:phyllishaase@pepoa.org) to address your concerns.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If at the end of the day, the membership desires not to consent to the amendments, then the more restrictive Declaration will remain in effect.

## Janine Wang Interview cont.

(continued from page 6)

I wouldn't put anyone else through the long rambling part, but I thought it might be helpful to other people, too. So I ended up cleaning things up, and produced a basket-making kit that I sold and shipped to folks all around the country, even to Canada. It's the first time I've done something like this. It's been very exciting!

### Q: What's your next adventure in what you're doing?

**A:** Right now I'm doing a residency at the Hunterdon Art Museum, as part of the show, "From the Ground Up: Peter's Valley School of Craft." It's a 50-year anniversary retrospective of the school, looking back on how the school and work of its students and faculty have affected the culture of craft. I took the basketry class at Peters Valley two years ago now, and it's had such a huge impact on my work. Now I've been weaving live from the gallery, and will be teaching a couple of workshops at Peters Valley this upcoming year. The whole experience has come completely full circle. It's amazing. I'm also going to be teaching my first college course at Bucks County Community College in a couple weeks, in woodturning. I also started my first very own wood shop with my partner, and we've slowly begun taking on our own woodworking jobs. It's been a wild, wild year full of new beginnings and new horizons. I'm looking forward to what's to come.

Thank you, Janine, for sharing your experiences and insights in basketry and woodwork. Best wishes for your new endeavor in the New Year! —Editor

*Readers can check out Janine's website for her work and her basket weaving kit at [janinewang.com](http://janinewang.com).*

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# Making (at least a bit of) Lemonade out of Lemons in the Era of Covid-19

by Stephanie Joy Lewis, Contributor

If there is one thing we can all likely agree about: The Covid-19 pandemic has brought immense difficulty, sadness and devastation, to be sure. Negatives are easy to find and often all we read or hear about. Some of us have experienced these negatives first hand, some derivatively, others through word of mouth. But, it is likely that no one is unaware of them. Some of us may even feel enveloped in a Covid-19 world we cannot escape from, with little light to help us through.

It is said that often a crisis results in some silver linings, so I have been tasked with sharing a few I have learned of that some of us in Penn Estates may have benefited from, or still can. We've been dealt with the biggest basket of the proverbial lemons, but can some lemonade be made from it? (Disclaimer: This is not to suggest that these proposed silver linings are perfect or without flaws or need for improvement, only to point out that they exist.)

## Embracing Delivery Services

Some of us have been forced to learn new technologies and services that we never had need or desire to use before. Instacart, for me, was one such technology. In an effort to not leave home and socially distance, some of us decided to give this service, or other similar, a try. While I have learned to tweak how I use the service for a better experience, it does succeed in saving me about an hour and a half to two and a half hours a week, on average, in time spent shopping for groceries, which I can definitely use otherwise. It also prevents my bad habit of impulse buying when in store, which I optimistically hope offsets my tip and delivery fee.

For those unfamiliar with this kind of service, you pay a delivery fee (reduced to near nothing if you subscribe to some annual express type version, which I did) and you pay the delivery person a tip of your choice. The win-win is that I got the benefits of the above while a self-employed person, often with child in tow, who is providing a 'gig' service, and needing to earn living under such trying times, also earned income. Also, because a delivery person typically shops for multiple customers at one time, one car is on the road heading to the store, vs. three or four or more customer cars to and from, a help to our environment. Four lemons?

## Getting Projects Done or Starting New Ones

Some of us endured lay-offs or reduced work opportunities, which has come with huge stresses attached. For some, after a couple of thumb-twiddling weeks, the time was used to complete projects that were sitting on a shelf due to lack of available spare time. Needed home improvements were finished or initiated. Self-improvement goals were set and I know of at least two major successes (unfortunately I am not one of them). Some families, now living, working and

schooling from home, used the foreseeable time to start a new long-term project – including welcoming a new furry family member into the home now that human presence and time to devote was at an all-time high for the necessary extended training period. And for others, given that craft sales have exploded, it appears that many families have used this time as an opportunity to “get their craft on.”<sup>1</sup>

## Good for Pet Adoptions

Speaking of furry friends, according to a USA Today article, “Twenty percent of respondents to a Nielsen survey in July said they adopted one or more dogs or cats between March and June, up from less than 5% over the same time last year.”<sup>2</sup> That is at least a 300% increase in adoptions. Silver lining?

## Working Remotely from Home

There are definitely pros and cons to suddenly having to work from home. Among the pros, however, off the top of my head are reduced gasoline costs for commuting, reduced dry-cleaning bills, saved travel time, less risk of a car accident, and the ability to lunch-date with the kids.

## Telehealth Visits

Love them or hate them, telehealth visits have exploded on the scene as a result of Covid-19, and for good reason. While there are many health needs that cannot be properly monitored or treated online, there are some that can, to some degree. In the past, many people would not get treatment for some medical needs because they could not travel due to physical limitations, family obligations, or a lack of reliable transportation. At a time when traveling to a medical office was often the only method offered, they went without care. With regard to mental health care, “Until recently, the use of telemental health in psychiatry was progressing at a relatively slow pace... [one health insurance entity] reported that the number of daily telehealth claims increased from 200 in February 2020 to 38,000 in May 2020, and about half of all telehealth claims were for behavioral health services...”<sup>3</sup>

While all the data is certainly not in on the efficacy overall or in specific arenas with telehealth visits, perhaps its newer availability is a silver lining to those that had no care at all, now finding they can participate in telehealth care on a regular basis. Silver lining?

## Kids View: Stepping Out of their Comfort Zones

Some older children, by the time warm weather came about, were so cabin-fevered with ‘too much’ family time and too little space, took to the great outdoors around Penn Estates and its many amenities. (Or, maybe their mothers kicked them outside at 10 a.m. and requested they return for dinner.) I think I may have witnessed more use of non-pool amenities, even just walking individuals or duos or very small groups, than ever before. Lots of new tennis players on the courts; many a volleyball game; and of course, nicely distanced Cornhole games! I know at least one handful of youths that met for the first time during the summer of 2020 as a result of getting out for fresh air, who continue to visit regularly with each other both online and off, and now remain friends into 2021. Kudos to them! Lemonade Italian Ices made.

## Using Technology to Stay Close

When friends and family were separated physically from one another, many learned how to use technologies that were always available but not before needed, such as Facetime and Zoom. While a screen time chat will never replace a hug or a handshake, many have found it much better than a phone call alone.

## Sleeping in?

One child told me that although he misses physically going to and learning at Stroudsburg Middle School, he does like that he gets to sleep in a little longer than he could when he had to catch the bus. I am guessing that this rings a bell for some adults now working from home as well.

Like everyone, I eagerly await this pandemic being behind us all. With the new year of 2021 upon us, I am hoping that we all come to take advantage of some or more of the silver linings that are out there, because of or in spite of, the pandemic. Happy new year everyone!

- 1 <https://www.npd.com/wps/portal/npd/us/news/press-releases/2020/at-a-time-of-social-distancing-us-families-turn-to-activity-based-toys-books-and-art-supplies-for-the-home-according-to-npd/>
- 2 <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2020/09/02/dog-adoption-covid-19-creates-a-thriving-business-for-dogs/5680569002/>
- 3 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7725495/>

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# Eats Around Town

by Debra Celentano, Communications Committee

## Momento Restaurant

www.momentopizzeria.com

Phone: 570-422-1040

Location: North Ninth Street,  
across from the Stroud Mall

In these odd times, many of us are looking for ways to support local owned restaurants. If you aren't comfortable dining-in, there are a lot of places that will deliver or allow you to pick up (nothing you don't know, I'm sure). But I wanted to let you know about one of my favorite restaurants.

Momento's is an Italian pizzeria/restaurant that has amazing food. I've been going there (dining in and picking up) for probably 18 years (give or take). They have a fabulous menu and really great pizza. I'm a New Yorker at heart and most of us love our pizza. It's very difficult to find good pizza up here, in my opinion. However, Momento's definitely comes close. It even got my nieces and nephews seal of approval. It's the place they ask to go when they visit.

I've included the website, address and telephone number above. They will deliver to Penn Estates – the back gate only. They could be considered slightly pricey, but again, I've never had a bad meal. You can call-in or place an order online.

Some of my family's favorites (besides their pizza) include the chicken Caesar salad (Caesar dressing is really good but sometimes I even have it with creamy Italian and that's amazing), penne a la vodka with chicken, chicken lemon soup, chicken francaise, chicken marsala, and chicken parmesan. I'm not a seafood girl but my brother has confirmed it's good.

I hope I've made you hungry and you give them a try!



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# February and March Observances

by Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee

Due to the paucity and unpredictability of events to write about, I began this column to note observances. Some may be close to your heart. Some, like Columbus Day, are a source of debate. Some are just plain fun! We need a little fun right now, so I added a bit more information on the ones I find interesting or fun.

## February

Black History Month

- FEB 1

National Freedom Day: Commemorates the signing of the 13th amendment, which abolished slavery in 1865.
- FEB 2

Groundhog Day: Watch for Punxsutawny Phil. Due to Covid, the annual in-person events will not be held; however, you can find out what is happening this year at [www.groundhog.org](http://www.groundhog.org)
- FEB 5

National Wear Red Day History: Started in 2004 to raise awareness of heart disease in women.
- FEB 12

Lunar New Year (Confucian/Daoist/Buddhist): An important festival at the turn of the lunisolar Chinese calendar. Also known as Spring Festival.
- FEB 14

Valentine’s Day
- FEB 15

President’s Day: Honors all past presidents.
- FEB 16

Fat Tuesday: This is the day before Ash Wednesday. Think Mardi Gras! This was a day to use up the meats and supplies that were to be avoided during Lent. It is also Fastnacht Day in our Pennsylvania Dutch area. Eat a doughnut to celebrate a rich delight before Lent begins.
- FEB 15

Susan B. Anthony Day: Honors Susan B. Anthony and women’s suffrage.
- FEB 17

Ash Wednesday: The first day of Lent.
- FEB 17

National Random Acts of Kindness Day: There are many ways to celebrate this day. Drop off a bag of groceries to a local food pantry. Pay the toll for the car behind you at the Delaware Water Gap. Thank the essential worker at your grocery store. Shovel your neighbor’s driveway. Send a thank you note to PEPOA management, Board or maintenance folks!
- FEB 19

National Caregivers Day: During the pandemic, we need to honor the folks who provide long term and hospice care. They may be working around the clock, with fewer staff and greater risk.
- FEB 20

World Day of Social Justice
- FEB 20

National Love Your Pet Day: During this time of Covid-19, more and more people have added a pet to their households. We may not be able to hug our friends and family, but we can lower our blood pressure by observing fish or petting our cats or dogs. So, show the love. Take them for a walk. Are their vaccinations up to date? How about a new toy?
- FEB 28

Purim (Jewish): The Feast of Lots celebrates the salvation of the Jews from Persian extermination

## March

National Women’s History Month

- MAR 2

National Teen Mental Wellness Day
- MAR 8

International Women’s Day
- MAR 11

Maha Shivaratri (Hindu): The Great Night of Shiva
- MAR 14

Daylight Savings Time. Remember to “Spring Forward!”
- MAR 17

Saint Patrick’s Day
- MAR 21

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- MAR 21

Nowruz (Zoroastrian): Traditional Iranian festival celebrating the first day of spring and the Iranian New Year.
- MAR 28

Palm Sunday

## March cont.

- MAR 28

Passover begins (Jewish): An eight-day celebration (March 28 - April 4) of Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage.
- MAR 29

National Vietnam War Veterans Day: Combat and support units withdrew from South Vietnam on this day in 1973. Believe it or not, it was introduced into legislature in 2017, and signed into the Vietnam War Veterans Act on March 17, 2017.
- MAR 31

National Equal Pay Day: This day brings awareness to the disparities in between men and women doing the same work.
- MAR 31

Cesar Chavez Day: This day honors Cesar Chavez who was a farm worker, activist and labor leader.

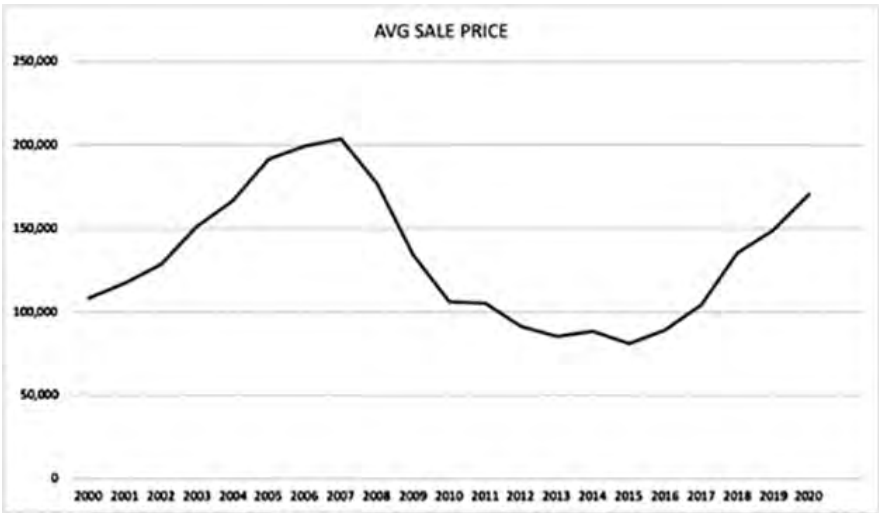
## Real Estate Pulse

by Lisa M. Sanderson, Contributor

### Penn Estates - 20 Years of Home Sale Data

Information has been gathered from the Pocono Mountains Association of REALTORS’ Multiple Listing Service on January 5, 2021.

Year	Number of Units Sold	Average Sale Price	Price per Sq. Foot	Days on Market
2020	127	170,260	103.09	79
2019	92	148,932	95.39	92
2018	100	135,512	80.12	81
2017	136	104,464	63.25	119
2016	134	89,375	50.93	110
2015	116	80,876	47.75	150
2014	93	88,425	49.31	126
2013	72	85,303	48.49	192
2012	51	91,152	51.93	235
2011	40	105,169	55.58	215
2010	60	106,100	61.82	170
2009	65	134,243	75.76	186
2008	55	176,933	99.56	148
2007	69	203,490	120.45	150
2006	125	199,540	114.87	131
2005	152	191,786	110.38	101
2004	162	166,397	100.79	127
2003	140	151,368	92.25	131
2002	126	128,640	74.94	171
2001	128	117,314	82.13	154
2000	58	108,325	N.A.	60



About the Author: Lisa Sanderson is a Past President of the PEPOA Board of Directors, founder of the *\*unofficial\** Living in Penn Estates Facebook Group, and a 28-year veteran of the real estate industry. She is a full-time Associate Broker with Keller Williams Real Estate in Stroudsburg. Comments and questions are welcome at [poconolisa@gmail.com](mailto:poconolisa@gmail.com)

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# Navigating Your Finances

by Bettyanne Nevil, Communications Committee

## Frozen Assets

One of the biggest hits to my food budget is how much we waste. I make a large pot of chicken soup. I know we will have leftovers. What I am trying to remember to do is freeze some. Some time back I had a bad cold. One of my friends sent over a plastic container of chicken soup he had in his freezer. I equate chicken soup with medicine. It just feels good to eat it. I feel better while eating it and it brings back memories of being mothered.

That was an aha moment for me. You mean instead of throwing out the soup that wasn't eaten within an acceptable period of time after being made, it could have been frozen? Now that got me to thinking about other food waste. Hubby and I like stuffed peppers. Daughter and grandson, not so much. So, I make the family sized amount so it's available if their tastes suddenly change. Then I freeze the remaining leftovers. Trying to be sure to label what is in the container and the date I freeze it. Old food service hospitality lessons never forgotten.

Usually on nights like this I can microwave a hotdog for the grandson. Then we have the issue of preserving the open hot dogs and buns. So, now I put the hot dogs into the bun and freeze them individually. So simple to take out a single hotdog from the bag and instantly have the main component needed to satisfy a six-year-old. No more wasted hot dogs or buns.

Next comes lasagna night. Even with three adults indulging in total Italian bliss, we barely make a dent! Make less you say? Same work, less food. Oh no, not this girl. Cut it up into individual servings and freeze it. Same with sausage and meatballs. You're doing the work. You might as well get more than one meal out of it.

Don't get me wrong here. I do not deny my family leftovers entirely. There's nothing as good as opening the refrigerator and grabbing last night's dinner to munch. Or to brown bag for lunch.

My Christmas ham gets frozen for future pea soup. Thanksgiving turkey for a noodle casserole. Cabbage from St. Patrick's Day dinner? You guessed it. Frozen to be fried up with noodles and butter. Leftover veggies? Not enough left for a meal. Freezer! It may end up in soup.

But then how do you make sure you use up all those frozen delectable meals? We do what I have aptly named freezer frenzy times. That is when I try to have spend-free weeks where I make sure to use up all the meats, potatoes, and meals in our freezer. I also run down my stock in the pantry for dry and canned items so that nothing expires before it is used.

These little tweaks have improved our bottom line. Maybe not in leaps and jumps but slow and steady. And we've all heard that slow and steady wins the race.

# Reset 2021

by Yolanda Sarrabo, CPT, NASM

I think we all can bear witness that 2020 was a horrible year for one reason or another. Whether we've lost loved ones or gotten sick ourselves due to COVID-19; it has been quite daunting, and not to give less light in dealing with other non-related issues than COVID. So what do we do and how do we move forward for 2021?

We were here at this exact same place a year ago making those plans with hope for a better year. Well, 2020 wasn't it!

When we make resolutions it's all about meeting some goal we would like to improve within our lives. As many of the residents have been working home along with our children and school work, and for some the slump has hit many hard.

The constant eating with little recreation may have had a toll on you. So with this alone, 2021 has to be the reset button to make things tight and make things right. Don't you agree?

Here are 3 tips to make a go when the clock strikes 12 for New Year's Day:

**Tip#1** Stretch it out - I totally stress the importance of full body stretching. When you get up in the morning rather making your way to that pot of coffee, make it towards some resistance bands and 10-15 minute stretch; it will do the body good. Many of us wake up with ache from various sectors from a hard sleep and stretching to rid you of the tightness in those muscles or that area speaks loud. Work out that ache with sitting on the floor in a cradle laid flat position and stretch out that should blade and back, move tension from those areas with full ROM (Range of Motion).

**Tip#2** A tip for my clients is to always **write it down**. When we have floating thoughts about how we want to get healthy and fit we literally leave it in our head. Consider writing it down in color and tape that on the refrigerator, it will be an easy call-out of a goal you need to complete. Once you make that effort then and only then remove it from your refrigerator door.

**Tip#3** C to the, A to the, equals Calisthenics. With being indoors and the gyms closed, how do you move forward when stuck indoors? Well, when there's a will there's a way! Use your own body weight and do some callisthenic moves. Calisthenics are another great option in the stretching mechanisms stated earlier.

> Try a few sets of **Flutter Kicks** using your lower body to lift your heels and lower leg while seated or flat to the floor, and pump your legs pulling strength from your hips and core.

> Another go to is **Floor Planks**. Lift your body by positioning straight while holding the position while having forearms to the floor all while keeping back straight - now hold the position for count of 15, 3 sets.

That's it! May your 2021 be about "do something by being fit." Happy new year!

*Yolanda Sarrabo is principal at Chronic Fitness Personal Training Boutique Service and a regular contributor. [www.chronicfitnessinc.com](http://www.chronicfitnessinc.com)*



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# So, You Think You Know Women's History?

by Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee

1. What Marine biologist wrote Silent Spring, exposing environmental issues in the United States?
2. Who was denied admission to 29 medical schools before becoming the first licensed female physician in the United States?
3. What Shoshone woman was a guide and interpreter for the Lewis and Clark expedition?
4. Who was a civil rights advocate and the first black woman to sign a long-term Hollywood contract (1942)?
5. Who was the first black person to perform for the Metropolitan Opera in 1955? She was denied permission to sing in the Daughters of the American Revolution auditorium due to her race in 1939.
6. Who read a poem she wrote at Bill Clinton's inauguration in 1993?
7. The first black congresswoman who also ran for president in 1972.
8. The first woman to be nominated and campaign for the U.S presidency.
9. What slave named Isabella became an outspoken orator for antislavery and for women's suffrage?
10. Who was a conductor for the Underground Railroad, freeing over 300 people and for whom there was a price of \$40,000 on her head? She was also a spy for the union army.
11. What suffragist was convicted of attempting to vote in 1872?
12. She was a WWII freedom fighter and Paris nightclub singer in the 1920's.
13. Who was the first woman of color to go into space? (Endeavor, 1992)
14. The first woman in space and the youngest American to orbit the Earth.
15. Who tended Union soldiers during the Civil War and was the founder of the American Red Cross?
16. Who founded the birth control movement in the U.S. and also started what became Planned Parenthood?
17. Who devoted her life to tending to the sick and poor throughout the world and founded a religious group of nuns in Calcutta?
18. Who was the first woman appointed to be a U.S. Supreme Court justice?

Answers: 1 Rachel Carlson; 2 Elizabeth Blackwell; 3 Sacagawea; 4 Lena Horne; 5 Marian Anderson; 6 Maya Angelou; 7 Shirley Chisholm; 8 Victoria Woodhull; 9 Sojourner Truth; 10 Harriet Tubman; 11 Susan B. Anthony; 12 Josephine Baker; 13 Dr. Mae Jemison; 14 Sally Ride; 15 Clara Barton; 16 Margaret Sanger; 17 Mother Theresa; 18 Sandra Day O'Connor

## Quotes

'For most of history, Anonymous was a woman.'

*Virginia Wolff*

'Here's to strong women.

May we know them.

May we be them.

May we raise them.'

*Anonymous*

'I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own.'

*Audre Lourde*

'If there is one thing I have learned in my life, it's the power of using your own voice.'

*Michelle Obama*

'Your silence will not protect you.'

*Audre Lourde*

'A woman is like a tea bag—only in hot water do you realize how strong she is.'

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

'How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.'

*Anne Frank*

'I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.'

*Maya Angelou*

'Know what sparks the light in you so that you, in your own way, can illuminate the world.'

*Oprah Winfrey*

'When they go low, we go high.'

*Michelle Obama*

# Debra's Bookshelf

by Debra Celantano, Communications Committee

## 365 Days by Blanka Lipinska

I'm sure you've seen the very popular movie on Netflix or maybe you just heard the hype about it. Either way the movie 356 Days (staring Michele Morrone – go look him up – and Anna-Maria Siekluka) was based on a Polish novel of the same name is releasing an English version on February 2nd and I was lucky enough to receive an early copy of the book back in December.

As mentioned above but I think it's important enough to repeat *365 Days by Blanka Lipinska* is a translated book from Polish to English and one must keep that in mind while reading. There are some phrases that don't quite work and some dialogue that just didn't work for me. However, I reminded myself of this often while reading and carried on. :)

I really wanted to read this book (mafia romance is one of my most favorite book tropes) and was excited to start. Don Massimo Torricelli is the head of a mafia family and had dreamed of Laura for years (after being shot and in a coma) and when he sees her, in real life, in Sicily, he must have her. So, he takes her.

Now, I've read many a book with a similar kidnapping plot and have loved the overall stories (for most of them). However, with this one it just falls a bit short -- for me, that happened mostly at the end of the book. I kept wanting "something big" to happen, but nothing ever did. For that, I had to give this three (3) stars.

365 Days is book one in a trilogy. If given the chance to get an advanced reader copies of books two and three, I will give them a chance and let you know what I think. Happy reading and movie watching.



# NETFLIX

## Top Ten Bingeable Shows

by Debra Celantano, Communications Committee

I thought I'd share a quick little list for those trying to find something to watch during these winter months. Here's my top ten Netflix series list (some I've watched myself and the rest come highly recommended from my teen-aged nieces and my close friends).

1. Cobra Kai – I binged this with the family over the New Year's break and it was AMAZING.
2. The Crown – if you have all things British royalty, you'll love this. I'm not too far into it but it's really good.
3. Sweet Magnolia – if you love romance novels, you'll love this. I learned after I watched the first season it's based off the book series of the same name by Sheryl Woods. I'll be starting this series soon.
4. You – if you love suspense and stalker type movies (think Sleeping with the Enemy) you'll love this series.
5. Schitt's Creek – I've not watched this one yet, but it's next on the list. I've heard nothing but great things about it.
6. Fuller House – my nieces love this; highly recommend for your kids.
7. Orange is the New Black – this one's been out awhile, and the series is complete, but it is pretty funny.
8. Lucifer – if you like paranormal you should love this series. I've not watched it myself but again my nieces love it.
9. Ozark – I've not watched this one, but it comes highly recommended. Plus, it has Jason Batman in it. :)
10. Peaky Blinders – it's about gangsters. Do I have to say more? I started this but I'm not too far into it. I tend to go back and forth between this and The Crown.





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