



Living in Harmony with Nature

Harmony

Penn Estates Property Owners Association

April/May 2021

Notice and Call to the Annual Meeting of the Membership

Saturday, May 1, 2021

10:00AM via Zoom

In light of the serious public health and epidemiological concerns regarding the transmission of contagious disease and illness, specifically relating to the coronavirus (COVID-19), and the recommendations of public health officials and authorities that in-person meetings and gatherings be temporarily limited to the extent feasible in order to limit the risk of transmission, this year's meeting will be held electronically in accordance with the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law (15 Pa.C.S.A. §5704 and 5708). We will be using the Zoom platform.

The President will conduct the meeting in accordance with Modern Rules of Order. At the time noted on the agenda, the Board of Directors and PEPOA Management will respond to comments and questions.



SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

Meeting Agenda

Annual Meeting of the Membership

May 1, 2021 | 10:00AM via Zoom

1. Call to Order and Officer Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Introduction of Professionals in Attendance
4. Determination of Quorum
5. Approval of 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes
6. Financial Report
7. Individual Candidate Presentations [* No Action Required]
8. Special Issue Voting – Bylaw amendment [* No Action Required]
9. Complete Ballot – [* No Action Required]
10. President's Report
11. Report on Balloting – Election Results [* No Action Required]
12. Public Comment – Questions & Answers

** Voting will not take place as there is no election or amendments to the Bylaws for 2021*



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From Phyllis's Desk

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

In the month of February, our area recorded 34.4 inches of snow, mostly from two storm events. The total accumulation for the 2020-2021 winter stands at 57.1 inches. Our maintenance team worked diligently to keep our roadways open. We thank all the members for your patience and cooperation.

As a reminder, the parking of vehicles in the easement or street area is not allowed without the issuance of a parking pass. Parking passes are issued for a limited amount of time for those having parties, deliveries, guests, or construction work done at their home.

However, incidental momentary parking is allowed. Some examples are repositioning vehicles, clearing driveways, dropping off or picking up persons or parcels, and generally any short-term activities requiring momentary parking. Hazzard lights shall be on during brief parking of the vehicle. **During snow and icy weather, no parking variances will be issued.**

We are making progress, slow as it may be, with the approval from the membership to amend the Declaration of Covenants. The Association has received 403 completed forms; we need an additional 781 forms to reach the required 67% approval of the membership. There are an additional 42 forms that have been found incomplete and waiting on the members to correct the deficiencies. I encourage anyone who should have questions to please email me at phyllishaase@pepoa.org so I may address your concerns.

For our members who haven't had the opportunity to attend recent Board meetings, I would like to share some of the Board's recent discussions and actions:

- The Board reviewed requests from the membership related to the prohibition of inground sprinkler systems and the feeding of wildlife. While we do not recommend feeding wildlife, the probation has been repealed. Inground sprinkler systems are now allowed.
- Discussion took place as to the opening of indoor facilities and the desire to hold indoor events. The Board looked at options. One was opening the buildings to those that have been fully vaccinated. It was determined under the Fair Housing Act that was a concern as not all members could get vaccinated at this time. The Board continues to explore ways to open the facilities and safely hold indoor events for our members. The Board will revisit this topic at their April meeting.
- **Outdoor** summer activities and events are being planned in accordance with the CDC and PA Parks and Recreation guidelines.

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The Celebration of Cinco de Mayo

by Sandy Black, Contributor

Cinco de Mayo is a holiday that celebrates the date of the Mexican Army's 1862 victory over France at the "Battle of Puebla" during the Franco-Mexican War. The day, which falls on Wednesday, May 5 in 2021, is also known as Battle of Puebla Day.

The Battle of Puebla (Spanish translation: *La Batalla de Puebla*; French translation: *Bataille de Puebla*) took place on May 5, 1862, near Puebla City during the second French intervention into Mexico. The battle ended in a victory for the Mexican Army over the French Army.

The French Army commanded by Charles de Lorencez, eventually overran the Mexican Army, General Ignacio Zaragoza in command, in subsequent battles. The Mexican victory at Puebla against a much better equipped and larger French Army provided a significant morale boost to the Mexican Army and also helped slow the French Army advances towards Mexico City.

The Mexican victory is celebrated yearly through a festival on the same date as the battle. It is primarily celebrated in the Mexican state of Puebla, where the holiday is celebrated as "*El Día de la Batalla de Puebla*" (The Day of the Battle of Puebla). There is some limited recognition of the holiday in other parts of the Mexican country.

Here in the United States, Cinco de Mayo is seen as a day to celebrate the culture and traditions of Mexicans with traditional Mexican food. It is also a great excuse to enjoy some of the great Mexican drinks. In America, Cinco de Mayo is actually incorrectly celebrated as Mexico's Independence Day which actually takes place in September.

In Mexico, Cinco de Mayo is celebrated differently compared to the United

States. Students get the day off from schools but all federal and local offices are opened. Parades and fiestas actually take place at the border, held primarily in the City of Puebla. A military parade is held and a mock battle is stated to commemorate the Battle of Puebla.

So why is Cinco de Mayo celebrated with such fanfare in the United States? As with many holidays, a lot of the celebration is due to marketing. People across the United States, whether of Mexican heritage or not, use the day as an excuse to eat Tex-Mex cuisine, drink Mexican beers, and prepare pitchers of margaritas, and the holiday associated with partying.



Harmony

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Saint Patrick's Day Festivities - A Look Back...

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member

In this time of Covid, there is so much to miss. Not being able to spend time with family and friends is probably what we miss the most. We can connect via email and social media, but it definitely isn't the same. Thank goodness for Face-time and Zoom!

St Patrick's Day parties and parades will be something to look forward to again. There was a Penn Estates Saint Pat's party scheduled for March 2020. It was canceled since that was the week everything shut down due to quarantine.

The last Saint Pat's party we had here was in March 2019. It was a great affair with plenty of music and great food prepared by Barbara Madden and her daughter Lisa Hoey. We feasted on corned beef, cabbage, buttered potatoes, candied carrots, soda bread and shepherd's pie. A beautiful occasions cake was presented.

I, for one, can't wait until we will be having parties and other community events in Penn Estates again.



Did You Know?

by Phyllis Haase, Community Manager

The coronavirus pandemic has caused everyone to reexamine the way they live. We were forced to find new ways to work and socialize that we could not have imagined before 2020.

- In a health crisis like coronavirus, the situation can change from day to day. The Board of Directors is guided by local, state, and federal authorities, CDC guidelines, and, most importantly, the local positivity rate in Monroe County.
- Monthly Board meetings have been held electronically in accordance with the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law (15 Pa.C.S.A. §5704 and 5708), as public health and safety is paramount.
- We have found the unexpected benefits of conducting association business remotely, like increased member participation and the flexibility for owners to attend using their phones, tablets, and computers from wherever they may be at the time the meeting is convened.
- Deeded Owners have the ability to view and listen to the meeting and, when appropriate, provide questions and comments.
- Our Board has successfully conducted their meetings virtually by the same parliamentary procedure that applies to in-person meetings. Proper notice of the meeting is provided to the members via Eblast and notice on our Website.
- The virtual meetings have been popular with our membership, some requesting they continue once the pandemic is under control. Please consider attending a meeting of the Governing Body.

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Debra's Bookshelf

by Debra Celentano, Communications Committee Member

Top 6 Books of 2021 thus far!

I've been on a real reading roll – which hasn't really happened in a while. So, instead of just reviewing one book for this issue, I thought I'd give you a list of six of the books I've read this first quarter of 2021. You can buy all of these in ebook format on Amazon and some of them are in the Kindle Unlimited program – where you pay \$9.99 a month and can read unlimited books that are enrolled in their program.

1. The Wolf Hotel Series by KA Tucker – this is a four-book series and is AMAZING! It's a billionaire romance and so freaking good! You also just can't go wrong with this author. She's one of my 5 top authors ever list.
2. The Santiago Trilogy by Catherine Wilther – this one is a three-book series that is a dark mafia romance but oh so good but its gritty.
3. Still Standing by Kristen Ashley – this one is a motorcycle club romance and it's really good. If you've read any of Kristen's books this one may feel very familiar to another book but still it's a great read. Kristen Ashley is my TOP author.
4. Shadow Man by Catherine Wilther – this is a spin off duet series from The Santiago Trilogy and part one was very good. Again, it's a dark and gritty mafia romance story.
5. Reckless Woman by Catherine Wilther – this is part two of the duet and my current read. It came out early March and I'm just in the beginning but the reviews I've read makes me excited to see how this twisty-crazy ride ends.
6. The Player Next Door by KA Tucker – this is a second chance romance. This couple dated in high school but due to some high school drama they broke up. There's a lot going on in this book to keep you turning the pages.

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Celebrate Earth Day Year Round!

by James Ruffini, Communications Committee Member

There is always a time to enjoy the Earth, and there is never a time to stop taking care of her. The Earth is to be enjoyed year-round, and like a house, needs to be looked after. You don't clean your house once a year, so doing our best to reduce our carbon footprint is a goal that shouldn't only happen once a year either.

Earth Day is April 22. Kettle Creek Wildlife Refuge normally has an Earth day event at the North Hampton Community College every year, but due to the pandemic, I believe it is postponed. However, there are other ways of caring and celebrating. Like I said, Earth can be celebrated year-round without having to wait.

One way of being active in caring for the Earth is through recycling. Now, you may be saying to yourself, "Well, I do recycle! I put out my cans, plastic and paper in the recycling bin every week." And that is a really great thing – but there are other ways to recycle, which many may not be aware of.

For instance, household single-use batteries can be recycled with a kit you send back to the company you received it from. I'm talking about the dry-cell batteries that we use in electronics – AA, AAA, C, D, and 9V. I don't endorse any company in particular, but I use Waste Management Lamp Tracker for my kits. They also offer kits for small electronics, and fluorescent light bulbs for recycling too.

If you don't wish to buy a kit for your CFL bulbs or small electronics, Home Depot will recycle the CFL bulbs for free at a drop off box in the stores. Best Buy has a recycling program for small electronics to, and they will accept them in store as well. You can check the Best Buy recycling site for more information.

Blue jeans are another item that can be recycled. There are a few companies that turn old blue jeans into pipe insulation for homes. The Good Will stores will take them as a donation, and upcycle them into new products for the public.

It doesn't end there though. Besides batteries, small electronics, light bulbs and blue jeans -- toothpaste tubes, old beauty products, shaving razors, and old snack food bags can also be recycled through a company called TerraCycle.com. Again, I'm not affiliated with them, or endorsing them, but with any recycling you ship to them – for free – you can also raise money for your favorite charity or group through a point system of how much you send in. So, through them, you're helping to save the earth, AND raise money for your charities.

If you are looking for other ways to recycle and take care of the Earth in general, there are websites with loads of information on what can be recycled. One website in particular which I frequently use is called Earth911.com. The site provides numerous tips and articles on how to save the earth and recycle items in general.

So, hopefully this is a good starting point to go beyond regular recyclables and help you keep some of those other household items out of the oceans and landfills. Taking care of the Earth is a reciprocating action. This is the only planet we have, and we are responsible for the Earth's wellbeing. If we take care of the Earth, the Earth takes care of us. Happy Earth Day!

Poetry Corner

by James Ruffini, Communications Committee Member

Above Trees

A score of birds
Twist and flow as one,
Like loose news
On a windy street.

Earth

The Earth hunches,
Rolls itself over,
Continually turning
And young.

A Beautiful Arrowhead in a Museum

Once encased in earth
Where you last fell,
Now held in a glass case on a pedestal,
You have become the high priest
Of history – distinct, powerful,
Sharply handsome still.
Imagination slows strongly
With each pulse of the viewer's heart,
Releasing you
As a new breed of hunter
In art.

Communications Committee member James Ruffini writes poetry in his spare time. Besides showcasing James's poetry, we would like to include the work of other Penn Estates poets. Submit your poems to pepoaharmony@gmail.com

President's Message

by **Sandy Bonet, PEPOA President**

You Can't Make Up This Stuff!

The President's Message is supposed to provide information to members, present ideas or discuss board business. But sometimes that sounds like Charlie Brown's teacher: "Wah wa wa wah wa wa."

So, just so we don't take ourselves too seriously, here are real-life antidotes about the amusing behavior of POA members including board and committee members. Don't worry, our secrets are safe, none of these things happened in Penn Estates. But they did happen.

Some funny rules proposed by residents at board meetings:

- No one can own a cat over 15 lbs. – it's just not right to have a fat cat.
- No airplanes can land in the community – in case of emergency, land somewhere else.
- Residents must wear polo shirts and khaki pants when holding a garage sale. This one actually passed, with a \$30 fine for non-compliance! Really.
- A resident submitted plans for a tree house to his community's architectural review committee. The committee tried to block the project by requiring the plans to be stamped by a qualified engineer. The resident then stamped the plans in front of the committee. He had a PhD in civil engineering!
- During a board meeting, a resident was yelling so loud that his false teeth flew out of his mouth and hit the board president in the head. No assault charges were filed.
- Male residents of an "active senior" community were using the pool showers, not to rinse off before jumping in the pool, but for full daily showers including shaving. When asked why, the men stated that they didn't want to clean their own bathrooms or use their hot water.
- A resident was continually complaining to the community manager that he was hearing ghosts moaning at night. Turns out it was a faulty toilet valve in the house next door.
- A homeowner complained that someone has smeared dog feces on the playground equipment. One of the Board members said that it wasn't dog feces, it was chocolate. He knew this because he "took the time to smell it." Visions of the pool cleaning incident from Caddy Shack danced through the other Board members' minds.
- Homeowners received notices that their fences had to be stained. The very next day, there were flyers in their mailboxes advertising a painting and staining service. Turns out, one of the Board members owned the painting company. Talk about a Board member pushing their own agenda!

Whenever you are complaining about the strictness of rules and regs here in Penn Estates, here are examples of some over-the-top community regulations issued by POA Boards:

- Blue trampoline covers are banned. They must be green or black.
- Nudity is prohibited in the common areas. (Bet there is a good story about how this one came into being.)
- Holiday decorations must be removed within three days of the end of the holiday (\$50 fine).
- Homeowners must use only the light bulb colors approved by the HOA (\$25 fine).
- Only two children can live in a home.
- Two unmarried people are prohibited from living together.

Outrageous or reasonable? Funny or serious? In the end, I guess it all depends on your perspective.



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HOW BOARD MEMBERS SEE THEM



HOW MANAGERS SEE THEM



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2021 PEPOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES

Chris Morton

Hi! My name is Christine Morton, but I usually go by Chris. I have lived in Penn Estates for over 18 years with my husband Dave. I have four adult children and four grandchildren.

Currently, I have been serving on the PEPOA Board of Directors since 2018 and am currently the Secretary. I was Treasurer from 2018 to 2020. I am also currently on the Finance Committee and was member of the Community Safety Committee and TNR. I was on the Recreation Committee many years ago and currently serve as the Board Liaison.

I have a Bachelors' in History and Archaeology, a Master's in Teaching Social Studies and an Associates of Applied Science in Radiography. My most recent and rewarding career has been becoming a Radiology Technologist. As I currently work throughout this devastating pandemic, I have been uniquely aware of its effects on our area.

I was an owner/operator of a Bread Route and have previously worked for the IRS and H&R Block. I have also worked with a few Archaeological Companies, as a Substitute Teacher, and with Real Estates Sales and Appraisals back on Long Island. I have a variety of skills and a diverse background which helps with my being a Board Member.

I was a Girl Scout Leader for over twenty years. I also volunteer at Quiet Valley on occasion. I enjoy crafts and have been trying to learn how to crochet again recently. Once this pandemic is over, I would love to see the expansion of the various special interest clubs and groups resume. Cornhole, anyone?

I hope to be able to continue on the Board of Directors and help serve our community. I feel Penn Estates is a great place to live but like everywhere there is room for improvement. I admire the current Board of Directors and all members the committees. As I became more involved, I was amazed at the hard work and dedication the community volunteers and Board Members have towards our development.

I do feel there needs to be better communication with our residents and we have been answering that need with Zoom meetings and Webinars.

The current Board worked really hard to update the Covenants to reflect the desires of most of residents, to simplify the language, and allow for sheds and out-buildings. We are in the process of getting enough signatures to be able to fix this issue. We have also addressed the need for a healthy capital reserve fund to keep our development financial stable and fiscally responsible. We have seen an increase in our property values recently and won the Community Association of the Year award.

I want the experience of living here to be a positive one for everyone. I think everyone wants what is best for the community. With the challenging times we are currently undergoing with the COVID19 pandemic, adjustments had to be made in some long-range projects. We are working on figuring out a way to have a dog park here for our residents and I hope to eventually have a splash park for the kids.

I want to work on a proactive way to hear the desires of our residents and a practical way to address these issues in a timely manner. I would love to have your vote for a second term so I can continue to help make Penn Estates such a great place to live!



David Montalvo

My name is David Montalvo. My wife, Maria, and I left the hustle and bustle of New York City almost 21 years ago. Like many in our community, we came looking for a home and a quality of life in which to raise a family. We found all that and something more here in Penn Estates.

Professionally, I'm a 3rd level Information Technology Engineer with 30 years of experience spanning in the service of fiduciary and technology firms. This career choice has exposed me to numerous technical and business disciplines spanning across system administration, programming, project management, and vendor relations in the service of large corporations. Outside of my career, I'm a father of four, a husband of 27 years, and an avid photographer.

In my professional life, I've learned the value and significance of teamwork. No man is an island, which means ancillary soft skills, like mediation, peacemaking, arbitration and diplomacy are as necessary to the success of an end goal as one's primary skillsets. It's these skills that I have leveraged while on the board, where I've routinely socialized issues concerning our community.

If reelected, I will continue this tradition of advocacy and work with like-minded members towards the betterment of our Community. Penn Estates is our home, any impact or benefit within our community affects or enriches us all. So, with that in mind, please read the bios of all your candidates, don't skim through it. Each of us hopes for the honor of representing our community but it's up to you to choose. Please take the time to know who you are voting for.



Chris Hoffman

Greetings Neighbors,

I am Chris Hoffman, and I would like to represent you as a member on the Board of Directors. I have been a PA resident and homeowner in Penn Estates for 17 years. My wife and I have been blessed to raise our three kids while they have grown, played and learned in our neighborhood.

I grew up in Maryland and left to attend the United States Military Academy at West Point. While at West Point, I studied Systems Engineering and became an Officer in the US Army. After 5 years in the Army, I moved to New York City where I worked for Con Edison in several positions in the electric utility industry. After having our first child, my wife and I made Penn Estates our home. Realizing I could not commute for the rest of my working life, I took a job with PPL and worked in Allentown, Scranton and Tannersville. I currently work for Lafata Contract Services, a company that manages large projects for PECO, the utility company of the Philadelphia area. Throughout my professional life I have been both a teammate and a team leader and enjoy working with others to achieve positive outcomes.

Since last July, I have served as a Penn Estates Board Member, filling a vacated position. The past eight months have been an eye-opening experience learning about the business of running and improving our community. I have had the pleasure of meeting and listening to many of you on the Zoom Board meetings, and while strolling our streets with my dog! I am always amazed at the kindness and generosity that our residents extend to each other, and because of that I am inspired to be a Member of the Board to help further the success our community enjoys. While I believe life is good in Penn Estates, there is always room for improvement. While we continue to improve our roads and facilities, I look forward to helping improve our community pride through open communication and inclusion.

When not working or chasing my kids, I volunteer as an Assistant Scout Master for Boy Scout Troop 86 in Stroudsburg and attend Our Lady Victory Church. I look forward to meeting more of my neighbors and hope you will give me the opportunity to continue serving as a Penn Estates Board Member.



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Things to do in the 'Burgs

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee Chair

Exploring Ann Street - Part 1

The shops and businesses on Ann Street in downtown Stroudsburg are often overlooked. They seem a bit out of the way but really are just a block or two from Main Street.

One of our favorite shops is the **Potting Shed**. Tucked away in the back of the parking lot, it's a very small cozy space. Besides indoor plants year 'round, as well as outdoor flowering plants in the warm months, they have an array of gifts



and crafts including nice textile decorative items like coasters, place mats, dish towels and decorative throw pillows. They also have a selection of dried flowers and the supplies you would need to make your own arrangements. If you are looking for a small reasonably priced gift, this is a good place to check out.



Earthlight Natural Food Market is just across the parking lot. What a zen place to just stroll around. They have an epic selection of bulk spices that can be easily parsed out into small plastic zip lock bags. The meats, seafood and dairy are very fresh. The seasonal produce is always arranged artfully and the selection impressive. They have natural and organic groceries that are too numerous to list. I often go in and walk around to just get some inspiration as to what future meals to make. It's also very relaxing. Nice staff and friendly customers.

See the next issue of Harmony for Part 2, including other establishments like The Ribbon Factory, The Blue Attic and Little Angels Cafe in the Ann Street area.



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Keep Your Pets at Home

by Ting Qian and Ning Wang, Contributors

When you walk in Penn Estates and come across a cat bathing in the sunshine, or walking toward you instead of running away, or even rubbing your legs and starting to purr, that cat could be one of the new members of our Penn Estates' abandoned pets.

Can stray/abandoned cats survive in the wilderness?

Abandoned cats or stray cats are different from feral cats. They are used to the home environment and cling to people. Feral cats are the off-springs of stray or other feral cats. They are not accustomed to human contact. Stray/abandoned cats suddenly become vulnerable facing the danger of the wilderness. The extreme weather, the predators out there, lack of food source, risk of injury and death from cars, confrontation by feral cats and other animals all contribute to the high death rate.

Many people believe that releasing a cat/kitten in the wild is humane. It's actually the opposite. A lot of data shows that the odds of survival of an individual house-raised cat/kitten put in the wild are very small. According to American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), each year, approximately 6.5 million companion animals enter animal shelters nationwide — and 1.5 million are euthanized.

Data from ASPCA shows that of the cats entering shelters, approximately 37% are adopted, 41% are euthanized, and less than 5% are returned to their owners. A recent study from the American Veterinary Medical Association reported survival data for 169 kittens in the wild. Overall, 75% of the kittens died or disappeared. 90% died as a result of trauma, with attacks by stray and owned dogs and motor vehicle accidents being the most common types of trauma. For the causes of death not determined of kittens reported to have died, many reportedly had signs of disease, including upper respiratory tract disease and diarrhea prior to death.

Why do people leave their pets behind?

While demand for animal adoption skyrocketed due to the pandemic nationwide, there is an increase in the number of pets left behind after their owners moved out of their houses. Of course, there's no reason to justify abandoning an innocent animal. Sometimes what we need is just to understand the situation.

(continued on page 11)

April and May Observances

by Sharon Kennedy, Communications Committee member

I am so looking forward to observing special days with loved ones when the COVID numbers are under control. (Just think, a year ago we thought this would be over in a few weeks. I no longer think in terms of "over." I think of numbers being low. Sigh!) I especially will miss the PEPOA St. Patrick's Day celebration this year. In the meantime, here are some traditional and some quirky special days.

APRIL

- Autism Awareness Month, National Poetry Month, National Humor Month, Sexual Assault Awareness, and Adopt a Shelter Dog Month
- April 1 Plan a (virtual) prank. It's April Fool's Day! Also National Burrito Day.
- April 2 Good Friday, World Autism Awareness Day, National Peanut Butter and Jelly Day and Walk to Work Day. It's also National Reconciliation Day, a day to repair damaged relationships that have been harmed through actions or words. Reach out to someone that has drifted away or who may have distanced due to the conflicts or neglect of the past year. Make amends, give and receive forgiveness, and make a fresh start.
- April 4 Easter, National Hug a Newsperson Day (at 6 ft. distance with masks)
- April 5 Gold Star Spouses Day: Gold Star families are the loved ones of military services members killed in the line of duty.
- April 5 First Contact Day. Star Trek: First Contact was released in 1996. April 5, 2063, marks the first interactions between humans and Vulcans.
- April 6 SAAM Day of Action: Dedicated to ending sexual violence and supporting victims of sexual assault. Support your local shelter, or teach your children about boundaries, or take your teen to self defense classes.
- April 7 Childhelp National Day of Hope: Make commitment. End child abuse.
- April 7 National No Housework Day (isn't that every day?); World Health Day
- April 10 National Hug Your Dog Day
- April 11 National Pet Day: This is your chance to spoil your pet! Or it might be a good day to support getting a dog park in Penn Estates.
- April 12 Ramadan
- April 13 National Be Kind to Lawyers Day
- April 14 International Moment of Laughter Day
- April 15 National Titanic Remembrance Day
- April 16 Wear Pajamas to Work Day (every day during COVID online work, at least from the waist down) and National Stress Awareness Day. If you can stay in your pajamas all day, you're already reducing your stress.
- April 21 Administrative Professionals Day
- April 22 Earth Day. There are so many ways to honor this day. Pick up trash when you go for a walk. Repurpose items. Support green businesses.
- April 28 National Superhero Day
- April 30 National Honesty Day; Arbor Day; National Adopt a Shelter Pet Day

MAY

- National Mental Health Month, National Pet Month, National Military Appreciation Month
- May 1 May Day (present flowers to someone). Also, National Loyalty Day
- May 2 World Laughter Day
- May 4 National Teacher's Day
- May 4 Star Wars Day: May the fourth be with you!
- May 5 Cinco De Mayo: celebrate Mexican-American heritage and pride.
- May 6 International Space Day, National Day of Prayer and (so important in this time of the pandemic) National Nurse's Day.
- May 9 Mother's Day
- May 8 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive Day. Food is collected by postal carriers to support local food banks.
- May 8 Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives During the Second World War
- May 13 Eid-al-Fitr: Muslims celebrate the end of fasting and worshipping during Ramadan with this day of feasting.
- May 15 Armed Forces Day
- May 17 Shavuot celebrates the Israelites receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai.
- May 21 World Day for Cultural Diversity
- May 25 National Missing Children's Day
- May 31 Memorial Day
- May 31 National Smile Day



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Eats Around Town

by Michael J. Tyrrell, Communications Committee Member

One of the best pizza places in the area in my opinion is Frank's Pizza in Bartonsville. Conveniently located in the Giant shopping plaza across from Loews. Normally we just stop in to grab a slice. The nice thing is that they will provide table service even if you are only ordering slices.

Just recently we met a friend for lunch and ordered a whole pie, garlic knots and fried calamari. The garlic knots were very fresh and dripping with garlicky goodness and served with a tangy marinara sauce. The calamari



was very crispy and also perfectly fresh.

Now for the money shot - the Za! We got half eggplant and ricotta and half plain. It was volcanic-hot and super thin and crispy. Just the right amount of topping. You really forget how wonderful a pizza is eaten right out of the oven. No cardboard box taste!

They also serve very generous size portions of full dinners. Think Chicken Parm, Penne, Heros. No license so its BYOB. We are going back soon for a full dinner. It's been awhile.



Keep Your Pets at Home

(continued from page 10)

People may have left behind their pets due to lack of training and preparation — training a cat or dog is not an easy job. Difficulties people encounter in their life, such as losing their job, moving to a place that doesn't allow pets, dealing with health issues, relationship break downs, having new babies, etc. All these can contribute to the animal being abandoned. Adopting a pet is a long-term commitment. Rescue experts often advise: Think before you adopt. Make sure that you will be able to meet all responsibilities of pet ownership before adopting a pet.

The ASPCA reported that approximately 3.2 million shelter animals are adopted each year, and in 2020, demand for animal adoption skyrocket due to pandemic. Animal welfare organization across the country saw a spike in the national adoption rate in March from 58% at the beginning of the month to 85% at the end of the month.

Some shelters in NYC have been seeing an increase in the number of pets left behind after their owners die from Covid-19.

Plan ahead. The ASPCA recommends pet owners have an emergency plan in place for circumstances such as the current pandemic. Find friends or family who can take care of your pet in case you get sick. Keep your pet's up-to-date veterinary records and proof of vaccinations handy, and stock up on food and medications for your pets.

What if the place you're moving to doesn't accept cats? Naomi advises: "If the place you are looking at will not accept cats, keep on looking. If all fails, make sure they are taken to a shelter. If the shelter is full, see if a friend can hold on to your pet until the shelter can take. Ultimately, you want to save this animal's life."

If you find an abandoned pet in Penn Estates, call Animals Can't Talk Rescue Adoption Inc. (ACT) at 570-242-2846 or go to www.animalscanttalk.org. ACT was founded in 2008. In 2019 and 2020 they helped just over 100 strays and kittens. Some were feral, fixed and released, some were kittens that were socialized and adopted.

Think before you adopt! Do not leave pets behind when moving. Naomi's biggest concern is the cruelty of leaving domestic animals abandoned in the wild. "It is cruel and inhumane to have a pet and abandon it when you move because you can't take it with you. It cannot fend for itself. If you can't keep a pet for life, DO NOT ADOPT."



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Real Estate Pulse

by Lisa M. Sanderson, Contributor

8 Tips for Adding Curb Appeal and Value to Your Home

By Pat Curry

Published: February 18, 2011, Houselogic.com

A good washing, and a bit of color are two low-cost ways. Homes with high curb appeal command higher prices and take less time to sell. But which projects pump up curb appeal most? Financially smart ways to boost your home's equity:

#1 Wash Your House's Face

Before you scrape any paint or plant more azaleas, wash the dirt, mildew, and general grunge off the outside of your house. REALTORS® say washing a house can add \$10,000 to \$15,000 to the sale prices of some houses.

A bucket of soapy water and a long-handled, soft-bristled brush can remove the dust and dirt that have splashed onto your wood, vinyl, metal, stucco, brick, and fiber cement siding. Power washers (rental: \$75 per day) can reveal the true color of your flagstone walkways.

Wash your windows inside and out, swipe cobwebs from eaves, and hose down downspouts. Don't forget your garage door, which was once bright white. If you can't spray off the dirt, scrub it off with a solution of 1/2 cup trisodium phosphate -- TSP, available at grocery stores, hardware stores, and home improvement centers -- dissolved in 1 gallon of water.

You and a friend can make your house sparkle in a few weekends. A professional cleaning crew will cost hundreds -- depending on the size of the house and number of windows -- but will finish in a couple of days.

#2 Freshen the Paint Job

The most commonly offered curb appeal advice from real estate pros and appraisers is to give the exterior of your home a good paint job. Buyers will instantly notice it, and appraisers will value it. Of course, painting is an expensive and time-consuming facelift. To paint a 3,000-square-foot home, figure on spending \$375 to \$600 on paint; \$1,500 to \$3,000 on labor.

Your best bet is to match the paint you already have: Scrape off a little and ask your local paint store to match it. Resist the urge to make a statement with color. An appraiser will mark down the value of a house that's painted a wildly different color from its competition.

#3 Fix Up the Roof

The condition of your roof is one of the first things buyers notice and appraisers assess. Missing, curled, or faded shingles add nothing to the value of your house. If

your neighbors have maintained their roofs, yours will look especially shabby.

You can pay for roof repairs now, or pay for them later in a lower appraisal. Appraisers will mark down the value by the cost of the repair. According to the "Remodeling Impact Report" from the National Association of Realtors, the median cost of a new asphalt shingle roof is about \$7,500. And if you install a new one, you'll get that back -- plus a bit more. A new roof has an ROI of 109%.

Some tired roofs look a lot better after you remove 25 years of dirt, moss, lichens, and algae. Don't try cleaning your roof yourself: call a professional with the right tools and technique to clean it without damaging it. A 2,000-square-foot roof will take a day and \$400 to \$600 to clean professionally.

#4 Neaten the Yard

A well-manicured lawn, fresh mulch, and pruned shrubs boost the curb appeal of any home. Replace overgrown bushes with leafy plants and colorful annuals. Surround bushes and trees with dark or reddish-brown bark mulch, which gives a rich feel to the yard. Put a crisp edge on garden beds, pull weeds and invasive vines, and plant a few geraniums in pots.

Green up your grass with lawn food and water. Cover bare spots with seeds and sod, get rid of crab grass, and mow regularly. If you're selling anytime soon, any work you do now will reap benefits in your home's selling price, usually 100% or more according to the "Remodeling Impact Report" from the National Association of Realtors.

Continued...want the other 4 tips? Email poconolisa@gmail.com

Penn Estates Home Sale Data

Information has been gathered from the Pocono Mountains Association of REALTORS' Multiple Listing Service on March 14, 2021.

	Active Listings	Pending Sales*	Closed YTD	Closed 2020
Total.....	7.....	18.....	13.....	127
Foreclosures.....	0.....	1.....	0.....	10
Short Sales.....	0.....	1.....	0.....	0
Low List/Sold.....	\$203,500.....	\$100,000.....	\$148,000.....	\$55,801
High List/Sold.....	\$539,000.....	\$349,000.....	\$359,000.....	\$395,000
Avg. List/Sold.....	\$332,543.....	\$210,383.....	\$247,864.....	\$170,260

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

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



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Salvation Army Used Clothing & Household Goods Drive

Saturday, May 8 | 10am-2pm | Community Center Parking Lot

The Salvation Army has asked us (Penn Estates) for help. There has been a significant decrease in donations that support the Salvation Army thrift stores and community programs in Monroe County. This is an excellent opportunity to de-clutter those full closets and cupboards, as well as a conscious way to dispose of unwanted goods in a manner that helps struggling families in our community!



What can you Donate?

- **In well-tied garbage bags:** used clothing of all kinds, shoes, purses, and belts, as well as bed and bath linens.
- **In boxes:** dishes, pots, pans, vases, decorative knick-knacks, jewelry, working electronics, and glassware. **Not accepted: Medical equipment or baby furniture, such as cribs, high chairs or car seats.**

This is a clothing drive that everyone can feel good about supporting, knowing that your used goods are getting a second life through reuse by those most in need in our community!

Community Yard Sale Weekend

April 17 and 18, 2021

9:00 AM to 4:00 PM both days

Members may participate in having a yard sale **at their residence**.

The local municipality requires a Yard Sale Permit

Stroud Township: 570-421-3362; 1211 North 5th Street, Stroudsburg PA

Pocono Township: 570-629-1922; 112 Township Drive, Tannersville PA

You must also register with the Penn Estates office

PEPOA Administration Office: 570-421-4265

Interested treasure hunters will be provided a map of registered properties.



HEALTH & FITNESS

Tight Muscles

by Yolanda Sarrabo, CPT, NASM

There's nothing more annoying and frustrating than trying to move around but you're hit with tightened muscles. There could be a couple of reasons more serious, but for this purpose we'll discuss if you sleep in a bad position or something to that effect.

When our muscles become tight, it can be a hassle to move around like you want to. And for some, it can stop you from doing your day to day.

So, what is muscle tension? *The most common causes of muscle pain are tension, stress, overuse and minor injuries. This type of pain is usually localized, affecting just a few muscles or a small part of your body. Systemic muscle pain — pain throughout your whole body — is more often the result of an infection, an illness or a side effect of a medication.*

So, a tight muscle may or may not be a pending issue. If your discomfort lasts more than a few days, it doesn't hurt to get it looked at by your doctor to rule out any other serious possibilities. Though sleeping on the wrong side is a common cause, there are some tips to consider when battling movement.

Tip 1 - Roll It

One way to really get at decompressing tight muscles is by using a foam roller to work out your piriformis muscles, that's just a fancy way of saying work out the tension towards your buttocks and hamstrings. By using an up and down motion it helps lift that beaded tension in that area. The prices for this tool can range \$5-\$20. You can also use a water bottle that is filled with water to roll the area.

Put slight pressure on the foam, but not so much to cause additional discomfort and pain. Use this method for a count of 15-20 for each side; continue for another set if you're up to it. Think of this process as your own at home massage go to.

Tip 2 - Stretch to the Heavens

Sometimes we jump right into the routine of exercising, or start our day without taking the time to stretch. Stretching can help alleviate tight muscles when done properly. Stretching is just that, it does not mean any type of pulling is involved.

Think of stretching as brushing your teeth before that sip of coffee or tea, for many it's the first steps to do whatever it is you're about to do. Stretching out that tightened muscle can help ease that stiffness.

Tip 3 - Move

Another cause for a tight muscle is when you don't move. It's necessary to use some form of movement throughout the day. The body reads signals when activity is minimal, and sometimes it can open the door for other issues to arise. A little means a lot, whether walking, bending and improving your range of motion.

Lastly, using a heat compress may work well for tightness, it is suggested cold compresses are good for inflammation, but again if you think this is more than what it seems to be than review this with your doctor.

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



A Cat with FIV Stole Owner's Heart and Found a New Home

by Ting Qian & Ning Wang, Contributors

Our daughter Janine and her partner Brian, who are two professionals and cat lovers residing in Philadelphia, recently took the adoption plunge after a long time of planning. They scheduled their visit to Animals Can't Talk (ACT), and adopted a five-year old cat with FIV - a virus similar to human AIDS in cats. They named the cat Nori, and hoped he would find comfort in a new home environment that's ideal for an adult cat to enjoy the rest of his life.

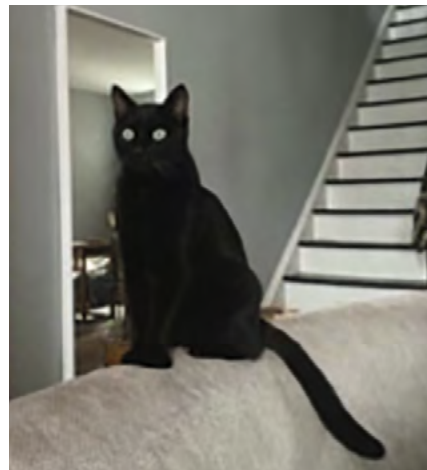
When asked how they ended up adopting Nori, Janine passionately told us, "We went to ACT and saw all the unadopted cats, then we went to go visit one last cat who was being kept in a volunteer's bathroom because he didn't get along with the other cats and had FIV." She continued, "He



was cute as hell and couldn't stop purring. So though we had our hearts set on another cat, he won our hearts by being so happy and sweet but unwanted by everyone."

Naomi Gauntlett, President and Founder of ACT, told us this cat was brought to ACT by a PE resident and ACT volunteer named Roy. He found the cat in his backyard. She said that although this cat did not get along with other cats, he was nice with people.

When asked how to identify if an abandoned cat is wild or domestic, Naomi



explained, "A domestic cat is friendly. It will come to you, you can pet it and pick it up. The cat that runs from you is feral."

Sweet Nori obviously had a connection with his new owners. Naomi was very thankful that our daughter loved him and took him in. And the joy this cat has brought to his new parents was immense.

As a new cat owner, Janine excitedly told us that Nori checked every little hole in the house and explored every corner of the house the day he arrived at his new home, and finally felt settled and had a nice day-long sleep from his long journey the following day.

Love and trust keep growing every day. Janine and Brian even ditched the idea of using automatic food feeders and preferred feeding the cat manually, the way parents feed their own human babies, to ensure Nori gets the attention and love he needs through their human and pet interactions.



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Mother's Day Gift Guide

10 Gifts Any Mom Would Love!

by Debra Celentano, Communications Committee Member

There's something for everyone – from free to \$90

- FabFitFun box – it's a quarterly subscription service. I get it and love it! If you want to use my link you get \$10 off the first box (you can cancel after the first box too) <https://share.fabfitfun.com/x/YjNiyO> Normally, it's \$49.99 so with my \$10 off it makes it quite affordable and the "mom" in your life will get a box that's worth over \$200.
- Ipsy is a similar subscription service that is \$12 a month. It has make-up and skincare products. I don't subscribe to this one but my sister-in-law does and she loves it. You can check it out here (this link may give you a discount or upgrade but I'm not 100% sure): <https://www.ipsy.com/wnjwhyhu>
- Gimme Beauty – this place has the most amazing hair ties ever! I use them,

I have my nieces using them and we all love them. They don't cause headaches, they don't cause breakage and they have ones specific for your hair (thin, thick, medium, long, etc.). They also have some other amazing products (hair-brushes, shower caps and much more). Here's the link: <https://gimmebeauty.com/> - They range in prices but I have the subscription service for hairties for my nieces and pay less than \$15 every three months.



- Calm App – an amazing app to help you chill out and destress. They often have sales but you can start with a week free. I got my year for \$69. <https://www.calm.com/>
- Throw Blanket – I got this throw for Christmas from a friend and it's the absolute best throw I've ever had. It's warm, cozy and comfy. It's about \$27 <http://bit.ly/comfythrow>
- Make-Up and Jewelry Organizer – I don't have this one yet but it's on my short list of things to buy soon. A few friends have it and love it though! It's about \$25 <http://bit.ly/makeuporganizer1>
- If your "mom" is a wine drinker, you can find a ton of fun wine glasses on Amazon. Here's one I thought was funny and it's about \$15. <http://bit.ly/funwineglass>
- On the same note, there's a lot of fun coffee mugs out there for moms. I thought this was a fun one from a child (that has a sibling) to his or her mother and it costs about \$16. <http://bit.ly/funmomcoffeemug>
- A relaxing massage is always a great gift. I go for monthly massages for a shoulder injury, but Massage Academy of the Poconos has a wonder list of massages that range from about \$40 to \$90 (depending on the massage). You can find out more on their website: <https://www.massageacademyllc.com/>
- For those on a budget or a child wanting to do something nice for their mom you can always create some vouchers for cleaning the house, walking the dog or making breakfast. Whatever you do, I'm sure it'll be appreciated.



Happy Mother's Day to all!



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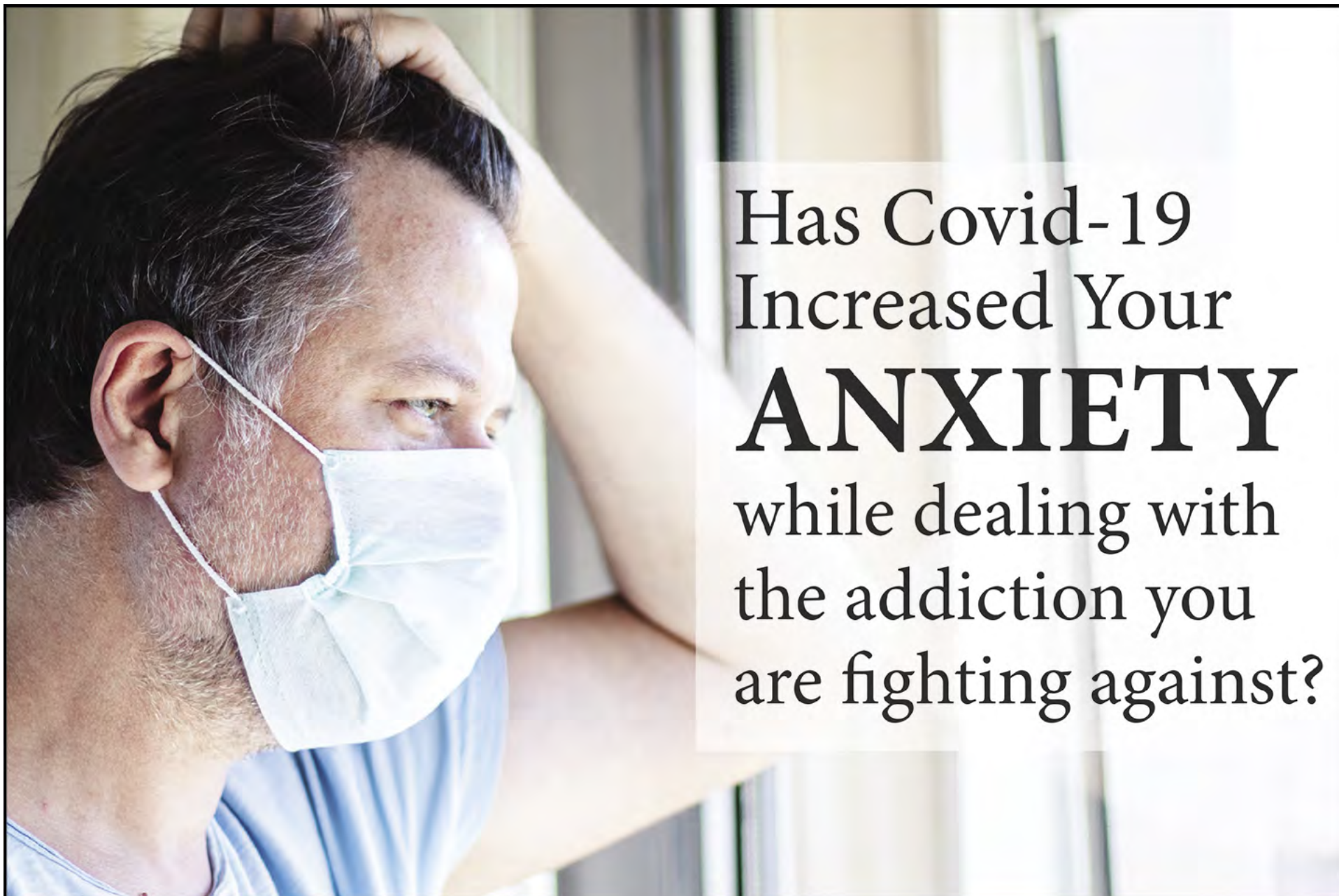
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