

Southmont
Borough

Kindred Spirit

Volume 1; April 20, 1991

About "Kindred Spirit" ...

This is the first publication of a semi-annual newsletter in which we plan to bring to you *newsy* bits of information about your Shade Tree Commission, your Borough, the Fire Company our community and our residents.

We first planned to concentrate only on "Shade Tree" topics. We quickly realized that we would run out of words long before the blank paper was filled with print. It then occurred to us that a newsletter was a great way to communicate with the Borough residents and bring us all a little closer together.

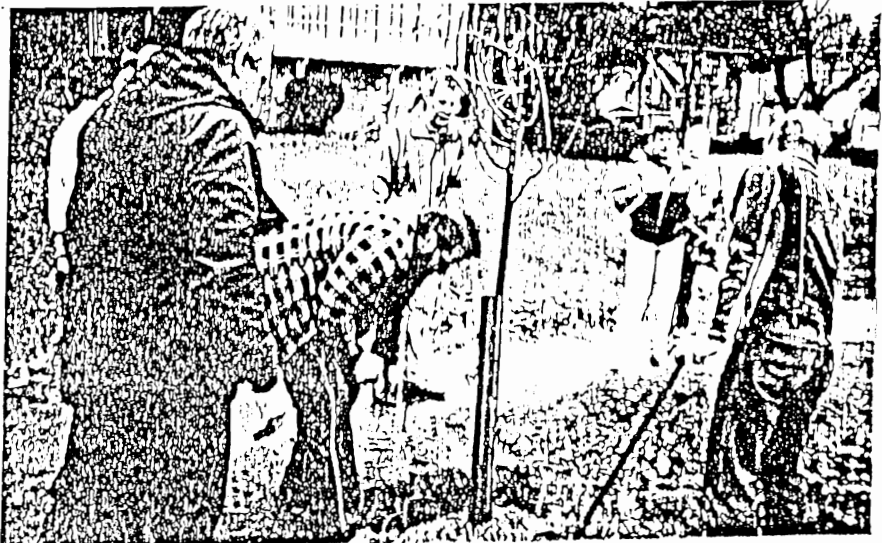
We would be very pleased to receive suggestions and articles from you that could be used for future topics.

Sponsor a Tree

There are many challenges facing communities as they try to restore their declining street trees. You can help in this environmental endeavor by sponsoring a tree in Southmont Borough. The names of residents who sponsor a tree will be displayed on a plaque in the borough municipal building and will also be printed in our fall newsletter. Your tree may be given in the name of a family, member, friend or as a memorial. The trees will be planted during the borough's ARBOR DAY celebration on April 20th in the triangle at the intersections of Menoher Blvd., Mill-creek Road and Geneva Street. We believe the addition of trees to this plot of ground, will greatly enhance the beauty of our community. If you are interested in helping to renew Southmont Borough's urban forest in this way, please complete the form on the back of this newsletter and mail it to the borough office with your check for \$100.

Arbor Day 1991

Southmont Borough's second annual ARBOR DAY celebration will be held on April 20th at the triangle of borough land across from *Ye Olde Country Club*. The ceremony will include brief remarks from the Mayor and from your Shade Tree Commission, the planting of the sponsored trees, and the presentation of the prestigious Tree City USA award to your Borough of Southmont. Please join us on this community day and show your enthusiasm for our borough's role in renewing and restoring America's urban forest. Feel free to come prepared to help plant trees or just come as a spectator, but **please come!**



Planting on Arbor Day 1990. Left-to-right, Frances Kelly, Jan Bosley, Jeff Kloss, Stephen Hildebrand, Mark Maser.

Southmont Borough's Urban Forest — Past and Future

Many of the borough trees that were planted 50 to 90 years ago have declined to the point that they are now just barely surviving. Factors that have contributed to this decline are:

- Inappropriate species selection
- Trees planted in the wrong place or too close together
- Improper maintenance

When planting a tree, please give careful consideration to the suitability of the species to the site. Many trees traditionally planted in the borough (Norway Maple, Silver Maple, Sycamore) were done so before the advent of sidewalks and overhead utility lines. Today, they quickly outgrow the available space. The situation can be compounded by planting the trees too close together. Many beautiful species of trees, planted in the wrong place, can never realize their natural shape and beauty. Before planting a tree along the borough *right-of-way*, please contact the Shade Tree Commission for approval and advice of the shade tree species. The commission is also your resource for information and assistance in tree planting and care.

Borough Happenings

Volume 1; April 1, 1991

Changes in Sewer Billing Anticipated

Changes in billing practice are anticipated with the City of Johnstown-Bureau of Sewage, due to the Public Utility Commission's ruling of a rate increase. The current quarterly billing will change to a monthly billing. The Borough of Southmont has requested that the City of Johnstown, Sewage Department do the billing since the PUC ruling stipulates that invoicing must be done monthly. A monthly billing through the Borough of Southmont would triple the current costs now expended for quarterly billing. The borough has proposed that the City does their own billing and their own collections for Sewer Treatment. Southmont Borough would then be responsible to bill separately for the maintenance fees for the sanitary sewer lines, along with the garbage fees. Information received from the Johnstown Redevelopment Authority indicates this monthly billing by the City could possibly take place as early as April or May. The Borough of Southmont will invoice the quarterly billing in late March for the consumption used in December, January and February (1st Quarter billing). If you have any questions, please call the Municipal Building at 255-3104. The borough will do their best to answer your questions.

25% Energy Savings at the Municipal Building

A new heating system has been installed in the Municipal building this winter. The Peoples Natural Gas cost analyst performed a three year historical study of energy costs to operate the old steam system compared to the newly installed hot water system. The results indicate a 25% savings with the new system.

Recycling in Westmont Borough by September, 1991 —

Under mandate by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Westmont Borough must recycle by September, 1991. Members of Southmont Borough Council have met with Westmont Council representatives in the hopes of learning more about the recycling efforts and to better educate themselves in the types of recyclable items that they will be doing and the capacity involved.

Currently, Southmont Borough is not mandated to recycle, due to its small population. However, recycling will be necessary throughout Pennsylvania in the future when the landfills become overloaded. Paper recycling has already become a part of the first phase of the recycling effort, and stations have been available throughout our area for you to drop off your newspapers and magazines. All residents are asked to support any recycling efforts and to perhaps begin to start some recycling within your own homes.

From the Fire Chief —

"The requirements of the volunteer fire service are changing..."

The Southmont Volunteer Fire Company wishes to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support. Through your past efforts, we have been able to improve and expand this organization yearly. This past year our members attended 335 sessions on 15 different fire & EMS subjects for a total of over 1,340 hours of training. Many of these schools are on weekends or evening classes. They represent county fire schools, Pennsylvania state fire academy classes and the national fire academy. These figures do not represent our weekly training held at the fire station on Thursday nights. The requirements of the volunteer fire service are changing. Fire-fighters must be well trained in many areas including vehicle rescue, building construction and collapse, forest fire-fighting, fire department hydraulics, defensive emergency driving, fire police arson investigation and hazardous materials as well as fire-fighting tactics. Your support has helped this company pay for all expenses incurred for training so that our personnel are second to none. If you have an interest in helping us perform our services stop by the fire hall on Thursday night or contact the borough office. We can offer you a challenging and rewarding experience.

In coming issues we will offer some fire protection tips to help you help us. Is your house address easily readable? Can you quickly read the address from the street? If you can't find your address, how can we? House addresses should be at least four inches in height and be easily visible from the street. If the house is more than 50 feet from the street or if the house is not visible from the street, place the house address on a sign in the yard close to the street. Something as simple as this may make the difference in saving a life in a fire or medical emergency.

More Facts

Volume 1; April 20, 1991

Dealing With Gypsy Moths —

Gypsy moth caterpillars have been busy chewing tree leaves and creating a nuisance for borough residents during the last ten years. Although they may never be eradicated, their numbers can be reduced so that their affects are less noticeable and easier to tolerate. Aerial spraying of insecticides may not always be possible or practical, but there are other control methods available to property owners. The following tips can be used to combat the pests in your own back yard.

Remove resting sites - Anything that a caterpillar can crawl under that is placed on or near a favored gypsy moth food plant can become a resting site.

Destroy female moths and egg masses - Each female moth or egg mass you destroy eliminates an average of 500 caterpillars from next year's moth population. Look for the white females and buff-colored, nickel-to-quarter size egg masses beginning in late June. Carry a spoon and a jar or tin can half full of strong detergent solution with you as you search the tree trunks, loose bark flaps, and other dry, sheltered sites. Scrape any moths and egg masses you find into the solution and let it stand a day or two before discarding. You may remove and destroy egg masses anytime between July and the following April, since the eggs usually don't begin hatching until late April in southern Pennsylvania. Do not merely scrape them onto the ground. This will not kill the eggs. There are also several gypsy moth egg mass sprays on the market which effectively kill the eggs.

Mechanical Controls - Two most widely used mechanical devices are burlap skirts and barrier bands. Burlap skirts are actually traps designed to provide resting sites for caterpillars. Because you install them at chest level, the resting cater-

pillars are easy to collect and destroy with your spoon and detergent solution. The skirt is simply a 12-18 inch wide band of burlap cut a little longer than the distance around the tree. Wrap the band around the tree, overlapping the ends, and tie securely around the middle with baler twine or nylon cord. Fold the top half of the band down over the bottom half to form a loose skirt. Make sure that the skirt flares out and the bottom edge hangs loosely. Band all trees favored by the gypsy moth and check every day or two by lifting the skirt to collect hiding caterpillars. Barrier bands are slippery or sticky tapes wrapped around trees and shrub stems to stop caterpillars from crawling up to the leaves. Available in many styles, colors, and sizes, tests have shown the aluminum foil-type sticky tapes and loose adhesives to be most effective. Do not apply these sticky products to the bark of thin-barked or very young trees!

Insecticidal controls - There are several chemical and biological insecticides registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for gypsy moth control in Pennsylvania. Contact your local garden supply dealer for any insecticides that are available

For more information - There is more information on gypsy moth control options for the home owner available in the **Shade Tree Information Center** in the borough building.

What is the Southmont Borough Shade Tree Commission?

In accordance with the Borough Code of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,

section 2722 "a Shade Tree Commission shall be composed of three residents of the borough, who shall be appointed by the council, and shall serve without compensation. Section 2724 states, "the commission shall have exclusive custody and control of shade trees in the borough." And section 2727 reads, "the cost of planting, transplanting, or removing any shade trees in and along the streets and highways in the borough...shall be paid by the owner of the real estate abutting which the work is done."

Who is the Shade Tree Commission?

The three members of the commission are: Walter Kowtoniak, Thomas Lewis and Donna Zellers. A Shade Tree Advisory Committee was formed this year to provide advice and assistance to the commission. The members of the committee are: Jeff Kloss, Cookie Middleton, Ed Kittka, Jack Green, Ellen Hoffman, Mary Ann Kory, Arlene Cerimele, Sylvia Pasquerilla and Mark Maser. Mark is the service forester from the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry who advises the commission and works with us in developing our projects.

Who Owns the Shade Trees?

The trees lining Southmont Borough streets are within the street *right-of-way* and are therefore the property of all borough residents. Owners of the property that abut the street tree locations maintain these trees. These residents are the caretakers of our urban forest. The Shade Tree Commission is anxious to provide information and assistance to all residents engaged in tree care and maintenance.