

## The Autumn Leaves...

As fall and winter approaches, the shorten daylight and rapid falling temperatures trigger the process by which deciduous trees turn brilliant colors and then lose their leaves. The strategy of dropping and replacing leaves is an adaptation of deciduous trees in temperate regions to protect against drying out during the cold of winter. In warmer weather, moisture lost by leaves through transpiration is constantly replaced by water in soil. In the winter, water in the ground freezes and frequent freezing and thawing would damage delicate tissue if leaves remained on broad leaved trees.

As the growing seasons change, carbohydrates in the leaves are converted to sugar which move down to the roots for storage during the winter. The increase in sugar content and the change in environmental conditions, triggers self destruction of the leaf cells. The first break down is called chloroplasts, the cell parts which contain chlorophyll, and the green pigment that converts carbon dioxide to sugars through the process of photosynthesis, a formation of carbohydrates on leaves by action of sunlight. What is unmasked at this point is the yellow and orange pigments that are always present. The result is the yellow-orange color characteristic of birch, elm, ginkgo, sycamore and other trees. These color pigments combined with brownish color, often caused by tannings, result in the gold color of beech and sugar maple. In some trees carbohydrates that have accumulated over the growing season may be converted to red-purple pigments. Both hereditary predisposition and environmental factors cause the formation of anthocyanins which produce the red-purple color in species such as red maple, dogwood, red oak, sumac and sassafras.

Lower temperatures, bright light, and dry conditions tend to favor conversion of insoluble carbohydrates which leads to the synthesis of anthocyanins. The best autumn color occurs under clear, cool, and dry conditions. Vibrant reds are often seen when sunny days are followed by cool nights. Early frost may actually kill leaves before they show their fall colors. Each year is a guessing game and weather conditions cause variations. That is what makes the annual search for the ultimate route for color display so much fun.

## ...And Then, Snow Covered Branches.

While we are still revelling in the beauty of the "falling" leaves, we must prepare ourselves for the inevitable sight of SNOW. We take good care to prevent any damage to trees and shrubs during the early Spring, and again during the drying Summer but sometimes we forget to do winter maintenance on our surroundings. Late fall is the time to prune or trim some flowering shrubs, and it is a good time to tie up limbs and branches, to prevent breakage during the snow storms that are "sooooo" popular in this area. Dead limbs should be trimmed, to prevent the howling winter winds from breaking them off. Remember, if you do any mulching around shrubs or trees it should be 2" to 4" thick and not against the base.

While the falling snow on the branches portrays a very beautiful picture, we know the damage it can cause. When the snow falls it lays very heavily on the branches, causing the branches to snap off. If possible try to shake off the excess snow, but use caution so as not to cause any further damage.

## What Is Wrong with This Tree?

Diagnosing tree problems can be very difficult. Listed below is some information that can provide clues to why your tree is not growing well.

### 1. What is the name of the tree?

It is important to know the normal appearance and growth habit of a tree before diagnosing a problem.

### 2. What are the common pests that affect this tree?

Most trees have a set of insect, mite and disease pests that effect them.

### 3. Does the tree have specific site requirements or intolerances?

Many plant identification texts can help you determine this. Like soil and water tolerance. Like wind, sun and excessive rainfall tolerance.

### 4. What's happening where the tree stem meets the soil?

This is where you see signs of girdling twine and roots.

### 5. Is the site extremely wet for any extended periods of time?

Be aware of changing soil water relations around plants due to construction, water diversion or broken down spouting.

### 6. Were herbicides applied recently?

Know the injury symptoms caused by common turf and landscape herbicides.

### 7. Were there recent, unusual weather conditions?

Late spring freezes, high winds, hail, drought, and excessive rainfall all affect plant growth. You might note if there has been any other unusual activity that may have affected the health of the plant or tree. The list is endless but might include vandalism, snow-plow damage, or de-icing salt that you might use on your driveway or walkways

## CHAPIN ARCH

Have you seen Chapin Arch lately? It has recently been renovated thanks to the efforts and funding received from Southmont Borough and Grandview Cemetery Association. The 86 year old historic structure served as an entrance to the Grandview Cemetery, built by Peter Chapin in 1920 in memory of his wife.

This Spring Penn Dot will be involved in renovating the area around the Arch. Curbing, parking spaces and signs will be constructed near the structure. After the renovation completion the Arch and the surrounding area will be turned over to the Southern Allegheny Conservancy which will assume ownership of this historic landmark.

# Borough Happenings

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## Borough Happenings!!

The early days and months of 1996 were a little unkind to us and many of our residents who experienced flooding in their homes. While we have no control of how a rainfall or snow storm will affect us, we have taken some step to improve an area of Leon and State Street. This Spring we constructed six new storm water catch basins on Leon Street, to collect the extremely heavy amount of run-off water from the Habeline section of Southmont. A new basin was also constructed in Hannah Alley and another on Diamond Blvd. This new construction will help some of the problem areas.

## Polecat Problems?

Nothing much can be done to deter the little black and white critters from roaming our neighborhoods at night. The PA. Game Commission has issued a word of caution that the skunk and raccoon are two of the most likely animals to carry rabies. The Commission states that skunks do not like the smell of ammonia. By mixing ammonia with water and placing it in containers under porches or in garbage areas might keep the nocturnal wanderer away. It is worth a try, if you can stand the smell of ammonia.

## Permits Required

All permanent property improvements need a building permit. If you are planning to make any improvements and you are not sure of the requirements, please call the Borough Office at 255-3104 and someone will be happy to answer your questions.

## From the Mayor's Desk

We have recently completed an extensive inspection of every home to determine if proper house numbers are clearly displayed for emergency services. Letters were sent to the residents who either have no numbers or the numbers are not visible from the street. We are working in conjunction with the County 911 and the Fire Company who is co-sponsoring a program to make sure your home is clearly marked for emergency vehicles, to find you quickly. Ordinance No. 404 provides that it is the property owners responsibility to install proper address numbers on their homes. It is for your safety and protection to have these numbers installed. Call the SVFC at 255-2633 for information on ordering the Safety in Numbers package.

## SAFETY IN NUMBERS

## From the Fire Chief's Office

Southmont Volunteer Fire Company is approaching its 70th year of service to our community. Through the years we have given low cost fire protection to our residents. The low cost is due to the reliance on residents to supply the manpower, "Volunteers". Being a member of the fire company is not just fighting fires. Many other emergencies, such as building, house or car fires, vehicle accidents, wires down, storm damage, automatic alarm calls, to name just a few. We have members who are Fire Police, to handle traffic control, crowd control and other similar tasks. Some members handle only the administrative tasks. All important functions for day to day operations. And there is the clean-up, to prepare equipment for the next emergency.

To find out more about the SVFC, call 255-2633 and ask where you can help. It falls upon the shoulders of all residents to protect their community. A little of your time will make you feel so good.

## Budget News

Southmont Borough Council has prepared the 1997 budget and the good news is, no tax increase. The annual sewer maintenance fee will remain the same, \$32.00 for the year.

You may have noticed the curve on Southmont Blvd., near Olive Street has been texture milled to help prevent the cars from sliding. As always, drivers should still use caution on the curve.

## RECYCLING NEWS

Once again, Southmont Borough's Recycling Committee is pleased to announce that there will be no increase in the garbage fee for 1997. Our garbage fee will remain \$74.00 for 1997. Our volume of materials removed from the waste stream for the first three quarters of 1996 is 49,000 lbs. Last years total was 53,000 lbs. When we remove this volume from the landfills, we are getting credit from our contractor, thereby allowing us to pass this credit onto the residents. We are eligible to make application to receive an Act 101 Performance Grant, based on the volume we have removed from the landfills. This year it was almost 27 tons. The newspaper recycling volume alone for 1996 was 5,100 lbs. Our first newspaper collection date is scheduled for April 5, 1997 at 8:00 a.m. until Noon. We plan several collection dates to be scheduled for the newspaper recycling in 1997. We will advertise the newspaper collection dates on the back page of the Tribune early in the Spring.

New gas spring shocks were installed on the bin doors. A reminder, with the time change it gets dark much earlier, the recycling center is open from 7:00 a.m. to dusk Monday thru Saturday. Weather permitting, Thursdays we are closed from 7 a.m. until 11:00 a.m., to take the recyclable materials to Total Recycling in Boswell.

We remind everyone, do not include your plastic bags in the individual bins. Use the outside bins provided. Colored glass must be separated from clear glass. NO light bulbs, mirrors, drinking glass, cups, dishes and window or safety glass. Cans and plastics must be rinsed. Contamination can result in additional costs to the Borough.

## BOROUGH NEWS

We received word from the Department of Environmental Protection that we will receive a grant to purchase a new leaf machine. We have two machines, a 1966 leaf loader purchased new and the other is a self-contained unit purchased used, sometime in 1982 believed to be a 1964 model or earlier. This year one machine was completely down and the other was down most of the time. Our grant is for a larger leaf loader collection unit, to be in service for the 1997 leaf collection. With the grant, we will establish a recycling leaf composting program and Grandview will allow us to use an area off Menoher Highway to deposit the leaves until proper treatment decomposes the leaves. Then they will be hauled away.



# More Facts

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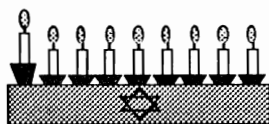
## ARBOR DAY SALUTE

Arbor Day 1996 was celebrated April 20th, on Palliser Street and Edward Street. Trees were planted on Palliser Street thru an Urban and Forestry Community Special Grant which was applied for by Mr. and Mrs. Neil Frey. Residents and children of Palliser Street helped in the planting. The trees that were planted on Edward Street are in anticipation of another Urban and Forestry Community Grant that Mr. Richard Mock made application for as the Edward Street Beautification Project. In kind services were provided by the Borough employees. Mr. William Krupa, Shade Tree Commissioner has grant applications for Urban and Community Forestry Special Grant Program, if residents are interested.

## Planting a Shade Tree?

When you make a decision to plant a shade tree, you should decide which species of tree you want in front of your house. In most cases you have a sidewalk in front of your home and some grass area before your curbing on the street. You also have to consider the area of your sewer pipe line to your home. In general most tree roots inhabit the top eighteen inches of soil and any pipes will be buried much deeper. However, roots will take the path of the least resistance toward moisture, so almost any species will naturally grow roots toward nearby moisture sources, such as french drains, drain tiles, leaky sewer or water pipes. Some tree species are more prone to do this than others, species such as willows, silver maple or poplar. These trees are prohibited to be used as street trees. Street trees won't clog your sewer lines unless they are already broken or leaking.

You will also need to consider if there are utility lines overhead. Southmont Borough Shade Tree Commission has a list of trees that are recommended to be planted under utility lines and also a list of species that may be planted where there is no overhead lines. If you are interested, please stop in the Borough Office for a copy.



## DISEASE ON SHADE TREES

Many deciduous hardwood trees are susceptible to a leaf disease called anthracnose which is caused by various species of the fungus *Apiognomonia* and related genera. Trees such as ash, oak, dogwood and maple are generally affected.

The stage that does not require mating (asexual stage) looks very different from the sexual stage (the reproductive phase that does require mating) that early scientists thought they were totally different organisms. It is now known that fungi previously named *colletotrichum* and *discula* are the asexual stage of *apiognomonia*. These fungi cause very similar symptoms and similar conditions that favor their development.

Symptoms to look for are:

- \*\* Small dead spots forming on leaves, especially if attack occurs when the leaves are almost fully expanded.
- \*\* Dead areas along veins with large dead blotches between leaf veins.
- \*\* Premature defoliation is a common symptom under ideal disease conditions.
- \*\* Twig death is associated with some but not all anthracnoses.
- \*\* Bud killing early in the season resembling frost damage, when leaves are just beginning to expand.

Examine the underside of infected leaves for pimple-like fungal fruiting structures, especially along the leaf veins. Infected leaves shrivel and fall. To some extent, the fungus survives in fallen leaves. Examine dead twigs near the end of branches for pimple like fruiting structures peppering discolored slightly sunken bark areas. To manage anthracnose, prune and destroy dead branches and twigs. Rake and destroy fallen leaves around susceptible trees. For anthracnose control, fungicides can be used. The name of the tree must be listed on the product label in order to use the chemical. Caution, if the tree is not listed it may mean that the chemical is toxic to that tree or plant. Spraying must begin at bud break and be repeated on a weekly or biweekly schedule until the weather warms to the point of an average 60 degrees.

Remember to read directions and follow safety precautions on the labels.

## TREE SPONSORSHIP

The Shade Tree Commission wishes to thank Mr. & Mrs. William L. Carstensen for their contribution in honor of Dr. Edward A. Puderbaugh. A tree has been dedicated, to continue improving our tree lawn areas in Southmont Borough. Our Shade Tree plaque, located in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Building, has 36 dedicated names and contributors listed since we began our Shade Tree Sponsor program. A gift to the "Sponsor a Tree" program keeps on giving. We are proud of the response from our residents, as we know you are proud of the tree lined streets. Thank you to all who help to make our continued program successful.

## OLD PROBLEM, NEW SOLUTION

Beautiful shade trees are dying unnecessarily. The problem is not an exotic disease or an insect attack, but an old problem, and a preventable one. The trees are succumbing to encircling roots. This could happen anywhere. Encircling or "girdling" roots are those that grow back across other roots, eventually creating a "strangulation" by preventing the movement of water and nutrients. There are generally three causes. (1) roots strike a barrier, such as a rock or building, (2) roots are severed too close to the trunk and new roots fail to grow out radially, and (3) most commonly, transplantable trees are left too long in pots or burlap.

Now a consortium of nurseries have developed new growing technology that can eliminate the third cause--spiraling roots in containers. Containers with vertically corrugated side walls and slots are being used. By starting trees in these containers and growing them above ground, laterally spreading roots are air pruned! The result is no encircling roots, a denser root ball, and no need to straighten or prune roots at planting time. (Tree City USA Annual Report)

**Ideas are such  
funny things;  
they never work  
unless you do.**