



### RESIDENTS: FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The Borough of Southmont has received numerous calls about residents who have allowed the trees abutting their sidewalk to become overgrown and have allowed low hanging limbs to obstruct the pedestrian sidewalk.

Council felt it was obligated to establish a sidewalk, roadway, and alley clearance so that all residents were governed by the same guidelines. In its entirety Ordinance No. 420, is as follows:

An Ordinance of Southmont Borough, Cambria County, Pennsylvania, to establish tree limb and shrub clearance at sidewalks, roadways and alleys.

WHEREAS, it shall be the responsibility of the abutting property owners to trim and maintain all trees and shrubs growing along sidewalks, roadways, and alleys of The Borough of Southmont.

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of Southmont Borough, Cambria County, it is hereby resolved as follows:

1. It shall be the responsibility of the abutting property owner to trim and maintain all trees and shrubs growing along the sidewalks, road ways, and alleys of Southmont Borough.

2. No mature tree limbs or branches shall have a clearance of less than seven (7) feet above the surface of the sidewalk or twelve (12) feet above the surface of any roadways or alley.

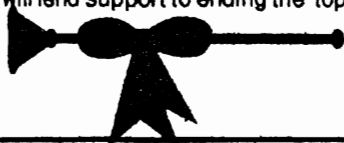
3. Shrubs and hedges shall not impinge on the free passage on the full width of the surface of sidewalks, roadways, and alleys. If necessary, the Borough of Southmont Council should be contacted on proper trimming or interpretation of possible violation.

4. Violations of this ordinance shall be subject to a penalty of up to three hundred (\$300.00), if not corrected within a time period not to exceed fourteen (14) calendar days from the date of notification. Ordained, enacted, and approved into Ordinance No. 420 on the 19th day of June, 2000.

We just wanted to make residents aware that while we have recently passed Ordinance No. 420, the Shade Tree Commission has had Ordinance No. 69 on the books since June 1927. This Ordinance provides for the appointment of the Shade Tree Commissioner, it provides for care and prevention of injury to the trees on the highways and public parks within the Borough of Southmont and provides for penalties and fines. Written permits to cut, trim or remove trees were needed in 1927, as they are today. The importance of trees was a concern of our forefathers and still remains important today. If you have any questions please call the Borough Office or Shade Tree Commissioner, Bill Krupa. Violators will be fined up to \$600.00.

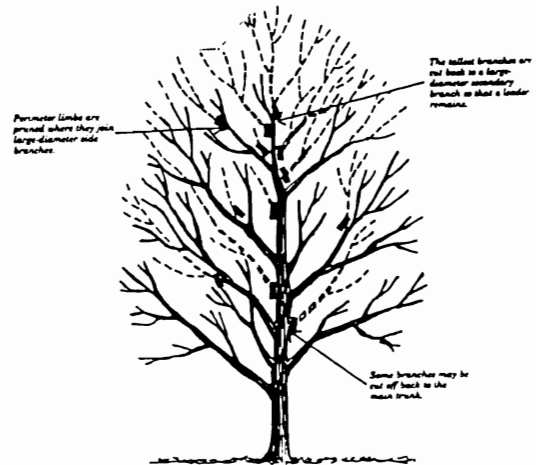
### DO NOT TOP TREES

As many, many previous Newsletters have stated, in almost every issue, we have made residents aware that the trees lining the street are within the street "right-of-way" and are the property of "all" the residents of the Borough. Owners of the property that abut the street tree locations maintain these trees. However, we have shown pictures, provided diagrams and in general gave you instructions on properly maintaining the shade trees on the property abutting the streets within Southmont Borough. When a tree is topped it is a senseless brutalization of older trees. It brings about uglification of the urban forest, striking communities like a plague. A topped tree becomes a disfigured tree. Even with regrowth it never regains the grace and character of its species. You are robbed of a valuable asset. Topping is the absolute worst thing you can do for the health of your tree. Topping removes so much of the crown that it upsets an older tree's well developed crown-to-root ratio and temporarily cuts off its food-making ability. We hope that you will be relieved of the slightest temptation to top trees on your property and that you will lend support to ending the topping of trees in our community.



### Reducing a Large Tree Height

There is sometimes a legitimate reason to reduce the size of a large tree. This can usually be accomplished through pruning, a method called crown reduction rather than by topping. As an alternative to topping the technique of most importance is one called crown reduction. The results can be amazing. When done correctly, crown reduction can look like a good haircut, virtually unnoticeable.



Crown reduction is a "thinning cut" that reduces height and spread without resulting in stubs and creating the kind of problems associated with topping. Rather than the ends of branches simply being lopped off, selected limbs forming the perimeter of the tree are pruned at their junction with side branches that are at least 1/3 the diameter of the branch being removed. In this way, the remaining limbs can take over as the new leaders. This prevents or reduces latent buds from sprouting into the bushy growth that results from lopping branch ends.

With care, crown reduction can be achieved while at the same time retaining the species' natural form. At other times, this method may be modified to allow utility lines to pass through while sparing the tree from removal.

### DID YOU KNOW?

The smallest Tree City USA Award was given to Calvin, North Dakota with a population of 26. The largest Tree City USA Award went to Los Angeles, California with a population of 3.2 million.

Southmont Borough falls somewhere in between these two cities. We are proud of our Shade Tree Commission and their continued efforts. We are used by other municipalities as an example for our beautiful street trees.



# Borough Happenings



Volume 18  
Fall/Winter  
2000/2001

## Borough Happenings!

As usual, as we prepare for the Winter months and the new year to follow, Council is busy preparing the Budget for the year 2001. Something this Council has discussed over the past several years, was to do away with the per capita tax. Council has removed the Per Capita tax from the tentative budget for 2001. Our bid for the Garbage Contract was done in October and Waste Management will again be your garbage hauler. There will not be a change in the weekly schedule. They will also do Spring Clean-up. The cost will go to \$70.00 annually. That is only a \$2.00 increase. We had expected an increase due to the higher fuel costs. This year we will be decreasing the sewer maintenance fee to our residents. The majority of the Department of Environmental Protection Corrective Action projects have been completed. However, we still have to maintain the sewer lines and continue with upgrading our system. Some work needs to be done on State Street and several areas need the linesize increased. With these anticipated repairs Council was still able to lower the sewer maintenance fee to residents. The fee will be \$24.00 from \$32.00 annually. Good News!

**Animal Control**  
Southmont adopted Ord. #419 prohibiting dogs, cats and other animals from running at large. The Borough's agreement with the City of Johnstown is for the provision of Animal Control. (Ord.#419) It appears to be working very well.

### From the Mayor's Desk

Council has decided to install lighting in alleys at various locations throughout our Borough. This is for the safety and protection of all our residents.

While the leaf collection is almost over, residents are reminded that leaves are to be raked to the curb side and not into the streets. The leaf machine can not pick up branches and yard waste. Please do not rake this material to the street. And of course, WINTER is coming. Residents are reminded to park in your driveways, when possible and to always clear your driveway to the right of your property. Remember not to shovel snow into the streets. Keep your sidewalks clear when possible.

The Borough of Southmont Council, Staff and Employees wish you all a very happy and safe Holiday Season.

## From the Fire Chief's Office

### HELP WANTED

You may have read recent newspaper articles about the lack of volunteers that many fire and emergency medical services are experiencing. While Southmont has not reached the critical stage, we are at a low point. This can be contributed to many social and economic factors. State lawmakers are looking into this problem since the safety and well-being of both residents and property are affected. The Southmont Vol. Fire Co. has several state and nationally certified firefighters as well as other members who contribute their time and services. But we need more help. We can use firefighters, fire police, apparatus operators, administrative help, etc. You're never too old to serve. We've

already had retired men volunteer as fire police to help with traffic control. A sixteen year old can serve as a junior fireman and learn the operations of the fire department. If you would like to serve your community and neighbors, please consider joining. We'd love to have you! Give us a call or stop by to lend a hand. We'll be glad to see you. Please have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season. Southmont Fire Department 255-2633

### CITIZEN INPUT

Borough Council members are always looking for residents who are willing to serve on the various Boards and Commissions that are necessary in the operations of Municipal Government. If you are

interested, please call the Borough Office and leave your name.

### CLIP & SAVE

Newspaper recycling in 2001 will be March 24th, June 9th, August 11th and October 20th, 8 a.m. till Noon only, at the Borough Building. Newspapers must be bundled. Waste Management will be doing the Spring Clean-up collection, 2001 thru 2003. For the year 2001 it will be done on May 16th and 17th., with your regular weekly collection. If you have any questions you can call them at 467-4011. Crack sealing will be done sometime in April 2001. Brush cleanup is done the third week of October. At no time should you rake yard waste and twigs into the street. Bundle twigs and place out with your garbage. **Watch newspaper for schedules.**

### RECYCLING NEWS

**While our recycling figures are down slightly for this year, we negotiated a good contract with Waste Management. We continue to receive credit for the volume removed from the wastestream. Last year we received \$1,000 in credit. Residents are urged to recycle more for continued savings. With the higher cost of fuel the garbage fee will go up \$2.00 for 2001. The annual fee will be \$70.00. Newspaper collections will be March 24, June 9, August 11, and October 20, 2001. Spring Clean-up will be done May 16th and 17th in conjunction with your regular garbage pick-up. Batteries, tires, Auto/Truck parts, construction materials or liquids excluded. No appliances with freon can be picked up. To have freon removed call a plumber. All yard and shrub trimmings must be tied in 3' bundles. If you have any questions, please call USA Waste Management at 479-4011. A reminder will be published in the newspaper.**

**We are having a problem with someone putting window glass in the bins for recycling. Each time this happens we must pay extra fees because the glass becomes contaminated. NO WINDOW OR SAFETY GLASS should be placed in these bins. Fines will be imposed if this continues. Recycling hours are 7:00 a.m. to dusk Monday thru Saturday. Closed Thursdays 7 a.m until 11:00 a.m. Use outside bins provided for plastic bags. Glass must be separated. Rinse cans and plastics. Compress plastics. NO light bulbs, mirrors, drinking glass, cups, dishes and window or safety glass or wire hangers. Ordinance 389 provides for fines of up to \$300.00. for contaminating and littering. Thanks for participating.**



## Tree City USA Tips

There are times when the size and shape of a shade tree needs to be controlled. With care and skill, this can be accomplished without marring the tree's beauty or usefulness. Responsible pruning contributes to the health and safety of a tree. As an alternative to topping, some general principles are; 1.) Start out by planting trees that will fit your available space when they reach maturity. 2.) Begin proper pruning early in the life of a tree. 3.) To slow growth of a tree; avoid the use of nitrogen. 4.) Prune properly and regularly. A light prune every three years will keep your tree in a healthy condition. It will also have a less drastic effect on both the landscape and your financial assets compared with neglecting older trees or resorting to topping. \*\*\*\*\* Remember that you must have permits to cut or remove any tree along Borough streets. Penalties and fines can be up to \$600.00.



## What is Topping?

The sight of topped trees is all too common in our community. Trunks with stubby limbs standing naked in the landscape and with trees stripped of all dignity and grace. To anyone who loves trees, the sight usually evokes anger and disgust. As more is learned about the long-term effects of tree topping, the more senseless this practice becomes. It is more than an assault on beauty, it is unnecessary stress and increased risk to the tree's health. Trees are often topped because they grow into utility wires, interfere with the view, or simply grow so large they worry the landowners. Pruning is a technique to remove limbs of a large street tree. "Under pruning" is used to allow wires to pass below the trees. To preserve the tree's appearance, lower limbs on the opposite side of the tree should also be removed. "Side Pruning" is often needed when a tree is located close beside transmission lines. As the limbs extend toward a pole or the wires, they must be removed. Pruning on both sides of the tree can prevent a lopsided appearance.

## Why NOT to "TOP"

There are eight good reasons not to top your trees.

1.) **Starvation:** Topping removes so much of the crown that it upsets an older tree's crown to root ratio and temporarily cuts off its food making ability.

2.) **Shock:** A tree's crown (umbrella) shields the tree from direct rays of the sun. Remove this protection and the remaining bark tissue (skin) is exposed to scalding.

3.) **Insects and Disease:** The large stubs of a topped tree have a difficult time forming callus. The tree's natural defense systems are highly vulnerable to insect invasion and the spores of decaying fungi.

4.) **Weak limbs:** At best, the wood of a new limb that sprouts after a large limb has been topped is more weakly attached. If rot exists or develops at the severed end of the limb, the weight of the limb becomes a dangerous situation.

5.) **Rapid new growth:** The goal of topping is usually to control height of a tree. After topping, the new "Sprouts" are far more numerous and they elongate so rapidly that the tree returns to its original height in a very short time.

6.) **Tree Death:** Some species do not respond to topping and do not sprout rapidly after such severe pruning. The reduced foliage will lead to the death of the tree.

7.) **Ugliness:** A topped tree is a disfigured tree. Even with regrowth it never regains the grace and character of its species.

8.) **Costs:** To a worker with a saw, topping a tree is much easier than applying the skill and judgement needed for good pruning. However, the true costs can be hidden. These include: reduced property value, removal and replacement if the tree dies, the risk of liability from weakened branches and increased future maintenance.

These are just a few of the reasons we stress that the topping of trees will destroy the beauty of our tree lined streets, while reducing the overall beauty of the area. Please remember these point before you decide to trim or cut your trees. If you have any street tree trimming to be done or if you have a question, please do not hesitate to call the Borough Office.

## TREE SPONSORSHIP

The Shade Tree Commission has planted additional trees this year through contributions from Mr. & Mrs. William Carstensen Jr., dedicating a tree in the name of Irene Carstensen and Mr. Everett R. James in memory of Muriel A. James. When dedicating a tree in memory or in honor of a loved one, you are providing a lasting memory and a visible reminder of your caring for family or friends, living or deceased. A tree provides a healthier environment for the community as well as a constant reminder to all of us.

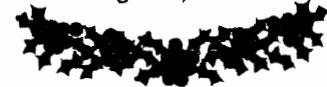
### ARBOR DAY "2001" \*\*

The Arbor Day celebration for the year 2001 will be held on May 5th at 10:00 a.m. The site will be announced at a later date. If residents have any suggestions, please get in touch with Mr. Krupa at 255-6242 or call the Borough Office. Trees planted on Arbor Day and throughout the year are paid for by the Sponsor a Tree contributions, remembering loved ones, by abutting property owners and by Southmont Borough. On Arbor Day 2001 Southmont Borough will once again be honored with the Tree City USA award for the 11th year.

New members to our Shade Tree programs are always welcome. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Shade Tree Advisory Committee, please call the Borough office and leave your name and number. Mr. Krupa will be in touch with you.

## DID YOU KNOW

In 1999 there were 2,619 Tree City USA awards given to participating municipalities. This is an increase of 2.4% from the previous years. In 1999 Southmont received a 10 Year Award for our part in Tree City USA. We will continue to grow, as will our trees.



The New Year gives you a chance to look backwards and forward, to reset your inner compass. Have a Safe and Happy Holiday from Council, Staff and Employees. 2001