

KINDRED SPIRIT

Southmont Borough



Volume 24
Fall/Winter 03

Message from Council President, Kevin L. Pile

Speeding in Southmont

More and more complaints have been sent to the Borough regarding speeding motorists on Southmont streets. The concern seems to be related to the disregard for the posted speed limits within the Borough and the danger that it presents to playing children. The Borough has installed various signs, painted "SLOW" on many streets and have asked the West Hills Regional Police to patrol the streets. We are asking residents for their cooperation.

Fall Leaf Pick-up.

By the time you receive this newsletter the leaf collection should be underway. Rake leaves to the curb (front of house); do not put leaves into the street (wet leaves can be dangerous for drivers); also **Please Be Patient**. You do not need to call the Borough office to let us know your leaves have been raked to the front of your house. Borough workers follow a schedule and make several trips through the Borough to collect leaves.

Recycling

Residents are reminded that recyclables can be placed in the trailer Monday through Saturday-Dawn to Dusk. The volume of recyclables has dropped off considerably. Residents are reminded that the volume removed from the waste stream reflects in a discount in our annual garbage fee to the hauler. The less you recycle the more you will pay for your annual fee. Think about it.

Snow Removal Season

The top priority of Southmont Borough is maintaining clear and safe roadways throughout the Borough during the snow removal season. However, our Road Crew personnel cannot perform this service successfully without your assistance. Please take the time to review our tips for the snow season.

- * Do not drive unnecessarily especially during severe snowstorms and freezing rain.

- * If a storm is anticipated, if possible, remove vehicles from the streets. This allows plows to clear the area the first time through, making return trips unnecessary.

- * Do not shovel snow into the street or have your driveway plowed into the street. This can cause a serious traffic hazard. It is best to place snow on the side of your driveway or lawn area opposite the direction the plow is traveling. By implementing this technique, the plow will carry the snow away from your driveway rather than back into it. If possible wait until the streets have been plowed before cleaning out your driveway or walks. There is no practical way to plow without depositing snow back into your driveway.

- * Avoid calling the municipal office during a storm unless it is an emergency. Phone lines should be clear for emergencies.

- * Have your vehicle properly equipped for winter driving.

Trees and Turf

We've all seen thinning grass under large shade trees; large surface roots that cause safety hazards and mowing obstacles; young trees that don't seem to grow; and tree trunks badly damaged by lawnmowers or string trimmers. All of these undesirable affects are caused by trees and turf growing too closely together. Woody plants and turfgrasses are both critical components of design plans for homes, parks and offices. Personnel preferences for color, fragrance and form should complement the functional properties of size, shape and density. Turfgrasses provide many of the same environmental benefits as trees. They change carbon dioxide into oxygen that we breathe. They cool the air by changing water into water vapors, stabilize the dust, entrap the air polluting gases and control erosion. Turfgrasses, in addition to being environmentally beneficial, are attractive in formal and informal designs. There are many advantages to combining trees and turf in the landscape around your home.

Most turfgrasses are generally sun-loving plants. They require 50% open sunlight; however, new varieties with improved shade tolerance are being introduced. Consult your garden center specialists for recommendations of shade tolerant grasses for your area. An effort should be made to make your trees and lawn area compatible. The fun is in the planning.

Highlights/2004

Newspaper Recycling
April 3, June 5, Aug 14, Oct 16, from 8 a.m. till Noon at the Borough Building Garage.

Spring Clean-up
May 19th & 20th, with regular pick-up

November 4, 2003
Election Day

Arbor Day -May 8, 2004

Fall Brush Clean-up
is scheduled for the third week in October, every year.

Leaf Collection/at curb side October thru November 30.

RECYCLING or Lack of

Recycling volume is very low. We will be going into negotiations for a contract this month. The volume removed from the waste stream by recycling keeps your annual garbage fee low. We receive credit for the volume removed and this keeps your cost down. If everyone does not participate in recycling your costs will climb. If you don't recycle please start, if you do, please continue.

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Borough Happenings!

Ahhh summer with plenty of rain to bud those trees and produce a bountiful leaf crop and possibly an early fall where all those leaves will fall probably too fast brings us to WINTER. I am sure we haven't forgotten last "falinter". (That's when fall and winter became one season.) The Borough has purchased a new leaf machine, leaf collections should be a lot more efficient. During snow, remember to clear your driveways to the right, (less snow plowed back into your driveway). Remember not to shovel snow into the street. And, clear your sidewalks to avoid any liability to you as a property owner. Above all have a safe winter season.

NOTICE: In 1999 the Uniformed Construction Code Act No 45 was signed. The Act creates a state-wide building code, that provides for the training and certification of construction code inspectors. PA. Department of Labor & Industry will require adopting regulations and will require compliance by municipalities. Regulations will govern the design, construction, alteration, enlargement, repair or demolition of all buildings within the state. Southmont has signed to opt-in with Middle Department Inspection Agency to do inspections if necessary but not until the Regulatory Review is final. This has not been done to date.

From the Mayor's Desk

The borough street guys worked hard this summer painting in big white letters the word "STOP" at many of our intersections. I believe it has made a difference in intersection safety. After all this work to make streets safer, I very often see the drivers who simply don't stop at the stop signs. It is as if, "hey, no one is coming" and slide through. These signs are there for safety reasons. I would hate to have to be the person who has to call 911 for you, or worse yet, one for the person you hit. *Gerry*

Fire Company News

A wet summer has ended and winter is fast approaching. We remind all residents to insure that their furnaces are cleaned and checked to be in proper working order. Insure that your chimney is clean, replace those batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to insure that you have a safe winter. The wet summer has taken a toll on all of us. Your fire company suffered greatly due to the rainouts at the annual jubilee. The jubilee is the biggest fund raiser and profits were down 25% from last year. Even though we were rained out Saturday night, the ticket drawings were held. We are happy to report that all ticket winners this year were residents of Southmont. Thanks again for all your support.

Reminder

Residents are reminded that you are to have your garbage out early the morning of pickup or late the previous night. Please place garbage in cans with lids, as the birds, crows, and /or rodents get into the bags. Any garbage left lying around after the "critters" tear open the bags is your responsibility. Please clean up around your garbage area. Thank you for keeping Southmont a neat place to live.

Fire co. cont'd.

This time of the year we receive many calls about carbon monoxide detector activation. If your CO detector should go off, call 911 for the fire department to respond. Get out of your house and into the fresh air. Do Not open doors or windows to air out the house. It is much easier to determine the source of the leaks and the amount of concentration if you do not ventilate your home. We hope you have a safe winter and a Happy Holiday season. Remember to check your extension cords during the Holiday season. Please feel free to contact your Fire Department if you have any questions. Our number is 255-2633.

"Critter" Tips: Once again the formula for deterring skunks and other critters is 8oz. of castor oil, 8oz. of dish detergent and 1 gallon of water. Simply spray where the skunk trails are. A few drops of bleach in your trash bag keeps birds and animals away. To solidify paint use clay cat litter.

Please clean-up after your pets, violations and fines will be imposed.

Happy Holidays from Southmont Borough Council

Hilltop Recreation

The Hilltop Recreation Commission is proud to announce a fundraising event that will debut Far North Professional Wrestling at "the Grove" on Sunday, November 16, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. (no Steelers game that day)

Far North Wrestling is action packed with excitement and fun entertainment for the entire family. You will have a chance to get up close and personal with one of WWF's greatest stars, the Honky Tonk Man. Tickets: VIP-\$14 Front Row, \$12- Ring Side and \$10. General Admission. Many activities and programs are scheduled for Fall and Winter. **Pre-school/Youth:** Girls/Boys Instructional basketball (ages 4-10), Indoor Roller Hockey

(ages 7-12), Soccer-Skills, Drills, and Fun (ages 4-10) After School Drop In. Basketball grades 4-12 and many others. Adults/Seniors: Yoga for Everyone, Gentle Yoga (designed for those with limitations), Aerobic Classes, Golf Fitness Clinic, Dog Obedience Class. Fran Lechak will conduct classes in soy and tofu cooking for a healthy heart. Don't miss out on these great opportunities. For more information or to register please call 539-1877.



TRICK

OR TREAT

10-30-03 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

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* Tree Selection

Tree selection is far too often a spontaneous decision. Prior to selection time should be spent considering how the tree will look 25 years in the future. The question you must ask yourself is "for what purpose is the tree intended"? A large tree at maturity will provide shade. An ornamental tree will provide beautiful flowers, leaves or bark. A tree that has dense, persistent leaves will provide windbreak, a screen or privacy. A tree that drops its leaves in the fall will allow sun to warm the house in winter. A tree or shrub that produces fruit will attract birds and wildlife.

Choose the right tree for the right reasons.

Tree Location

Trees are living organisms that grow larger each year increasing in crown, height width and in root system size. A common mistake is to plant too many trees or shrubs in a limited space. They will become over crowded. Nearby buildings will restrict selection to upright or columnar trees. Overhead utility lines restrict selection to small trees. Consider mature tree shapes. Trees with low spreading branches are good for screens but not for placing along streets where safety and visibility is essential. Consider the amount of sunlight available. Woody plants need full sunlight. Few trees species perform well in dense shade.

Soil Conditions

The volume and quality of soil can limit planting success. Tree roots can grow in topsoil. Trees need a minimum of 6", however 10"-15" is much better. The physical aspects of the soil include soil profile, texture, compaction and capacity to hold water. The chemical aspects are nutrients, soil pH and organic matter content. Chemical aspects can be more easily managed. Lack of the chemical aspect will likely limit the growth. Organic matter is living organisms such as earthworms, fungi, etc. they provide soil structure, nutrient availability and water holding capacity.

Southmont Borough Council wishes all residents a very Happy and a very Safe Holiday !

Benefits of Trees

Most trees and shrubs in communities are planted to provide beauty or shade. These are two excellent reasons for their use. The benefits of trees can be grouped into social, community and environmental categories.

Social Benefits:

We like trees around us because they make us feel serene, peaceful, restful and even tranquil in a setting of trees. We feel "at home" when surrounded by trees. The strong ties to people and trees are evident in the resistance of residents when trees are removed to widen streets and when trees are cleared to build large malls.

Community Benefits:

Even though trees may be private property their size often makes them part of the community. Since trees take up considerable space, planning is required if both you and your neighbors are to benefit. With proper selection and maintenance, trees will enhance and function without infringing upon the rights and privileges of neighbors. Trees bring natural elements and wildlife into urban surroundings, all of which increase the quality of life for residents in the community. We often become attached to the trees that we or those we love have planted, perhaps as a living memorial.

Environmental Benefits:

Trees alter the environment by moderating the climate we live in, improving air quality, and harboring wildlife. The sun is absorbed or deflected by the leaves on deciduous trees in summer and is only filtered by branches of trees in winter. Trees intercept water and reduce storm runoff and the possibility of flooding. Leaves filter the air we breathe by removing dust and other particles. Leaves absorb carbon dioxide and other pollutants, such as ozone. These facts have been developed by the Society of Arboriculture.

"Go" is the shortest complete sentence in the English language.

SHADE TREE COMMISSION

The Shade Tree Commission is continuing to remove and replant trees within the Borough right-of-way. This is an ongoing project for the Commission. Each year it costs the borough approximately \$7000./\$8000. for care of the shade trees.

Mr. Krupa works diligently to look at the trees and to remove the trees most hazardous. It is a constant year around project. Residents have been cooperative and respond to the removing of hazardous trees

lining their property by agreeing to replace a tree if the Borough removes the tree. This is the practice of the Shade Tree Commission. Residents help with this program by making contributions to renew the Urban Forest. This past year contributions were made dedicating a tree to Zackary and Mallory by Mr. & Mrs. Bill Krupa and contributions were received from Mr. Branko Svitchen and from Ken & Chris Funkhouser. Contributions made over \$100.00 are engraved on our dedication board. See the back page for more details.

Arbor Day 2004 will be on May 8, 2004. The Shade Tree Commission will begin planning where Arbor Day ceremonies will be held. If you have any suggestions, please let any Commission member know and considerations will be made.

