



KINDRED SPIRIT



Volume 35

Fall/Winter 2009

Special Points of Interest:

* **Waste Management Services** will run one day behind on the following days: November 26, November 30, December 25 and January 1.

* **Pro-Disposal** will be taking over for Waste Management as of January 1, 2010. Garbage and Sewer Maintenance fees as well as pick-up days will remain the same.

* **Borough Office Closed** November 26—27, December 25, 2009 and January 1, 2010.

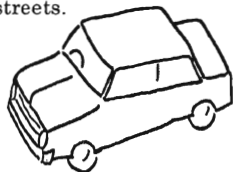
* **Daylight Savings Time** ends Sunday, November 1—set clocks back one hour.

* **Trick or Treat** will be on Saturday, October 31st. from 6p.m.—8 p.m.

* **Leaf Collection** at curb side October 12 thru November 30th.

FRIENDLY REMINDER

Please remember it is a motor vehicle violation to park vehicles on or across public sidewalks. Please keep all motor vehicles on the streets.



Office Hours:

8:00 a.m.— 4:00 p.m.

148 Wonder Street
Johnstown, PA 15905

Phone: 255-3104

Fax: 255-4150

E-mail:

smtboro@atlanticbnn.net

Website:

www.southmontborough.com

Message from the Southmont Borough Council

This is the time of the year the following items should be reviewed by residents...

Sidewalks & Curbs

Current Borough Ordinance #'s 39, 397 and 403 provide that all owners (or agent of owner), with property abutting or fronting upon any street, are required to keep the public walkway immediately abutting their property in good repair. The Borough will inspect and the property owner will be notified that repairs that repairs are necessary. The property owner should notify the Borough office on their intention to fix the sidewalks. If not notified, the Borough will contract to have the work done at the property owner's expense.

Snow Removal

Residents are requested not to plow, shovel or blow snow from their sidewalks or driveways back into the street. When clearing your driveway, push snow to the right of your driveway or "down stream". It is impossible not to have snow pushed into your driveways. Priority is given to streets along bus routes and hills, secondary streets and alleys are done as quickly as possible. Residents have been requested to park in their driveway or off the main streets during heavier snow conditions, to better accommodate snow plows and material spreading vehicles.

Push snow to the right of your driveway.



Establishing Tree Limb & Shrub Clearance at Sidewalks, Roadways and Alleys

Borough Ordinance #420 states the following:

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

Borough.

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

Southmont Borough Council should be contacted on proper trimming or interpretation of possible violations.

Council wishes all residents to have a safe and happy holiday season. If you have any suggestions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Borough Office at 255-3104



Fall Brush Clean-Up Canceled

The Borough will no longer be having a Fall Brush Clean-Up. Any brush and limbs may be disposed of with the following specifications:

- Make sure limbs are cut down to no longer than 3 ft.
- Bundle and tie together any large pile of brush. (If you do not have a large amount of limbs they do not need to be tied, but please place in an easily gathered pile.)
- Leaves and yard waste must be placed in bags.

with garbage collection

PUBLIC REMINDER ON ANIMAL NUISANCE

Please remember to carry clean-up tools when you are out walking your dog. According to Southmont Borough Ordinance #374 no person, being the owner or having control of an animal being walked with or without a leash, shall allow such animal to urinate or defecate on any property other than that of such person. No such person shall allow such animal to defecate on any property other than that of such person or on a public street, alley, ground, parkway, thoroughfare, lot of other public or private property without immediately removing the defecation and cleaning the animal feces from place of deposit and restoring such a place to its condition before the defecation. Please be considerate of your neighbors and the community. We all work hard to keep our properties looking nice.



TREE HEALTH

Preserving trees is not very complicated if you understand how they function and what they need to grow. Trees are living organisms that respond to what is done to them and to the environment that they occupy. To stay healthy and vigorous, trees need air, water and soil nutrients. Trees need protection from insects, disease and physical damage. Trees have roots, bark, a trunk, branches and foliage, and they will thrive only if these organs remain healthy and undamaged.

Roots are essential to tree health. They support tremendous weight, store food and take up water and nutrients from the soil.

Bark serves as a living barrier to insects, disease and water loss and as a transport system. On the inner side of the bark is the cambium, a single layer of cells that produce a new layer of xylem (wood) and phloem (bark) each year. Together, the xylem and phloem make up the circulatory system of the tree.

A tree trunk provides height to the canopy of the tree, space for storing food materials

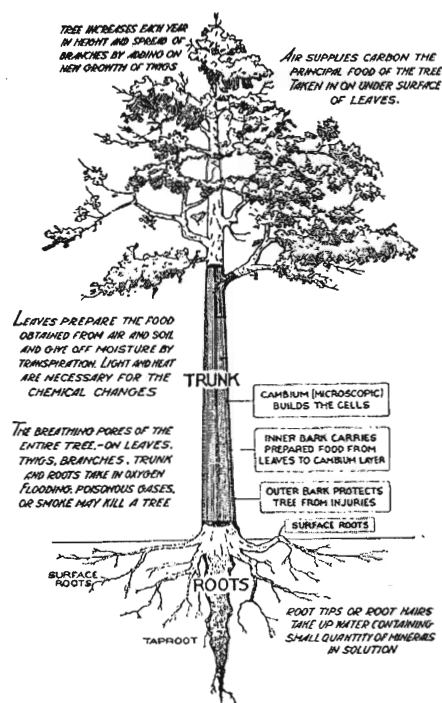
and support for the branches and leaves.

Tree limbs, branches and twigs support leaves, where most of a tree's food is produced in a process called photosynthesis.

Wounds that penetrate through the bark into the wood enable insects and fungi that cause decay or diseases to pass through the outer defenses of the tree. There is a misconception that trees are able to "heal their wounds." A tree does not heal, or fill, a wound. Compartmentalization of decay in trees is a process that protects the unwounded part of a tree from decay through the development of physical and chemical boundaries that resist the spread of disease into surrounding wood. If a tree is damaged, it can be marred for life or killed. Wounds and pockets of decay do not fill, but are compartmentalized and covered by wound wood. As a result, pockets of decay never disappear, even if they are covered by new wood. Some trees decline slowly over a number of years because of injury, others may die quickly.

*Information from Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences "A Guide to Preserv-

ing Trees in Development Projects."



The Value of Mulch

A young tree's best friend, mulch insulates soil, retains moisture, keeps out weeds, prevents soil compaction, reduces lawn mower damage, and adds an aesthetic touch to a yard or street. Remove any grass within a 3-foot area and pour organic mulch such as wood chips or bark pieces 2 to 4 inches deep within the circle. Keep the mulch from touching the trunk of the tree.



HOW TO PRUNE YOUNG SHADE TREES

According to The Arbor Day Foundation, how you prune your tree during its first few years will affect its shape, strength and life span. Proper pruning will save you money and give you safer, healthier, more beautiful, and easier-to-maintain trees.

Keys to Good Pruning

1. Prune early in the tree's life so pruning wounds are small, but do not start until the third year or so. A new transplant needs its leaves to

produce for new growth.

2. Identify the best leader and lateral branches before you begin pruning and remove any defective parts before pruning to form. Try to find and use lateral branches that form "10 o'clock" or 2 o'clock" angles with the trunk. Branches will have greater strength than those with sharper angles.

3. Keep your pruning tools sharp.

Prune with an eye to the future

As you prune, remember that the branches do not move up the trunk as the tree grows. A branch 5 feet from the ground now will be 5 feet off the ground in 10 years, only thicker and longer than it is now. Prune shade trees as lightly as possible and only when there is a good reason to prune. Never remove more than one-fourth of a tree's crown in a season.

Message from the Borough Manager

The first eight months of 2009 have been a very active time for Southmont Borough. Public Works is always very busy, but especially this year. With the directives from DEP for eliminating outside sources of water into the sanitary sewer system, it has created many additional projects. Besides the regular maintenance in the Borough, we have installed four new man-holes to monitor the sewer system and a new railing has been installed on the Harding Street Steps. The traffic lights at Menoher Blvd. and Gardner St. have been upgraded with LED components acquired through a State Grant. We have also painted the fences at the State St. soccer field along with completely renovating the inside of the restrooms

You may notice Council members walking in your neighborhood visually inspecting your downspouts to comply with DEP directives. You may also notice Public Works following up on these inspections with dye testing.

I would like to commend the residents of Southmont Borough for their diligence and continuing upkeep of their properties. As your Codes Enforcement Officer I will continue to monitor and review any problems that surface.

The Shade Tree Commission is also doing an outstanding job with the ongoing up-grading of the shade trees throughout the Borough. We have been awarded a matching grant of \$6,000 for additional planting and we will be

seeing this activity between this fall and next spring. It should also be noted that the Johnstown Garden Club has done an excellent job of showcasing the area near Barnett St.

There are also those jobs and positions we all take for granted, but hats off to the Southmont Borough Council for their sincere concerns for the Borough and its residents. And the fire company and police department for their protection to the residents. Enjoy the fall season and get ready for Old Man Winter!



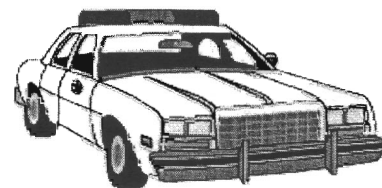


According to the Pennsylvania Borough News, TreeVitalize is designed to halt tree loss and revitalize our older communities, improve our air and water and enhance the quality of life for our citizens. What better way to bring life and beauty to an area than by planting trees? Launched in 2004, this program funded by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) was designed to plant trees in urban areas, some pollution-ridden, bare regions. It's driven by a public-private partnership of DCNR, Penn-State's Forestry Extension, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and local governments. Its goal: increase tree coverage and plant one million trees in parks, schools, yards and other public areas by the year 2012. TreeVitalize began in southeaster Pennsyl-

vania and has since moved north and west. Trees clean the air by absorbing carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases; create shade to cool sidewalks and streets; help control runoff by intercepting rain and helping water infiltrate back into the water table; reduce soil erosion and create noise buffers.

In addition to coordinating resources to support tree plantings, TreeVitalize aims to train thousands of volunteers in proper tree care techniques. These "citizen foresters" will provide urban forestry know-how and skills in towns where they often were lacking, and ensure the future health of newly planted trees. In the five years since this program began, almost two dozen boroughs have added trees to their area due to TreeVitalize's funding. Volunteer help in the form of planting, watering, proper pruning, etc. are coordinated through the Southmont Shade Tree Committee. Southmont must provide evidence of community volunteer efforts and matching labor/equipment costs to receive funding for the 15—30 trees being planted in

2009. Individual efforts also are welcomed. People wishing to plant trees themselves can visit the TreeVitalize website - www.treevitalize.net- and add their trees to the overall total of trees planted thus far.



West Hills Regional Police Dept.

The 2009-2010 school year has begun and there are numerous school buses on the roadways, particularly in the early morning and afternoon hours. There are also children walking to and from school. Therefore, the West Hills Regional Police, again, caution all drivers to be more alert and observant. Also, for the safety of both the students and the police officers directing traffic, we want to remind all drivers that the speed limit in the school zone in the morning before school begins and in the afternoon when the students are dismissed, is 15 mph. It is imperative that drivers obey the directions of the officers and drive within the speed limit in the school zone. It should also be noted that the fines are significant for drivers who fail to comply.

During the past few years, there has been a considerable increase in Identity Theft. Although there is no sure way to prevent Identity Theft, common sense should prevail to protect yourself against this type of crime. Some of the precautions include guarding your

Social Security Number, as this is a prime target of identity thieves. Destroy papers that contain personal information with a shredder. Do not throw paperwork that contains personal information into the trash. Copy both sides of the credit cards and data that you carry in the event you lose your purse or wallet. That information will be very helpful when you contact the bank and/or credit card company to report the loss. Never provide personal information over the telephone unless you have implicit trust in the business or person with whom you are dealing. Be very alert when using your pin number at an ATM and when making purchases with credit cards. Use only secure sites when transacting personal business on a computer as it is possible for others to view personal information sent over the internet. Additionally, install virus protection and firewall software on your computer to ensure that the site is secure.

We again remind you that gun locks are available, free of charge, at Police Headquarters and it is not necessary to be a resident of the West Hills area to obtain these safety devices.

Chief Andrew T. Havas oversees the West

Hills Regional police Department with the assistance of Det. Sgt. George Musulin III (Criminal Investigator) and Corporal Michael W. Lose. The Administrative Secretary is Judith A. Fetcko. Police headquarters is located at the rear of the Westmont Borough Municipal Building, 1000 Luzerne Street. The administrative staff is available between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The West Hills Regional Police provides 24/7 coverage, and an Officer can be contacted at any time by calling either the non-emergency 9-1-1 number of 1-800-281-1680 or the office number of 255-4145 (which will roll over to the 9-1-1 non-emergency number if no one is in the office). Police caution residents, however, to immediately dial 9-1-1 if there is an emergency.

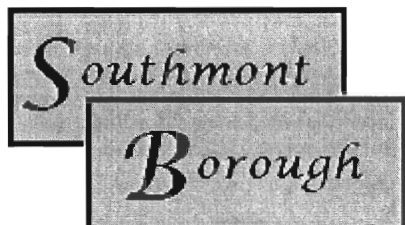
The West Hills Regional Police ask all residents to become involved in crime prevention. This can be done by something as simple as securing your home when you are away and making it a habit to lock your car door, no matter where you park your vehicle. Also, report all suspicious activity when it is occurring so that an Officer can respond immediately. The Police have solved many crimes with the assistance of people who are willing to become involved.

Trick or Treat will be held on October 31st from 6 pm— 8 pm



Southmont Borough Fire Co.

Currently waiting on Fire Co. report. I gave them a deadline of Sept. 25th. If we don't have an article by then I have a few stand-by articles to go in instead.



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We're on the Web!

www.southmontborough.com



SHADE TREE COMMISSION

The Shade Tree Commission was instituted by Council with Ordinance #69 in 1927, and amended by Ordinance #420 dated June 2002, as envisioned by Council, and is primarily advisory.

MEMBERS: William Krupa, Chairman; Herb Ewald & Ed Danyluk

Advisory Committee: Mary Ann Kory, Jennifer Drummey, Judy Kelly, Ellen Singleton, Betsy Seifert & Elizabeth Mayer

YES, I want to sponsor a tree and help Southmont Borough renew its Urban Forest. Enclosed is a check for \$100.00 or more.

Address _____

Name of whom the tree is planted _____

YES, I would like to contribute to Southmont Borough's Urban Forest Project, in the amount of \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____

Contributions are tax deductible and very much appreciated by all who enjoy, daily, the beauty and tranquility of Southmont Borough Urban Forest.

The Shade Tree Committee would like to thank Charles & Dorothy Glass, Renee Ahlstrom, Frank Lanieri and Andrea & Ivan Mulligan for their contributions.