

THE EVERGREEN

Historic Pine Grove . . . Early Settlers Noted the Area's "Fine Stand of Pines"

Vol. XVI, No. 3 – Issued Quarterly

BOROUGH OF PINE GROVE, PA

AUGUST 2024

Council President's "State of the Borough"

One Elected Official's Move Causes Council Shake-Up

Change is inevitable I must say, but it's sometimes a hard pill to swallow. Since our last issue of *The Evergreen*, Pine Grove Borough Council has experienced significant change.



LEROY BATES
Council President

In early May, our then Council President, Wade Gettle, moved out of the area and resigned his position on Borough Council. I Thank you to Wade Gettle for his short six months in office.

That said, we had to reorganize the council. At the May meeting I was elected President, Elaine Holley was elected Vice President, and our newest member of the council, Kyler Burke, was elected to be Pro-tem. This started the process of building

our new council.

Wade's departure put a hole in our numbers. Our

seven-member Council was reduced to six. Fewer members meant the rest of us had to work harder and smarter. The advertisement for those able to serve the Borough as a Council member went out in May. We reviewed two applications for the vacancy at the July meeting, but postponed a decision for an additional month to give the public more opportunity to seek the open seat.

Normally when a council seat becomes vacant, we must advertise for one month then choose someone, provided we have someone to choose. If the seat goes vacant in month two, the Vacancy Board is summoned and it makes the decision to fill the vacant seat. Please welcome Debra Thompson to the Borough as our newest member of Pine Grove Borough council.

Compost Site Available

With summer's vegetative growth and fall's shorter days / cooler temperatures signaling deciduous trees to drop their leaves, the Pine Grove Borough compost site is a welcome spot for residents to dispose of grass, garden waste, and those leaves as we prepare for winter. The Compost Site is open Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and on Saturdays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

You must be a Borough resident and you must have a compost site permit in order to use the site. The permit fee is \$20 - cash or check - for the year and can be purchased at the Borough Office Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Non-residents found using the site could be charged with trespassing and illegal dumping. This will be strictly enforced by the Pine Grove Police Department.

COMING EVENTS

Wednesday, Aug. 21 – First day of school for students of Pine Grove Area School District. The Pine Grove Community Pool is scheduled to be closed for the season.

Wednesday, Sept. 11 – Patriot Day will be marked with a Remembrance Service to be held in the area of the Main Battle Tank memorial along Veterans Memorial Drive.

Saturday, Oct. 19 – Autumn Stroll along Veterans Memorial Drive at Union Canal Park from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Celebrate the season with family, friends, and join community organizations to enjoy food, crafts, and entertainment in a beautiful setting.

Saturday, Oct. 19 – Pine Grove Holiday Classic Parade, sponsored and coordinated by the Pine Grove Lions Club, steps off from American Legion Boulevard at 7 p.m. in the region's best parade of the season.

Thursday, Oct. 31 – Trick-or-Treat night from 6 to 8 p.m. for youngsters, 12 years of age and younger. Turn your porch light on to indicate youngsters are welcome to get a treat. Rain date is Friday, Nov. 1.



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2024 BOROUGH OFFICIALS

Regular Council Meeting:
2nd Thursday of Each Month – 6 p.m.
Municipal Building – 1 Snyder Ave.

OFFICIALS

Mayor Willard Shiffer
 Chief of Police..... Thomas J. Trotter, IV
 President of Council..... Leroy Bates
 Vice President of Council..... Elaine Holley
 Pro Tem..... Kyle Burke
 Secretary/Treasurer..... Melissa A. Dyer
 Tax Collector..... Katie Burke
 Solicitor Shane Hobbs, Esquire
 Engineer..... One Atlas
 Floodplain Admin. Light-Heigel & Assoc.
 EMA Coordinator..... Dave Sattizahn
 Code Enforcement..... Light-Heigel & Assoc.
 Health Officer Lew Moyer

COUNCIL

Leroy Bates • Kyler Burke • Skip Butler
 Elaine Holley • Devin Lymaste
 Aimmee Reilly • Debra Thompson

POLICE

Thomas J. Trotter, IV – Chief
 Mike Dissinger • William Gelgot
 Greg Pritchard • Gino Ricigliano • Jeff Sampson
 Mark Vandermartin • Beau Yarmush

STREETS & WATER DEPARTMENT

Earl Kreiser, Streets Crew Leader
 Jacob Dinger • Robert Kolb
 Zach Peters

BOROUGH OFFICE

Melissa A. Dyer
 Amanda Lutz • Mandy Miller

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

ADMINISTRATION, BUDGET & FINANCE

Leroy Bates • Kyler Burke
 Elaine Holley

PERSONNEL

Leroy Bates • Kyler Burke
 Elaine Holley

PUBLIC WORKS

Kyler Burke • Devin Lymaster • Debra Thompson

PROPERTY & NATURAL RESOURCES

Leroy Bates • Elaine Holley • Debra Thompson

FLOOD MITIGATION

Skip Butler • Elaine Holley • Devin Lymaster

COMMUNITY DEV. • PARKS & RECREATION

Kyler Burke • Elaine Holley • Aimmee Reilly

PUBLIC SAFETY

Skip Butler • Elaine Holley • Aimmee Reilly

STORM WATER COMMITTEE

Leroy Bates • Devin Lymaster • Debra Thompson

Pine Grove Police

Motorists, for the well-being of all of our citizens, please ... **SLOW DOWN!**

Pine Grove Area's first day for the 2024-25 school year is Wednesday, Aug. 21. Many school children will be walking to and from school. Motorists must stop to allow anyone in a designated crosswalk to cross the street. Pedestrians have the right of way and it is state law. Motorists must stop when approaching a



school bus that is loading or unloading students.

The police will strictly enforce the pedestrian crosswalk law and cite motorists who exceed the posted speed limit. Those fines are very costly and

put points on your driver's license that could impact your insurance rates.

The Borough Streets Department freshly painted crosswalks at the school. School children and motorist safety is a top priority.

– Thomas Trotter, Chief of Police

GABRIEL CHAMBER ENSEMBLE *Our 35th Year* 2024-2025 Season

Opening Concert – Sunday, Oct. 6

Turina “La Oración del Torero”

Villa-Lobos String Quartet No. 5

Reynaldo Hahn Piano Quintet in F# minor



Al-Lin Hsieh, cello; Simon Maurer, violin;
 Dana Allaband, violin; Xun Pan, piano;
 Agnès Maurer, viola

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Summer Fun at the Pine Grove Community Pool

Community Support & Grant Boost Swim Programs

Many small towns and cities across Pennsylvania are facing closures of their public community swimming pools. Municipal recreational facilities such as pools, parks, and playgrounds do not create revenue, but are still “good” for the community. When the purse strings are tightening and budgetary decisions have to be made, discretionary expenses such as recreation are often cut. Thriving recreational venues nowadays rely on the financial support of nonprofit organizations, fundraising efforts, donations, etc.

The Recreation Committee feels strongly the community pool is a valuable asset to the welfare of our community. We are exploring ways in which our community can be proactively involved in helping to ensure the pool remains open for many more summers to come.

What is the impact of a public swimming pool in our community?

- Water Safety Instruction - According to a Red Cross survey, 54% don't have basic swimming skills.
- Employment Opportunities - This summer, the Pine Grove pool has employed 23 youth as lifeguards, swimming instructors, food service, and front desk. Summer jobs for youth help them foster personal responsibility, employability, a sense of service to the community, and may provide future career goals.
- Physical Fitness - Lap swim and water aerobics



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Grant helped youth learn to swim

This summer, through the generous support of the USA Swimming Foundation and the Pool & Hot Tub Alliance, the Pine Grove Community Pool was a recipient of a Safe to Swim grant that provided funds for children and youth to receive free or reduced cost swimming lessons in the American Red Cross Learn to Swim program.

Six of the lifeguard staff are American Red Cross certified Water Safety Instructors and provided instruction to 128 children. For the 2025 season we are hopeful to have more Water Safety Instructors on staff to provide instruction for both children and adult learners.

Junior Lifeguard Camp

In July, 10 youth attended a Junior Lifeguard Camp over a 4-day period at the pool. During the camp they participated in and learned about emergency action plans; scanning for and identifying distressed swimmers and drowning victims, securing an 8-pound brick from 12 feet depth of water, different types of lifesaving entries, how to swim with and use the rescue tube, the importance of staying physically fit, and the importance of teamwork and communication.

Pool manager Casey Kershner reported all the students said they wanted the camp to be longer. When asked if any of the students plan to become lifeguards, all ten raised their hand. Well done Junior Lifeguards and pool staff for instructing the camp!

Local businesses add to the fun

Recognition and thank you to the following businesses for their generous support this summer. Miller Paving purchased new umbrellas for the lifeguard chairs and for patron use. Movie Nights were sponsored by Sweet G's, Jenny Fessler, Mullen Realty, Hugs & Kisses, and BG's Value Market. Arthur "Pat" Aungst sponsored a free swim day.

The Pine Grove Borough Recreation Committee meets the last Monday of each month at 3 p.m. in the conference room located in the municipal building.

- Aimme L. Reilly, Recreation Committee Chair



Country Christmas Concert – Three Shows Planned

Popular Performance Returns to the Pine Grove Theater

Mended Heart and the Pine Grove Theater have scheduled three performances of a Country Christmas Concert & Celebration 2024. Choose among Saturday, Dec. 7 at 6 p.m. and two shows on Sunday, Dec. 8 ... a matinee at 2 p.m. or an evening show at 7 p.m.

Admission to these concert performances is free to the public with a free-will offering gladly appreciated. Previous Christmas concerts reached capacity well in advance. Because of this, reserved seats are offered with a \$10 donation per seat by mailing a check payable to "PG Christmas Concert" along with the number of seats to be reserved. Indicate the performance date and time on your reservation.

Mail reservation donations and a self-addressed stamped envelope to PG Christmas Concert, 83 Harris Ave., Pine Grove, PA 17963. For additional information, call 570-691-6673.

The country-style Christmas concert features a variety of professional musicians and vocalists that have joined together in past years. In its first year, the attendance - a one-night performance - drew 350 people. Last year the attendance was nearly 1,000 people over three shows.

The concert venue is once again at the Pine Grove Theater, 213 South Tulpehocken St. Parking will be available at School Yard Square, just one block from the theater, with free shuttle service to the front door

of the theater (and return) provided by Newhurst Bus Company.

Several new attractions have been added to the lineup this year. There will be some laughs, some memories from the community, lots of country Christmas music and a visit from Santa Claus! If you enjoy country-style Christmas music, you don't want to miss this exciting concert with a Nashville sound.

Featured special guests

Just take a look at these popular local and regional professionals - Mended Heart from Pine Grove; The Seger Family, Shamokin; Butch Flory from Lebanon; Doug Tretter of Ephrata; Eileen Hoffman and Daphnie Pinto, Evandale; and Dale Cresswell, Schuylkill Haven.

Do you want more? Also part of the troupe - Emily High and Cheryl Haas, both of Pine Grove; Jared and Katie Wehry of Northumberland; Karlie Wolfe, Kevin Albright, and more!

Mail-in your reservation request now

Refer to the half page advertisement on the back page of this issue of *The Evergreen* for more information and a mail-in coupon to reserve the seats for your party on the day and time of your choice. Make plans today and send your payment to reserve this performance for you and your friends.



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Pine Grove Joint Treatment Authority (PGJTA)

Sewer Inspection Needed Before Property Transfer

In April 2011, the PGJTA - along with Pine Grove Borough, Pine Grove Township, and Washington Township - adopted ordinances 411...80...and 2011-01, respectively, stating it shall be unlawful for any Property Owner/Responsible Party, connected to the public sewer system, to sell, give, donate, transfer or otherwise change titled ownership of Service Property (Transfer) in the municipality without first having secured a Certificate of Sewer System status (CSS) from the Pine Grove JTA.

The ordinance is intended to reduce I&I (Inflow and Infiltration), discover unknown and unregulated inflow systems, maintain the PGJTA within limitations as prescribed by its NPDES permit set by the PA DER, and provide for the orderly and random inspection of a certain number of properties each year as properties transfer. The ordinance sets forth the guidelines for the inspection of property sewer systems and the procedure to be followed to administer the pre-transfer inspection of property sewer systems.

The Application to Transfer form, provided by the PGJTA, notifies the Authority that a serviced property is intended to be transferred and a sewer system inspection is requested.

If the inspection is found compliant with the requirements for controlling I&I, the PGJTA provides a copy of the compliant CSS to the responsible party.

If, after the inspection, the PGJTA or its agent determines that the property has failed to meet the PGJTA sewer system standards, a Notice of Failure will be issued. The property shall not be transferred until the status of the sewer system has been corrected to the satisfaction of the PGJTA or the designated inspector, and a CSS is issued. Or, that an adequate financial reserve has been set aside in an escrow account, naming the PGJTA and the responsible party as joint owners on the account, and said account is designated for sewer system repairs to the property.

Repairs determined necessary as a result of failing a sewer inspection shall be completed within 120 days after the responsible party has been given notice of failure. An adequate reserve (escrow) is determined by 1.5 times the determined costs anticipated to be incurred for the repair of a sewer system to bring it up to PGJTA Operating Standards and Specifications. To obtain such costs at market rates prevailing in the community at the time such repair service is required, the PGJTA will request a quote from the inspector or approved contractor and multiply the quote by 1.5 to determine the appropriate reserve (escrow) amount. If no quote can be obtained before the date of transfer, the minimum amount to be held in reserve (escrow) shall be \$5,000.

Penalty for transfer without inspection

It shall be a violation of this ordinance for a property owner to fail to first secure a CSS or Deemed Approval before a transfer occurs.

The penalty for a violation shall be a fine of \$500 for the initial failure to comply and a continuing violation punishable by a fine of \$25 per day for each day, after the transfer, that the serviced property goes without a valid CSS or deemed approval. The penalties imposed by the ordinances shall be reduced to a lien and placed against the current property owner by action of PGJTA or the Municipality.

Forms, ordinances, and additional information are available at:

<https://www.pinegrovejta.com/public-sewer-inspections>



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Historical Society Preserves the Past

Stanhope School Closes Season with Sept. 21 Program

The final Stanhope School program this year – Pottsville Maroons: the Case of the Stolen 1925 NFL Championship – will be Saturday, Sept. 21.

The only other opportunity to see the schoolhouse before it closes for the season on the final day of September is to schedule a private event for your group of 10 or more. Contact the Stanhope Schoolhouse at PGHS-StanhopeSchool@outlook.com

The Stanhope School is the focus of an exhibit at the Schuylkill County Historical Society through the end of August. It's worth the drive to Pottsville to see this and other exhibits they have to offer.

Recapping our 2024 programs

The first educational program in 2024 was actually a private event for Pine Grove Girl Scout Troop 32840 in May. The troop learned how the restoration of the one-room schoolhouse fit into the three Girl Scout leadership keys – Discover, Connect, and Take Action. Linda Mills, chair of the schoolhouse project and also a life member of Girl Scouts, led the program.

This was followed by Stanhope intern and Kutztown University Elementary Education major, Reanna Reynolds, providing an interactive history of education and a typical school day during the period the Stanhope School was in operation. The lessons even culminated with a report card and certificate!

The first public program of the year – The History of Pine Grove Township – was presented by Township Supervisor Andrew Lesh on May 18 with many interesting facts about the township.

A new historical-type marker at the schoolhouse and new museum items were unveiled. The most recent acquisition is a one-gross box of An-Du-Septic Blackboard Crayons made by Binney & Smith Co. You may know this item by the name of chalk. Did you know the blackboard crayons were packed in sawdust to protect them in transit?

Not a new acquisition but a new addition to the schoolhouse, slate chalk boards were installed on two walls. These slate boards were originally in the Pine Street School in Tremont.

A private event was held in June for Girl Scouts of Eastern PA staff to learn more about the schoolhouse

restoration efforts from Chair Linda Mills. Stanhope alumnus, John Ziegler, spoke about the life of students who attended the school.

Our educational focus this year was on school-age children, especially those in 4th through 6th grades. For a program held on July 20, Reanna Reynolds provided an interactive history lesson about education during the period the Stanhope School was in operation. The lesson provided a look into a school day and included a spelling bee, arithmetic lesson, and practice with cursive writing.

This program will be available by group appointment in our 2025 season, May 1 through Sept. 30. It was the culmination of a 2-year internship Reanna completed under the supervision of Dr. Rob Reynolds from the Kutztown University History Department.

Eagle Scout project needs support

Coming in the fall, Reese Waldrop from Boy Scout Troop 154 will be installing a 33' x 100' parking area at the schoolhouse for his Eagle Scout project. It will be big enough to fit a school bus. The estimated cost is \$4,500. To help fund his project, checks can be sent to the Pinegrove Historical Society noting the donation is for the Stanhope School Eagle Project or made by PayPal or credit card online at PGHS-StanhopeSchool.org/financial-support.

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Kick off the holiday season – Enjoy a Country-style Christmas Concert with a Nashville sound in the magical ambience of the historic Pine Grove Theater. The 2023 concert saw almost 1000 people attend in the three concerts and some tickets are already reserved for 2024. There will be something for everyone, even a visit from Santa Clause himself.



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