



# NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER • DECEMBER 2009

## 2010 Budget & Assessment Coupons

The 2010 budget has been approved. Dues have been increased to \$75 per month.

Several factors were considered in approving the increase in assessment. A letter outlining the specifics has been mailed to all members. Removal and pruning of at risk common area trees depleted our reserve by \$60,000 in 2007-08 with another \$20,000 spent in 2009. An additional \$30,000 will be spent before the work is finished in the 2010-11 timeframe. Across the board increases in everyday services were considered as well. We are diligently working to rebuild our capital reserve with a plan to fund it with \$25,000 in 2010 and \$22,000 in 2011. Your Board carefully watches the budget and expenses and is very proud that, in over 20 years, a special assessment has never been levied.

2010 coupons will be mailed to you after the Thanksgiving holiday. If you do not receive your coupons in the first week of December, please contact the management office.

Somerton Forge  
Homeowners' Association, Inc.  
[www.somertonforge.com](http://www.somertonforge.com)

*managed by:*

REALTY MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE  
456 Germantown Pike, Suite 2  
Lafayette Hill, PA 19444

**ELIZABETH ASHDALE-LAMENT**  
**610-832-0500**

board of directors & officers:

*President:*

JOAN GRIFFIN 215-364-1791

*Vice President:*

STEVE COYNE 215-953-1789

*Secretary:*

HARVEY WHITE 215-322-2443

*Treasurer:*

Lou Krassen 215-364-6416

## SPECIAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS

A special meeting of the members has been called for WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16. The meeting will be held at The Library at 7:00 PM. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the installation of Verizon FiOS and its impact to the community and to the individual homeowners. Please come and bring your questions.

## SNOW REMOVAL POLICY

Although no one likes to think about snow - it makes sense to mention our SNOW REMOVAL POLICY and to be very clear that any vehicle parked in the street during a snowfall will be in violation of the policy and the homeowner will be fined \$250.

- ALL homeowners, tenants, and their guests must park off-street at the beginning of the snowfall.
- Keep your cars off the street. The plows will make several passes before snow removal is completed.
- Members are required to shovel their sidewalks after the snow has stopped.
- Do not shovel the end of your driveway until plowing is completed.



We must work together to make the most of snow removal so that our streets are as safe as they can be. We are all responsible to follow the guidelines to ensure our success. Because it can snow at any time of the day or night, snow removal can take place at any time. Be prepared – park your cars in your driveway. Do not plow, shovel or blow snow into the street. We will have optimal results if we all comply with the course of action outlined above.

You are reminded that snow policy violations are \$250 per occurrence.

## **CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR PET!**



Clean up after your pet –  
**each and every time.**

**DO NOT** walk your dog on  
your neighbors' property.

**Be responsible.**

**Act responsibly.**

**Clean up!**

Dog waste contaminates the ground and becomes a means of passing intestinal parasites and infections to dogs and people. Your own dog can be repeatedly reinfested by parasites in this way. Picking up the feces prevents a great deal of the contamination, especially if diarrhea is not involved. Cleanup can reduce veterinary expenses and might even save on human doctor bills.

Because of contamination as well as smell and mess, dog waste is highly offensive to many people in the community. It often becomes a reason to ban dogs from areas. Of course the dogs can't clean up after themselves, so this is a people problem rather than a dog problem. It's easy to enact "no dogs allowed" rules, and then the people who clean up suffer right along with the ones who don't.

If happiness for you is being able to have your dog live with you in a homeowner association, be conscientious about cleaning up. Dog waste damages landscaping, offends other residents, and costs money to homeowners associations. It pays to not only clean up after your own dog, but others, too, whenever the poop is especially conspicuous.

Neighborhood disputes over dog poop can escalate into real misery. In some localities it is illegal to allow your dog to relieve on someone else's property unless you have that person's permission. The very existence of such laws is an indication of how seriously people take the cleanup issue!

If you've ever tried to have a pleasant outdoor meal next door to a yard contaminated with foul-smelling dog feces, you have some idea of how quality of life can be affected by cleanup neglect. If you've found your lawn mower stinking up the tool shed because of dog feces on the mower blades after mowing your own yard where someone else's dog deposited poop, you surely weren't pleased.

Keeping the yard clean keeps the dog cleaner, since the dog won't be stepping or playing in the mess on relief trips outside. A clean yard also gives both people and dogs a lot more exercise space.

**LEAVES.** Leaves need to be raked and bagged. **DO NOT RAKE LEAVES INTO THE STREET.** Our township does not pick up leaves left at the curb. It is your responsibility to bag them and put the bags at the curb for Monday morning pick-up. Pick-up continues until DECEMBER 1.



**TREE PRUNING.** Arrangements are being made for all homeowners to have their curb-side trees pruned in the November-December timeframe when trees have lost most of their leaves. Most curb-side trees are overgrown and some are impeding the street lights which impact the safety and security of us all.

Homeowners will be notified in writing with regard to tree pruning.

**LIABILITY ISSUES.** The Association cannot authorize the use of our streets and cul-de-sacs as play areas due to insurance liability issues. Your cooperation is required to ensure compliance.

- **SCOOTERS** - not permitted on our streets.
- **SKATEBOARDING** - not permitted ANYWHERE at ANY TIME.
- **PORTABLE BASKETBALL BACKBOARDS** may only be placed in the driveway and must be stored when not in use.
- **FIREWORKS** – not permitted in Somerton Forge.

**SAFETY & SECURITY.** Keep your property well lit. Turn on your outside lights. Address numbers must be visible and easily readable from the street!

**TRASH CANS.** Do NOT leave trash cans in front of your home. You will be fined if your can is left out and visible from the street. Be smart – put the can away.



**SCHOOL BUS ETIQUETTE.** School buses require your attentiveness when it comes to proper protocol. You must STOP when the bus is loading or unloading. Please make every effort to obey the speed limit and stop signs. Many times the children are either running for the bus or running home and are not looking for cars moving up and down our streets. Each driver must be aware and keep their eyes on the school children.

**DON'T SPEED.** Even the neighborhood children have complained about the residents who speed on our streets. DON'T SPEED. Pay attention, SLOW DOWN, drive safely and STOP at the STOP SIGNS. Your cooperation could prevent a tragedy. DON'T SPEED.

## **REAL ESTATE INFORMATION**

The deed to your property identifies certain restrictions such as the fact that your property is part of a homeowner association and, as such, requires the Association to provide documents when a property is transferred.

Settlement of your property can be held up if the appropriate documents are not provided.

Be sure to keep the Association informed of your intention to sell or rent.

In 2008, two homes sold.

In 2009, two homes sold (range of \$296,500-\$284,000) with two homes currently for sale:

**218 ANVIL DRIVE  
150 FORGE LANE**

### **PUTTING YOUR HOME ON THE MARKET?**

Request permission **FIRST** before you place a "FOR SALE" sign on your property.

Call 215-364-1791 with any questions.

Put your request in writing and forward to:

**JOAN GRIFFIN**

**150 Forge Lane, Feasterville, PA 19053**

### **WHAT COSTS YOU CAN EXPECT**

#### **SELLER**

- \$225 - Resale Package
- Unpaid Association Fees, Late Fees, Fines

#### **BUYER**

- \$150 Capital Reserve Contribution
- \$150 Two Month's Dues Prepaid

**GOT A SIGNED SALES AGREEMENT?** The Uniform Planned Community Act (UPCA) provides protection to prospective buyers with regard to resales. Once you have a signed Sales Agreement, you must **immediately** provide a copy of the Agreement to the Association in order to comply with this law. Within 10 days, the Association must provide a "5407 Resale Package" to prospective buyers which include a **certificate; current budget; financial statements; declaration; and insurance certificates.**

### **LOWER SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP requires Use & Occupancy Inspections.**

**Below are some guidelines to help better assist you.**

- A. There must be GFIC outlets within 6 feet of any water source including washing machines, laundry tubs, kitchen sinks, bar areas, and sump pumps.
- B. A working smoke detector on each floor including basement plus all bedrooms.
- C. Bathroom ventilation (window or fan) in bathrooms with showers and baths.
- D. Heater must be clear of combustibles (gas or paint cans, etc.)
- E. Windows in good condition – not broken or cracked.
- F. Sump Pumps must discharge to the outside of yard (not sewer). Any sump pump pits not being used must be filled with cement. Sanitary sewer vent cannot accept water.
- G. Decks must be in good condition (not rotted wood, railings tight).
- H. Yard Sanitation must be in safe and clean condition, trees and bushes must be maintained.
- I. Sidewalks should not have large cracks or vertical edges, change in level edges should not be more than ¼ inch.
- J. Railings must be tight and secure, both interior and exterior.
- K. Siding must be in good condition.
- L. Roof Drains – clear gutter and proper discharge.
- M. House numbers should be 4 inches or larger.

Any other unsafe condition should be repaired or replaced before Inspection. (electrical junction boxes not covered, electrical panel doors, etc.) Properties sold as is must be inspected and will be granted a Temporary Certificate to take to settlement, the buyer will have 18 months to make repairs. Any property sold or rented without a Use & Occupancy Certificate will receive a **VIOLATION** from Lower Southampton Township.

# ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE.

**ALL EXTERIOR CHANGES MUST BE APPROVED BEFORE THE WORK IS DONE.  
NO EXCEPTIONS!**

You must contact the Architectural Review Committee before you make an exterior change to your home (see Article VII of your Declaration). This includes changing light fixtures, replacing the wood on a garage with vinyl siding, expanding a patio or deck, changing the landscaping, replacing a front door, or replacing windows.

**Contact STEVE COYNE, ARC Chairman, at 215-953-1789.**

<p>■ <b><u>HOW TO REQUEST PERMISSION.</u></b> Use the ARC "Request for Approval" form and submit as directed. The form is easy to use and can be used for all exterior change requests. Approval may be delayed if full and complete information is not provided in your request.</p> <p>Be sure to sign your request!</p> <p>Make 2 copies and mail to:</p> <p><b>STEVE COYNE</b> <b>130 Forge Lane, Feasterville, PA 19053.</b></p>	<p>■ <b><u>TOWNSHIP PERMITS.</u></b> Permits are required for: decks, plumbing fixtures, electrical, repairs, and new siding on existing structures.</p> <p>You need written approval from the ARC before you can apply for a PERMIT with Lower Southampton Township. Before starting projects such as repairs or replacements, residents must obtain permits from the township. Residents should contact:</p> <p><b>Lower Southampton Township</b> <b>Dept. of Licenses &amp; Inspections</b> <b>215-357-7300</b></p>
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**EXTERIOR CHANGES.** Don't make the mistake of thinking you can perform exterior work without obtaining permission in advance. A few residents have taken the approach that it is ok to make the changes and then apply for approval. It does not work that way. Should you want to take that chance, you should know that you will be fined. Several homeowners have already taken that path and they have been fined. Please be guided accordingly.

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## Trash, Recycling & Yard Waste Information

**J.P. Mascara & Sons**  
**800-432-1616**



- Make sure your trash is secure.
- Use heavy-duty bags and tie securely.
- Put a lid on your trashcan.
- Pick-up any trash or litter you see in the street or collected in the storm drains.

**TRASH COLLECTION.** Trash is collected on **WEDNESDAYS** and **SATURDAYS**. Each residence is limited to **6 bags or cans of trash** per collection day. Put your trash at the curb **after 6:00 PM** the evening before pick-up.

**YARD WASTE.** From **APRIL 1 to DEC 15**, yard waste (grass, garden clippings, leaves) will be collected on **MONDAYS only**. There is no limit to the number of cans or biodegradable 30-gallon paper bags of yard waste you can set out.

**BULK ITEMS.** One bulk item (furniture, major appliances, etc.) may be put out on **SATURDAY only**. Carpeting must be cut up into 3-foot widths, rolled up and tied. Up to 10 rolls of carpeting may be put out per collection. Call **800-432-1616** to arrange a pickup before putting a refrigerator, freezer, air conditioner or dehumidifier out for collection.

**NO HAZARDOUS WASTES!** Car batteries, gasoline, motor oil, pesticides, oil-base paints and other toxic and hazardous materials do not belong in the trash. Call **Bucks County's Household Waste Hotline** at **215-238-9991** for information on disposing of these materials.

**RECYCLING COLLECTION. SATURDAYS ONLY!** **CANS, GLASS & PLASTIC** can be commingled in any recycling bin.

**CANS.** Aluminum beverage cans. Steel and Tin food and beverage cans. Please rinse the can and remove the lid or push it into the can. No need to remove the labels. No foil or food trays, please!

**PLASTICS.** #1 and #2 food and beverage containers only. Most soda, milk & water bottles fit this category.

**GLASS.** Clear, green or brown glass food and beverage containers such as jars and bottles only. Remove lids and rinse. Leave labels on. No light bulbs, mirrors, window glass, etc.

**PAPER.** Newspapers, magazines, office Paper, & phone books less than 1.5 inches thick must be tied in bundles or bagged with paper grocery bags and placed at the curb.

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