

HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF THE ALLEGHENIES

DECEMBER 2008 NEWSLETTER

BOARD MEETING

Monday, December 8, 2008: Our monthly board meeting will be held at Sassy's Restaurant. Sassy's is located at the Johnstown Cambria County Airport. Dinner begins at 6:30 PM.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Annual HBAA Christmas gathering will serve as our general membership meeting this month, please plan on attending for a fun night!!

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:

6:30 p.m. Cocktails 7:00 Dinner First Monday of the month		
December	05,	2008 Christmas Gathering
January		no meeting
February	02,	2009
March	02,	2009
April	06,	2009
May	04,	2009
June	01,	2009

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS:

6:30 p.m. at / Second Monday of the month		
December	08,	2008
January	12,	2009
February	09,	2009
March	09,	2009
April	13,	2009
May	11,	2009
June	08,	2009

*A Special Thank You to Businesses That Have
Sponsored One or More of Our General
Membership Meetings Recently.*

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The HBAA annual **Christmas gathering** is Friday December 5th at Sassy's Restaurant. Cocktails at 6:30PM and dinner at 7:00PM. Each person pays for their own meal at the gathering. Please let us know if you plan to attend by a RSVP to Denny Squillario at 736-9070 before November 29th.



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SPONSORS

If you are interested in sponsoring a general membership meeting, please contact Walt Freidhoff at (814)535-8371.

ATTENTION HBAA MEMBERS

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HELP KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE WITH SMOKE ALARMS

As the cool chill of fall turns into the arctic blasts of winter across much of the nation, families often turn to fireplaces, wood stoves and space heaters to help stay warm. Many also adorn their homes with festive candles and decorated trees for the holidays.

While these go a long way towards keeping the home temperature comfortable and creating cozy ambiance, it is important to know what will best protect your family in the event of a house fire, and take a few simple steps to make sure your family stays safe.

The most critical steps you can take are : 1) make sure that your smoke alarm system is in working order, 2) devise an escape plan and practice it, and 3) never go back into a burning building.

Thanks to smoke alarms, Americans are safer than they've ever been. In fact, a study by the United States Fire Administration showed that 88 percent of the fatal fires in single family homes from 2001-2004 occurred where there were no working smoke alarms.

And the design of smoke alarms continues to get better, with new innovations including wireless



technology and alternate signal noises that are easier for children and seniors to hear.

There has been debate in the news about the value of smoke alarm systems compared to the addition of sprinkler systems, as special interest groups have stepped up pressure on local governments to mandate installation of sprinklers in newly-constructed one and two family homes.

Your home builder can arrange for the installation of sprinkler systems in your new home. But it's important to note that installing these systems cannot guarantee anyone's safety. And maintaining these systems, especially for home owners in cold climates, can be costly and time-consuming.

Residential fire sprinklers can significantly increase the cost of a new home, pushing what was once an affordable dream out of the reach of many families. Every family needs to have a fire safety action plan, and have the right to choose for themselves which type of preventative device they want to use.

MANDATORY BUFFER PROPOSAL IS THE WRONG PRESCRIPTION FOR PENNSYLVANIA'S ECONOMY ... AND ENVIRONMENT

Nov. 18, 2008 By Joseph Mackey

For more than a year, report after report has confirmed the United States' economy is weathering an extremely difficult period, as a wave of bank failures, near-failures and ever-more urgent calls for additional federal intervention have made clear that Americans may be facing the most serious economic crisis since the Great Depression.

In this uncertain climate, it should be obvious that this is the worst possible time in many areas of Pennsylvania for policymakers to add yet another barrier to desperately needed economic growth.

Yet that's exactly what would happen if a coalition of environmental advocates, municipal governments and other groups get their way in Harrisburg. These organizations favor a statewide requirement for 100-foot riparian forest buffers along both sides of rivers, creeks and streams in new developments. In some cases, even greater buffer widths would be required.

Supporters of the "Buffers 100" proposal say their plan is needed to protect the quality of Pennsylvania's waterways, reduce damage caused by flooding, increase wildlife habitat, and improve the health of our communities.

While most Pennsylvanians would agree these are important objectives, the "Buffers 100" proposal would be bad policy because it doesn't balance environmental protection with the need for economic growth.

Protect property rights

First of all, while some Pennsylvania municipalities have passed ordinances requiring buffers for new development (despite the lack of a state law specifically authorizing such measures), imposing any type of mandatory buffer requirement constitutes a regulatory taking of private property. It deprives landowners of the use of their property without compensation.

Since Pennsylvania has 83,000 miles of rivers and streams—a figure second only to Alaska among the 50 states—a 100-foot buffer requirement could result in the uncompensated taking of hundreds of thousands of acres of Pennsylvanians' private property.

Although some government programs are available to compensate landowners for installing buffers on their land, it's highly questionable as to whether the level of compensation would even come close to mitigating the losses those owners will suffer if they aren't able to develop their land.

The proposal also would reduce the amount of developable land available. This would, in turn, raise the price of land and make housing less affordable to hardworking Pennsylvanians.

One size doesn't fit all

Second, although the "Buffers 100" campaign argues that its buffer requirements for all new development in Pennsylvania are scientifically justified, they are, in fact, arbitrary figures that fail to fully take into account a number of relevant issues.

Mandatory buffer width requirements - even those intended to address variables such as water quality and slope - don't allow for the flexibility needed to address the specific conditions that may exist at an individual site. They also don't sufficiently factor in whether or not the presence of other best management practices designed to protect rivers and streams from such pollution runoff—a number of which are strongly promoted by the state for new development and therefore heavily influence local decision-making—can achieve the same water quality goals.

Maximize our clean-up investment

Finally, many environmental advocates have noted that reducing pollution from agricultural runoff is the cheapest, most effective method of keeping rivers and streams healthy.

This is one of the central premises underlying the state's strategy for cleaning up waterways feeding the Chesapeake Bay, since agriculture is the largest single source of nutrient and sediment pollution flowing into the Bay from Pennsylvania. Pollution from agricultural sources far exceeds the percentages attributed to developed lands.

Knowing this, it's puzzling why the "Buffers 100" proposal specifically omits farming activities from its mandatory buffer requirement.

The Pennsylvania Builders Association, as a founding member of the "Pennsylvania Fair Share for Clean Water Coalition," supports increasing state funding to help farmers use best management practices to meet their existing obligations to reduce pollution to the state's waterways.

Pennsylvania needs flexible, common-sense environmental policies that produce the maximum benefit at the lowest possible cost to the state's families and businesses.

A mandatory buffer requirement will fail to achieve either goal, and in the current business climate, could deliver a death blow to economic growth in much of Pennsylvania. For those reasons, it's critical state policymakers reject the "Buffers 100" proposal.

Joseph Mackey of Target Homes in East Stroudsburg serves as the secretary of the Pennsylvania Builders Association.



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annual Christmas gathering
is Friday December 5th
at Sassy's Restaurant.*

Cocktails at 6:30PM and dinner at 7:00PM.

Each person pays for their own meal.

Please let us know if you plan to attend

by a RSVP to Denny Squillario

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DO YOU KNOW THE CODE?

1. Over residential property and driveways, service-drop conductors shall have _____ feet minimum clearance above final grade.
2. In no case shall the point of attachment for service-drop conductors be less than _____ feet above finish grade.
3. Service cables shall be supported by straps or other approved means within _____ inches of every service head, gooseneck or connection to a raceway or enclosure....
4. Freestanding or built-in ranges shall have a vertical clearance above the cooking top of not less than _____ inches to unprotected combustible material.
5. Sauna heaters shall be equipped with a thermostat that will limit room temperature to not greater than _____ degrees F.
6. Boiler discharge shall be piped to drains by gravity to within _____ inches of the floor or to an open receptor.



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CODE ANSWERS

1. 12 ft. *Review the other clearance requirements in this section.* -2006 IRC Section E3504.2.2 Vertical clearance from grade. #2
2. 10 ft. -2006 IRC Section E3504.3 Point of attachment.
3. 12 in. *And then every 30 inches max.* -2006 IRC Section E3505.7 Mounting supports.
4. 30 in. -2006 IRC Section M1901.1 Clearances
5. 194 degrees F *Where the thermostat is not an integral part of the heater, the heat-sensing element shall be located within 6 inches of the ceiling* -2006 Section M1902.4 Controls
6. 18 in.. -2006 IRC Section M2002.4 Pressure-relief valve.

Cambria County Building Code Enforcement Agency

has a new location.

1100 West High Street, Suite 1012
Ebensburg, PA 15931.

MAKE RESOLUTIONS THAT LAST BEYOND THE NEW YEAR

Every New Year, do you make the same old resolutions? Go to the gym. Quit smoking. Be more organized. Then, like many people, do you abandon these goals within a month or two?

Here are some resolutions you can make - and keep - that will benefit not only you, but also your family, your community and your world.

Improve Your Home's Safety

There are lots of little things you can do around the house to give yourself big peace of mind that your family is protected from all-to-common household accidents. For example, to avoid electrical shocks, place covers over all outlets and tie up or unplug cords so they don't dangle temptingly in front of toddlers or pets.

Home electrical problems account for 67,800 fires during a typical year, according to the U.S. Fire Administration. Inspect appliance cords and immediately replace any that are worn, old or damaged. Keep clothes, curtains and other potentially combustible items at least three feet from all heaters. Make sure electrical appliances are used and stored away from wet floors and counters.

Your home's windows need to be accessible in case your family has to use them as an escape route. Make sure they are not nailed or painted shut, and if they have guards, security bars, grilles or grates, test the release mechanism make sure it works.

On the other hand, windows can pose a falling hazard. Make sure screens are secure, and keep furniture - or anything children can climb - away from window ledges.

Save Money by Going Green

Prices for fuel oil, propane and electricity are expected to rise this winter, so even the smallest improvements could help your family's budget. Replacing incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent can save you up to three-quarters of the electricity previously used by incandescent bulbs.

Put an insulating blanket on your water heater. The U.S. Department of Energy says that adding insulation to your heater can reduce standby heat losses by 25 to 45 percent,



and save 4 to 9 percent in water heating costs. The blankets cost anywhere from \$15 to \$50 at your local hardware store or online, and are easy to install.

Change your thermostat to one that is programmable and can be set to lower the heat automatically when the home is empty during the workday, and at night when everyone is asleep. Programmable thermostats can save about \$180 per year in energy costs, according to Energy Star, a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy.

Conserve water, and reduce your water bill, by making simple changes such as running dishwashers and clothes washers only when they are full and taking short showers instead of baths and turning off the water when you are shampooing or soaping.

De-clutter and Help Others

Especially in these tough times, donating your unused items to charity could be a lifesaver for homeless or needy families. If it's in good condition, your out-of-style or outgrown clothing could keep a family warm during the cold weather months.

Many local charities also accept donations of household items that are in working order. That lamp, toaster or set of dishes gathering dust in the garage could help furnish a home for a needy family.

When you redecorate or remodel, don't put out-of-style-but-usable home furnishings such as light fixtures, bathroom vanities, and even door knobs in the garbage. Habitat for Humanity restores and other organizations will take and re-sell them at a fraction of the cost of new, and the proceeds help build Habitat homes.

P.B.A. BOARD MEETINGS

02/26/09 - 02/28/09 Hotel Hershey

07/23/09 - 07/25/09 Wyndham, Gettysburg

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSING ISSUES

To help focus state government on the need for affordable housing, the Pennsylvania Builders Association selects legislative, regulatory and judicial priorities on issues affecting residential construction, land use and development, taxation and the environment. Here are a few of the initiatives the PBA has adopted.



LAND USE

Site improvement standards

The Issue: Municipal subdivision and land-development ordinances containing mandates that violate sound land-use principles increase the cost of housing in Pennsylvania and can negatively impact our environment. Municipal requirements for site improvement standards vary widely from community to community. Frequently, these standards are far in excess of what is needed, and they often have unintended adverse effects. For example, excessive street development standards can produce roadways that are unsafe for pedestrians by increasing traffic speed, are unattractive to home buyers and are expensive to construct. The expanded impervious surfaces cause greater stormwater runoff and increase non-point source pollution.

The Answer: PBA is working with the Pennsylvania Housing Research Center to create model site improvement standards for street design, non-vehicular circulation, storm water management, water systems and sanitary sewer systems to reduce excessive requirements and unnecessary costs while encouraging sustainability and enhancing the environment.

Development densities

The Issue: In Pennsylvania, there is growing realization that low-density development, categorized by traditional, "cookie-cutter," single-family, large-lot zoning, contributes to uncoordinated growth. Most knowledgeable land-use advocates agree that a sensible solution for combating suburbanization is the implementation by local governments of appropriate development densities.

The Answer: PBA is seeking to promote local acceptance of appropriate development densities. This will allow projects to proceed in a manner that is compatible with surrounding land uses and promote economic growth of the community. This also will allow local governments to identify areas where it is best for growth and development to occur so a full range of critical public services can be planned, including: sewer and water, highway construction, police and fire protection, public schools, parks and recreation and open spaces. Appropriate development densities encourage innovations in the type, design and layout of structures. The efficient use of open space promotes conservation of the state's natural resources and the construction of affordable workforce housing that is consistent with projected population and employment growth.

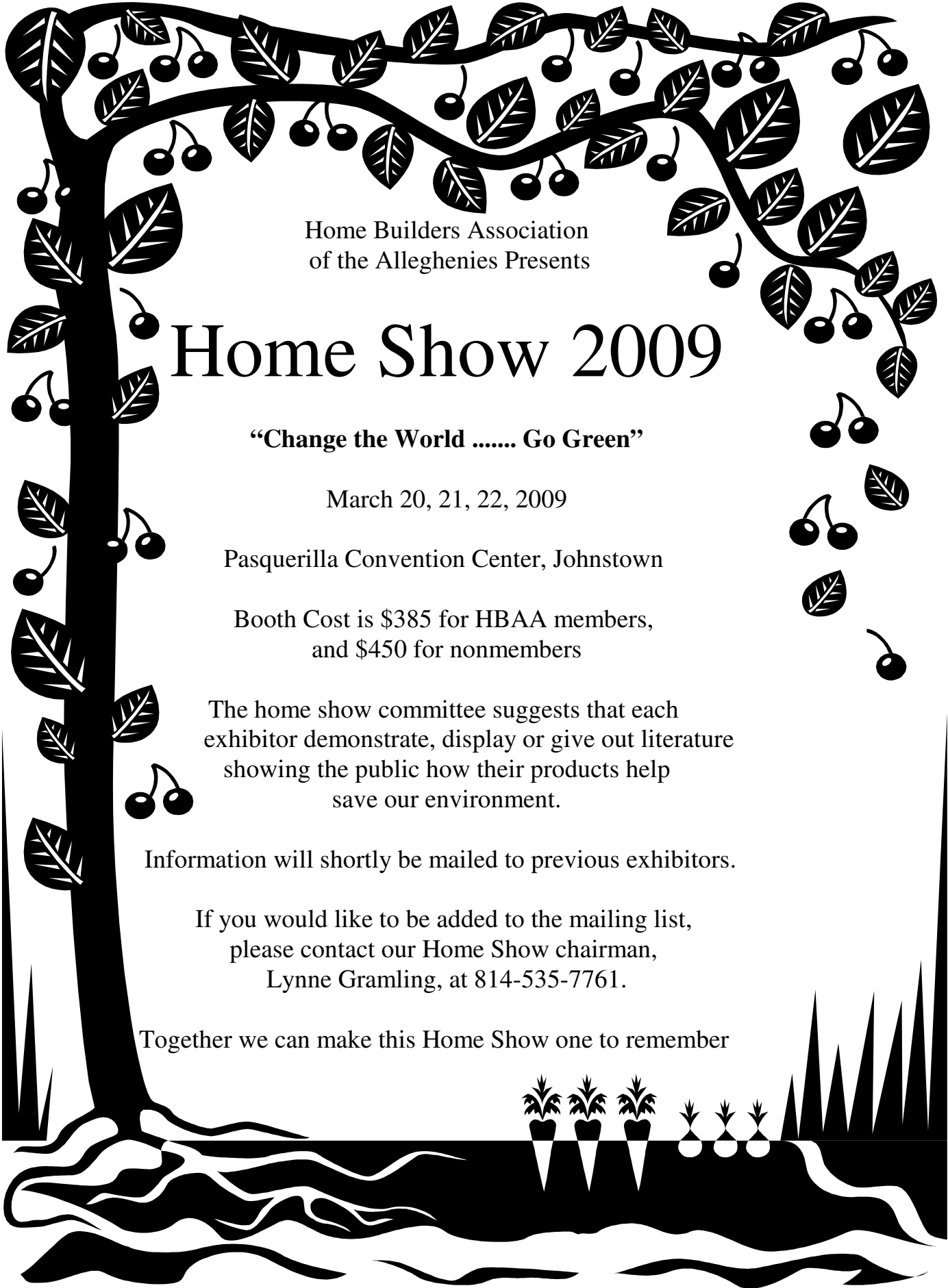
PENNSYLVANIA BUILDERS ASSOCIATION NAMES MESHAW AS NEW EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

LEMOYNE, Pa. – The Pennsylvania Builders Association announced that Douglas Meshaw of West Hempfield Township, Lancaster County, has been named the association's new executive vice president. PBA is the voice of the state's homebuilders. "Doug brings a tremendous reputation for his knowledge of building issues and his strength of character," said PBA President Ray Fertig. "Doug is known across the state and nationally for his expertise on building code and other housing issues. We have great confidence in his ability to lead our association forward in the coming years." Meshaw, who has been with PBA for 17 years, previously served as director of association member services. He is well respected across



Pennsylvania for the depth of his expertise on the state's Uniform Construction Code. In fact, in April he was recognized with the Pennsylvania Association of Code Officials Service Award. Meshaw's career includes work as the executive director of the Community Action Program of

Lancaster County and as state human services coordinator with Pennsylvania state government under governors Shapp and Thornburgh from 1974 until 1979. As a result of his efforts on behalf of the Governor's Office, Meshaw was named in 1978 as one of the top 15 public administrators in the nation. Meshaw has worked as a special consultant to the Sigma Investment Corporation, assisting with development of a national real estate franchise. He also has five years experience providing training to the asbestos abatement industry as an instructor certified by the Environmental Protection Agency. "I'm grateful for this opportunity to continue my service to the state's residential building industry," said Meshaw. "Homebuilding is a powerful economic driver in our state, and I appreciate the chance to play a leadership role helping to grow Pennsylvania's housing industry." Meshaw is a graduate of Millersville University with a degree in economics and has served in the United States Air Force. He lives with his wife, Susan, near Columbia. They have six children. Meshaw replaces David Martin, who resigned as the association's EVP in June.



Home Builders Association
of the Alleghenies Presents

Home Show 2009

“Change the World Go Green”

March 20, 21, 22, 2009

Pasquerilla Convention Center, Johnstown

Booth Cost is \$385 for HBAA members,
and \$450 for nonmembers

The home show committee suggests that each exhibitor demonstrate, display or give out literature showing the public how their products help save our environment.

Information will shortly be mailed to previous exhibitors.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list,
please contact our Home Show chairman,
Lynne Gramling, at 814-535-7761.

Together we can make this Home Show one to remember



NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING

Home Builders Association of the Alleghenies

Richland Square III, 1397 Eisenhower Blvd., Johnstown, PA 15904
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Newsletter Advertising Contract

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Yes No

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- . All ad copy and artwork must accompany this contract.
- . All advertising artwork must be photocopy ready. (B&W only)
- . All advertising contracts are for a minimum of 3 months.

Business Card (3 1/2 x 2")	\$10.00 x _____ months = \$ _____
1/8 page(5" x 2")	\$15.00 x _____ months = \$ _____
1/4 page(5" x 4")	\$25.00 x _____ months = \$ _____
1/2 page(5" x 8")	\$45.00 x _____ months = \$ _____
Full page(8 1/2" x 11")	\$90.00 x _____ months = \$ _____

Order for a flyer attached to inside of our monthly Newsletter:

4. The flyer must be of size 8 1/2 by 11, on standard weight paper.
 5. All the flyers are to be created by the advertiser and given to H.B.A.A. (Please call HBAA for an estimate of the number of flyers required)
- \$75.00 x _____ sheets x _____ months = \$ _____

Circle month you are requesting your ad period to start:

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

6. All advertising contracts must be prepaid, please attach check payable to the H.B.A.A.
7. All advertising must be supplied to the H.B.A.A. office a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the advertising month.

The HBAA does not discriminate against any person or company in accepting paid advertising in its newsletter. Acceptance of advertising does not constitute an endorsement of the advertiser, its products, services or claims. The HBAA shall be held harmless in the event that a newsletter is not published or distributed as planned, or in the event that an ad is omitted or incorrectly displayed.

Advertiser _____ Date _____

HBAA _____ Date _____

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This Year

**Home Builders Association
Timothy C. Leventry, Executive Officer
Suite 202, Richland Square III
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Johnstown, PA 15904**

Return Service Requested



**HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF THE ALLEGHENIES
NEWSLETTER
December 2008**

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Richland Square III, Suite 202
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(More information inside)

