

The Meadow Lark

A Monthly Publication by and for the Residents of The Meadows, a Family Condominium Community

Charcoal Grills Prohibited!

In order for The Meadows to be able to secure a renewal of their master insurance policy, charcoal grills will no longer be allowed anywhere on our property. All insurance carriers find charcoal grills to be too high risk for multifamily residential communities. For that reason, all charcoal grills must be removed from The Meadows property no later than October 15, 2014. There will be no exceptions to this policy, violation of which will lead to assessment charges of \$10 per day.

Candidates Wanted for Election

Fall is here, and soon it will be time for an election. The Meadows Co-Owners will be voting at the Annual Meeting in December for five members to serve on the Board of Directors for the next two years. So far, no candidates have declared their intention to run for one of these seats.

If anyone is interested in running, please make your intentions known to The Meadows office. There is an application form that needs to be filled out, this must be done by October 15 so your name can be included on the ballot for the election and your biography can be published in the November *Meadow Lark*. In order to be eligible to run for the Board you must be a Co-Owner of a Meadows unit with your condominium dues not in arrears.

OCTOBER



Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, October 16, 7:30 PM in the Clubhouse. Residents and Co-Owners are encouraged to attend. Agendas are posted online and at the Clubhouse on the Tuesday before the meeting. Minutes available upon request at The Meadows office and online at mymeadows.net.

Deadline to Run for the Board: October 15.

Community Budget Meeting: Thursday, October 16, 7:00 PM in the Clubhouse.

Halloween Decorating Contest: Judging on Friday, October 31, 7–8:00PM

Looking forward to:

Candidates Night: Thursday, November 20, 7:00 PM in the Clubhouse.

Annual Meeting: Tuesday, December 9, 7:30 PM in the Clubhouse.

Residents and Co-Owners are welcomed and encouraged to attend any committee meeting. Meetings are held in the Clubhouse.

Halloween Decorating Contest



There will be a contest held on October 31 to find the best Halloween decorations within our community. Judging will be from 7:00 PM until 8:00 PM, so be sure your pumpkins have their candles lit during that time. Good luck to everyone, will we see some scary decorations?

Important Dates Upcoming

Mark your calendars with some upcoming dates of interest. First, there will be a Halloween Decorating Contest, with judging on Friday, October 31 from 7 PM to 8 PM.

There is an election for Board members this year, and the Candidates Night to meet the candidates will be held on Thursday, November 20 at 7 PM in the Clubhouse. The Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 9 at 7:30 also in the Clubhouse.

President's Corner

I'd like to share with you all a short story that I was told when I was younger.

A young girl and her mother were walking on the beach and saw what looked like hundreds of starfish on the sand. It was low tide so these starfish were washed ashore with no way to get back to the sea. The skin of these starfish were showing signs of drying. The young girl quickly ran over and one-by-one, she picked them up and carried them into the water. Her mother was amazed and asked her daughter, "Honey, what are you doing? There's so many of them. It's not going to make that much of a difference."

The little girl looked up at the mother, holding a starfish in her hand and said, "It's going to make a difference for this one."

Sometimes we all can get discouraged when life throws us a situation that may seem overwhelming. The path forward may be difficult or the solution may seem nearly impossible to attain. The story above teaches us that starting with something small may be more meaningful than it appears to be. As a community, we can all do that "something small" which in the end can make a big difference. Picking up a piece of trash near your area, sweeping up debris around your sidewalk, or a simple "Hello" to your neighbor ... all little things that can make a big difference in The Meadows. This fall season, let's all try and do that "something small" so that together, we can all be a part of something big!

As always, stay safe and have fun! Happy early Halloween!

~ Eric Sokolowski

Meadows Website
www.mymeadows.net



Board of Directors Motions

At the September 18 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to approve an Interior Alteration request for a kitchen remodeling and replacement of floors in other parts of the unit.
- Passed a motion to reaffirm email votes for approvals for sending a letter to a Co-owner, two air conditioner installations on the common elements, performing a test of painting a patio slab and to review a plan for a Co-owner's request.
- Passed motions to deny requests to remove two trees.
- Passed a motion to approve a landscaping project by Valley Crest for a cost of \$315.
- Passed a motion to accept a bid of \$183,770 from Philadelphia Insurance for renewal of the master insurance policy.
- Passed a motion to approve cleaning of a sewer line on Strasburg twice a year at a cost of \$1000 for each cleaning.
- Passed a motion to accept a contract for snow removal from Collins Septic at the same rates as last year.
- Passed a motion to accept a contract with US Security Solutions with no increase in price from last year.
- Passed a motion to accept a bid of \$24,983 from Katchmark Construction for brick and concrete repairs.
- Passed a motion to deny waiving a \$50 charge for a trash violation.
- Passed a motion to approve waiving of all but \$150 of a violation charge.
- Passed a motion to conduct a full asset search associated with a delinquent Co-owner.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS
AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE

Security Totals

August 15 – September 14, 2014

Vehicles Ticketed: 43

Vehicles Towed: 10

Calls for service and/or situations involving or requiring security assistance, by street:

Avocado Court: 0

Cool Oak Lane: 2

Golden Oak Court/Road: 3

Rustling Leaves Lane: 0

Saguaro Place: 2

Saint Germain Drive: 1

Strasburg Drive: 4

Turin Lane: 1

Calls referred to FCPD/FCFD: 4

The Meadows



Fire Regulations

- Kerosene, or any fuel heaters, are forbidden by Meadows regulations.
- Residents should not store combustibles in furnace rooms. It is a serious fire hazard and is against County and Meadows regulations.
- Smoke detectors are required on *each level* of homes in The Meadows.
- Residents should maintain a fire extinguisher in their units. It should be rated at least 2A:10BC.



Carbon Monoxide Detectors

The furnaces and most hot water heaters in The Meadows use gas. It is imperative that all homes have a working carbon monoxide detector. Carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas which can cause death.

Community Improvement: Good Neighbor Top Ten

by Jason Spessard

Being on bad terms with your neighbor can make your life frustrating, day after day. But taking the time to establish good terms with your neighbors has numerous benefits. The community will be friendlier, the neighborhood safer, and the area a nicer and more comfortable place to live.

1. **Introduce Yourself – Whether you're new to the neighborhood or have not got around to the task of meeting your neighbor after years of living next door, introduce yourself.** Say hello, offer a welcome gift, or just give a helpful hint about the area: "The garbage truck comes on Mondays and Thursdays. We usually see them on our street around 7 AM." An unfamiliar neighbor is not a good neighbor.
 2. **Consider Your Neighbor's Lifestyle – Get to know your neighbors, what they do for a living, what their schedules might be like, and so on.** Sometimes, you can remedy problems before they even start; for example, if they work nights, quiet mornings will be important for them. If they have young children, quiet evenings will be very important to them. Similarly, give them information that'll help them be more considerate of your lifestyle. If you do a lot of yard work, or if your teenage son plays the drums, let them know in advance and mention that if it's getting too loud, they shouldn't hesitate to let you know.
 3. **Be Aware of Shared Walls – Position noisy household appliances, especially TVs and speakers, away from shared walls.** If you live above someone consider the time of day you do that aerobic workout you love so much. If you live below someone consider the strong scent of your cooking or preferred candles. A neighbor coming through your ceiling is not a good neighbor.
 4. **Control Your Dog – Keep your dogs on a leash and pick up after them.** Respect planting areas that your neighbors spend countless hours on. It is all fun petting and friendly licks until that poorly timed lift of the leg. Also, it is neighborly to be aware of others who would rather steer clear of your lovable "Rex." Dander allergies and dog fears are real, so crossing the street with your pet in certain areas can go a long way. A frightened neighbor is not a good neighbor. **BONUS:** Dog Barking – I know I am guilty of having my dog annoy my neighbors with the ill-timed barking fits. Whether you have a "yippee" dog or a "woof-er" dog, most others don't care to hear it. This is not the easiest fix, but talking to your neighbors about it can smooth things over before annoyances boil over.
 5. **Practice Parking Etiquette – When you park your vehicle, be sure not to block anyone's access, or make them have to pull out of a very tight spot.** Don't over-rev the engine of your car or motorcycle early in the morning or late at night. Avoid slamming your doors or shining your headlights into your neighbor's windows late at night. A trapped neighbor is not a good neighbor.
 6. **Slow Down, You're Driving Too Fast – An injured neighbor is not a good neighbor.**
 7. **Take Your Garbage Out – Pretty simple, really.** The dead animal stench coming from your rotting garbage makes everyone feel sick, particularly those of us down wind. We have specific garbage times for a reason. If you accidentally miss the collection, bring it back in immediately and try to contain it well. Garbage can attract vermin, insects, and other pests, and is also unsightly. A smelly neighbor is not a good neighbor.
 8. **Invite Me to the Party, Or Give Me Fair Warning – If you're going to fill up the street with cars and have that deejay blasting his tunes out into the universe through speakers bigger than a cow, then at least give me a bit of warning first.** A sleepless neighbor is not a good neighbor. Ok, so your neighbor would never do this, right? If you're planning a party, be sure to give your neighbors plenty of warning, letting them know when it's going to start and how long you expect it to go on. Leave them a telephone number to contact if they need to ask you to turn it down. If you get on well with your neighbors, why not invite them too?
 9. **Be Aware of Your Surroundings – Keep your eyes on anyone you don't know acting suspiciously around your neighbor's home.** When in doubt, call security or the police so they can quickly curtail any criminal activity. A robbed neighbor is not a good neighbor.
 10. **Be Adults – We are bound to have disagreements.** If an issue arises, talk to your neighbor directly and try to work out a solution that is agreeable. If you hear about things second-hand then disagreements can easily grow. It is best to give your reasons for a request to your neighbor yourself. A gossipy neighbor is not a good neighbor. Having said that, sometimes conflicts are not easily resolved. In these cases the best thing may be simple avoidance to circumvent an escalating conflict.
- So there you go. Ten easy-to-follow rules that will help make our neighborhood a better place; the Ten Commandments of the Good Neighbors, as it were. I'm sure there are other items that you can think of that might take the place of one or another of these on my list. Living by these might seem a matter of simple courtesy for some of us, but some people live in a bubble or else they just don't give a hoot. I am going to channel Robert Frost when I say, "Good fences make good neighbors."

This article first appeared in October, 2011

Council of Co-Owners
The Meadows
6100 Strasburg Drive
Centreville, VA 20121

The Meadow Lark is published each month exclusively for the benefit of the residents and owners of The Meadows. It is the official publication of the Council of Co-Owners and is under the purview of the Board of Directors. News items, personal ads, and such are welcomed and should be placed in the large mailbox in front of the Clubhouse, emailed to meadowsoffice@verizon.net or faxed to 703-815-0755. The deadline is the 20th of each month. Personal ads must be 25 words or less, on 8½x11-inch paper. Include your name, Meadows address, and telephone number. They must be renewed each month. The Meadows does not endorse any advertisers.

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24-Hour EMERGENCY ONLY
Service First: 1-888-980-8958

Security
703-628-9481

Towing
Battlefield Towing: 703-378-0059

AAA/Republic Services
703-818-8222
Call for special pick up, Thursdays only

Remodeling?

Any desired changes to the exterior or interior of your unit must be submitted on an ARF or Request for Interior Alteration form to the Board of Directors for approval PRIOR to the change being done.

A/C UNITS

If you replace your air conditioning unit, you may install it inside your utility room or submit an ARF for proposed exterior installation.

Satellite Dishes in The Meadows



Taking Care of Trash

Trash is an issue that no one really wants to deal with, but its existence is a fact of life. Some people just can't seem to dispose of trash properly. In order to keep our community looking as nice as possible, everyone is asked to please not leave trash on the Common Elements, and if you see some unsightly trash, please be a good citizen and pick it up.

To keep your community clean, please contact the Management Office at 703-830-4464 or meadowsoffice@verizon.net to report any neighbors who you feel are not following the rules related to trash and its removal.

Parking in The Meadows

As a reminder, any vehicle parked on Meadows property must display a valid parking permit. The acceptable forms of a permit can either be a Meadows parking sticker, a green Visitor hang tag, or a red Extended Visitor Hang tag. Residents may not use Visitor tags. Residents may not use Visitor tags. For details on our parking rules and regulations, please contact The Meadows office, or refer to the 2014 Meadows Rules and Regulations, Section X: Rules Governing Motor Vehicles.

Keep the Lights On!

In order to promote safety in our neighborhood, everyone is reminded to leave your porch lights on, both front and rear.

Generally, criminals like to operate in the dark, so the more light that is present, the less likely they will be to strike in that area.

Although we are blessed to have street lights, they cannot provide full light everywhere. If all units keep their porch lights on, the level of light in the community will be much more of a crime deterrent.

Safety Reminders

■ Regular Furnace Maintenance

It is critical to ensure safe and efficient operation of your furnace regardless of the age of the unit. Many heating and air conditioning companies offer discounted specials this time of year.

■ Carbon Monoxide Detectors

The furnaces and most hot water heaters in The Meadows use gas. It is imperative that all homes have a working carbon monoxide detector. Carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas which can cause death.

