

The Meadow Lark



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

Changes for Annual Meeting

In order to make attendance at the Annual Meeting possible for all Co-owners, the location of the meeting has been changed to a place that has no steps and will be more accessible. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 9 at 7:30 PM in the cafeteria of Centre Ridge Elementary School, which is located at 14400 New Braddock Road right here in Centreville.

A presentation will be made at the meeting concerning the current state of our community, including plans for what the future may hold. Please plan now to attend this important meeting.

Candidates Night

Would you like to meet the candidates that are running this year for election to the Board of Directors? You can do just that on Candidates Night, which will be held on Thursday, November 20 at 7:00 PM in the Clubhouse. See candidate bios on page 3.

There are currently five candidates running for five two-year terms on the Board of Directors. The candidates are Emily Berg, Linda Lachapelle, Bill Liedtke, Christopher Lyons and Jason Spessard.

Please plan to attend this important meeting. The Board of Directors sets the budget for our community, and also establishes all of the rules that all residents need to abide by.

Election Time

We will hold the election at the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, December 9. The package for the Annual Meeting will be mailed out shortly. This package will contain all the information about the election, including a proxy and a ballot. If you cannot attend the meeting, you need to send in the proxy, and you can then also cast your votes for members of the Board of Directors by returning the ballot. If you do not receive this package by mid-November, please contact the office so you can obtain one.

Return of the proxy form is very important. Our By-Laws require a certain percentage of Co-Owners either to be present at the meeting or to have signed a proxy form so they can be counted as present. Proxy forms, as well as the ballot if you wish, need to be returned by 4:30 PM Monday, December 8. They can be mailed, placed in the black Council mailbox located outside the Clubhouse or can be returned to the Meadows office in person.

SEE CANDIDATES' BIOS ON PAGE 3

NOVEMBER



Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, November 20, 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.

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

Looking forward to:

Annual Meeting: Tuesday, December 9, 7:30 PM at Centre Ridge Elementary.

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

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

Closed Nov. 27 Thanksgiving and Nov. 28 Day after Thanksgiving

NO TRASH PICK-UP

on November 27, Thanksgiving
Please do not put trash out on Nov. 26



Sunday, November 2

"Fall Back" at 2 AM

Set your clocks back one hour and replace the batteries in your smoke alarms

Adopt-a-Highway – November 8

Volunteers are needed for the Adopt-a-Highway pickup at 9:00 AM on Saturday, November 8. Meet at the Clubhouse. Please show your community spirit and come out to help for an hour or so.

President's Corner

Happy Fall! I hope everyone was able to enjoy some of the many Fall Festivals around our area. I highly recommend visiting one of the various Apple Orchards nearby. No matter how fresh an apple from a local grocery store is, nothing can beat a freshly picked apple right from the tree. My wife and I visit Marker Miller Orchards in Winchester, VA a few times during this season. Simply delicious.

It's that time of year again where the Board of Directors had to make the difficult decision of ironing out next year's budget. Shortly, everyone should be receiving a letter and an updated budget printout. The increase for next year has been minimized to 2% for all units. All of the Board Members understand that any increase, no matter the amount, is never an easy pill to swallow. Simply put, our community is over 40 years old and many items are in need of repair/replacement. Unfortunately, addressing these items can be costly.

On a more positive note, I would personally like to thank our newest member of the Meadows Maintenance staff, Joey, for his efforts since he joined our community. He has become a wonderful addition to our Maintenance staff and he has regularly gone above and beyond his normal daily duties. Thank you, Joey. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Happy Early Thanksgiving, everyone!
Take care, be safe, and have fun!

~ Eric Sokolowski

Board of Directors Motions

At the October 16 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to reaffirm email votes to approve two waterproofing jobs, waiving all but \$50 of a violation fee and actions to take regarding two extermination cases.
- Passed a motion to approve the 2015 budget which has an increase in the condo fee of \$6 per month.
- Passed a motion to purchase two gas grills for use at the pool complex at a maximum cost of \$300.
- Passed a motion to approve a bid of \$2,555 from Valley Crest to plant six trees.
- Passed a motion to accept bids from Valley Crest totaling \$5310 for shrub removal and turf restoration.
- Passed a motion to accept a bid from Syd's Plumbing of \$57,675 to replace a sewage clean-out line.
- Passed a motion to accept a bid of \$1900 from Capital Golf Carts for a replacement refurbished golf cart.
- Passed a motion to waive all except \$50 of a violation fee.
- Passed a motion to begin violation charges for a Co-owner that is not in compliance with a rules violation.
- Passed a motion to accept renewal of the employee health insurance plan with United Healthcare at a cost of \$28,934.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS
AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE

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.

Everyone is also reminded that our trash days are Monday and Thursday, and that trash cannot be put at the curb before 5 PM the evening before (Sunday and Wednesday).

Security Totals

September 15 – October 14, 2014

Vehicles Ticketed: 27

Vehicles Towed: 3

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

Avocado Court: 1

Cool Oak Lane: 2

Golden Oak Court/Road: 2

Rustling Leaves Lane: 2

Saguaro Place: 1

Saint Germain Drive: 3

Strasburg Drive: 0

Turin Lane: 2

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.

Don't Feed the Critters!

It has recently been noted in many areas around the community that people are putting out various types of food items, apparently in an attempt to feed the birds, squirrels, etc. It should be noted that it is against Meadows rules to do this, in fact even dogs and cats must be fed inside your unit and no food for them left on the Common Elements.

In the past we have had a rodent problem in some areas of the community, which was either caused or made worse by having a food source available for the mice, and even worse, rats. The rat problem has been controlled, we have bait stations in several places within our development. If food items are left out, the rats are more likely to feed on this rather than the bait which will control their population.

Our feathered and furry friends for the most part have food provided for them by nature, we do not need to feed them. And we certainly don't want to attract more rats into our community. If you do see any rodents, please let the office know so action can be taken to eradicate them.

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.

Board Candidates

There are currently five candidates for the five open seats on The Meadows Board of Directors. The election will be held at the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, December 9 at 7:30 PM at the Centreville High School. Here is a brief biography of each candidate and a statement concerning why they are running for the Board of Directors. Please plan to attend the Candidates Night on Thursday, November 20 at 7:00 PM in the Clubhouse. You can meet and ask questions of these candidates at that meeting.

Emily Berg

Emily has owned her condo in the Meadows since 2010, and works as a paralegal in Fairfax. She has an excellent background with the legal industry, which she feels helps as a member of the Board. She is interested in improving the community, reducing the increases in condo fees each year, and feels that after two years on the Board, she has a good understanding of what is good for the community, what has worked in years past, and what needs improvement.

Linda Lachapelle

Linda has lived in The Meadows for 23 years, and is employed by the County government. She currently volunteers for her son's school football team and orchestra, Boy Scout Troop, and at her church. Linda has been on the Board for nine years, four of those as the Treasurer. She would like to be re-elected to the Board so that she can continue supporting our Community. She is not afraid to speak her mind even in the wake of opposition, and not afraid to raise difficult questions to ensure that all sides of an issue are looked at prior to making decisions that will affect all 618 units.

Bill Liedtke

Bill has lived in the Meadows for 35 years, and been involved in the various governing bodies of the community since 1984. He was active with the swim team for many years, and has also served as the Commissioner of the Herndon Swim League for the last 20 years. Bill is interested in being on the Board because he continues to have an interest in making sure the property is well taken care of to protect everyone's interest in their homes. He enjoys working with other Board Members and management to make decisions which are agreed to be in the best interest of the community and its residents.

Christopher Lyons

Christopher has lived in The Meadows for nine years. He is employed as a steamfitter and welding instructor. His interest in running for the Board is that he would like to be more involved with the conservation and betterment of his neighborhood.

Jason Spessard

Jason has lived in the Meadows for eight years, and was on the Board for two years and served as its President for one year. He is the Director of Finance for an association in the DC area. If elected he says he would make decisions that benefit the future of the community, whether that is by reversing policies or providing different services or activities while striving to make prudent financial decisions. He says that he has a vested interest in the community.

Reminder for Pet Owners

The Meadows Rules and Regulations state that all pet feces must be bagged and removed from the Common Elements immediately. In addition, please be reminded that the Fairfax County Leash Law is in effect at The Meadows. This law requires dogs to be on a leash at all times when outside. For the health and safety of our residents, please immediately remove dog feces and keep dogs leashed at all times when on the Common Elements. It is important to remember that violations of these policies could result in the assessment of penalties in the amount of \$50 per occurrence.

In addition, please do not leave the baggies you use to scoop up your dog's waste anywhere on the Common Elements. These baggies should be placed in the proper pet waste stations that we have located throughout the community or should be taken to your unit for proper disposal.



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.

EDITORS: Bill Liedtke and Joan Orvis

Meadows Office

Monday–Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Phone: 703-830-4464

Fax: 703-815-0755

E-Mail: meadowsoffice@verizon.net

Website: mymeadows.net

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



Utilities Must Remain On!

ALL Co-Owners are required to keep the utilities on in their units. The heat must be set at or above 65°F in all units, vacant or occupied. This temperature may seem a little high, but one must consider that the furnace room where the pipes originate is unheated and may be affected by the wind chill factor. Another thing to consider is if the water is turned off, it remains in the pipes and is subject to even quicker freezing. Every year, major damage to several units has occurred as the result of pipes freezing and breaking in this manner.

Any damage resulting from broken pipes, etc., caused by improper heat being maintained in a unit will be the responsibility of the Co-Owner. A minimum of 65 degrees Fahrenheit must be maintained during the winter months. – Rules and Regulations.

In addition, to this regulation, The Meadows Rules also includes a Utility Maintenance Requirement for all units. It states:

In the event that a Co-Owner does not keep electric and/or gas utilities connected as required, the Council of Co-Owners shall take any and all measures reasonably necessary to protect the common elements of the condominium which shall include but are not limited to the appropriation of funds to reconnect and maintain electric and gas utilities. All costs and changes incurred by the Council shall be assessed against the unit owner.

You can help by reporting vacant units to the office as soon as you notice them. Send reports to the office via email, fax or phone. Make sure that you include the address. Report any evidence of possible broken pipes or water coming from a unit immediately!

What To Do If You Experience a Leak

If you experience a leak in your unit you must contact your own plumber to respond.

If your leak appears to be from a neighboring unit you should attempt to reach your neighbor and have them shut off the water to their unit to minimize damage. Most shut off valves are located in the utility closet behind the hot water heater; however, if there have been any plumbing changes in the unit by a current or previous Co-Owner, the valve may have been moved. If the neighbor is not reachable or unable to shut off the water, contact the Fire Department and they will report and turn the water off. In these cases, you may contact the Management Office on the next business day; however, since this is a neighbor-to-neighbor issue, The Meadows involvement is limited. You are encouraged to contact your neighbor directly or if that is not possible, file a claim through your homeowner's insurance company.

The only exception to the procedures outlined above is if you are in an upper unit and inspection of your attic indicates the leak is coming from the roof. If this is the case, please contact the office to schedule an appointment for a maintenance technician to inspect the leak. In the meantime, simply place a bucket or pan under the leak to keep the water from penetrating into your living space. While this is not an after-hours emergency call, we do ask that you let us know as soon as possible so that we may see the attic while it is still wet. This helps us determine where the problem is.