

The Meadow Lark



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

Annual Meeting Held

The Annual Meeting of the Council of Co-Owners of The Meadows was held on December 9, 2014 at the Centre Ridge Elementary School. About a dozen residents were present for the meeting. The primary purpose of the meeting is to elect a portion of the Board of Directors, five of the nine Board seats were up for election this year. Elected to the Board for two-year terms were returning members Emily Berg, Linda Lachapelle and Bill Liedtke. New members elected to the Board are Jason Spessard and Christopher Lyons.

The meeting also provided a discussion relating to what is currently going on in the community and gave residents a chance to ask questions and make comments.

New Board Officers

Immediately after the Annual Meeting the Board of Directors met to elect new officers for the upcoming year of 2015. Two returning officers are Eric Sokolowski as President and Emily Berg as the Vice President. The new Treasurer will be Linda Lachapelle and the new Secretary is Bill Liedtke. Kelton Reynolds will serve as Parliamentarian.

It is recommended that residents, particularly Co-Owners, attend a Board meeting so they can see how our community is governed. Meetings are held in the Clubhouse at 7:30 PM each third Thursday of the month. The next meeting will be on January 15.



Contest Winners!

The Meadows closed out the year with a Holiday Decorating Contest. Many residents put up some wonderful displays of lights and other decorations. It was very difficult for the judging committee to pick the winners from all of the great displays, but the best were judged to be from the following addresses:

6168 Strasburg • 14417 Golden Oak • 14498 Cool Oak • 14424 Saguaro

Congratulations to the winners and here is to wishing everyone a joyous and prosperous New Year.

Turn the Water Off!

Everyone is reminded that all outside water spigots are required to be turned off by December 1st. In order to prevent pipes freezing and damage to your unit or those of your neighbors, please turn off both the front and rear faucets located in all lower units.

JANUARY

Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, January 15, 2015, 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.

Office Closed: At noon on December 31 and closed January 1.

Christmas Tree Pickup: Until January 6.

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



Christmas Tree Pick-Up

According to Fairfax County regulations, Christmas trees must be recycled—they cannot be put out with your trash. For your convenience, a drop off area will be located next to the Clubhouse on Strasburg Drive through January 6.

All decorations, including tinsel and garlands, must be removed. If you use a carry plastic bag, this must also be removed.

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

Closed at noon on December 31.

Closed January 1.

NO TRASH PICK-UP

Please do not put trash out on December 31

President's Corner

Taking a Holiday Break! Everyone have a wonderful New Year, and see this space for a brand new item next month.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed for all of the standing committees of The Meadows. These committees are: Landscape and Grounds, Social and Recreation, and Pool. The committees will welcome new members with any new ideas they would like to present for consideration.

Frozen Pipes = Big Trouble!

Our Management is trying to make sure that the utilities remain on and the thermostats are set to the proper temperature in all units to prevent pipes from freezing and breaking. This is done to prevent water damage to the affected home as well as the possibility of water damage to surrounding homes.

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!

See the back page for office and emergency after hour phone numbers.

Security Totals

November 15 – December 14, 2014

Vehicles Ticketed: 25

Vehicles Towed: 5

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

Avocado Court: 1

Cool Oak Lane: 3

Golden Oak Court/Road: 8

Rustling Leaves Lane: 2

Saguaro Place: 3

Saint Germain Drive: 1

Strasburg Drive: 1

Turin Lane: 1

Calls referred to FCPD/FCFD: 3

New Condo Payment Coupons

New condo payment coupons for 2015 have been mailed. If you did not receive your coupons, please—ASAP—get in touch with SFMC at 703-392-6006. These folks will get you the 2015 condo payment coupons. It is important to know that your payments are due the first day of each month regardless of whether or not you have your coupons.

Please remember the new fees are \$306 for 3 bedrooms and \$272 for 2 bedrooms.

Important Safety Issue!

It has been noticed that the insulation covering the electric wiring and gas lines running from the meters into the utility closet at some units have deteriorated, which could eventually result in exposed wiring. Exposed electrical wiring may cause injury, so please check the wiring behind your unit as soon as possible.

These sections of wiring and gas lines belong to the Co-Owner and it is the Co-Owner's responsibility to maintain them; however, we have been made aware that the utility companies may perform this work at no cost. You can reach Washington Gas at (703) 750-1000 and NOVEC at (703) 335-0500.

Please take a moment to inspect your wiring and gas line and contact the utility company or a certified electrician to make necessary repairs as soon as possible.

Keep the Lights On!

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

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.

The Meadows Trash/Recycling Guidelines

To keep your community clean, please contact the Management Office at 703-830-4464 or meadowsoffice@verizon.net to report any neighbors who are not following these rules.

Trash is certainly no one's favorite topic; however, in order to keep our community free of odor, pests and debris, we all need to do our part to ensure that trash is disposed of properly. Please review the following guidelines for trash and recycling:

When are trash and recycling picked up?

- Trash is picked up on Mondays and Thursdays.
- Recycling is picked up on Mondays only.

Where and when to leave trash/recycling for pick up

- Trash should be in trash bags and left on the curb *after* 5:00pm the night before scheduled pick up.
- Recycling should be prepared as outlined below and left on the curb in the blue recycling bins *after* 5:00pm Sunday evening.

Where to leave trash prior to pick up date

- Each unit has a small storage area (approximately 3'x3') with a black door which should be used for this purpose. Your trash storage is near your outdoor stairwell. Please note that this is the only acceptable place to store trash prior to pick up.

What items should I put out for recycling?

- Our recycling service will take glass bottles and jars, tin and aluminum food and drink containers and #1 through #7 plastic bottles and jugs. These items must be rinsed out to minimize insects and odor. They will also pick up bound or bagged newspapers and magazines, as well as mixed paper including junk mail, cereal and pizza boxes and flattened corrugated cardboard and fiberboard.

What items will the trash service pick up?

- The trash service will take all normal household garbage and debris that is left on the curb in trash bags.

Greetings and Good News Solicited

Everyone likes to hear good news. One thing that will allow *The Meadow Lark* to publicize good news is for our residents to submit items to us. We used to list important events or milestones in this newsletter, but it seems that people just aren't sending such news in to be recognized any more.

Accordingly, a call is being sent out to *everyone* to send in your good news! We are willing to publish all birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, weddings, births, awards and anything else that may be noteworthy in the life of your friends and loved ones. You can drop a quick note in the black mailbox outside the clubhouse, or call or email the office.

What items will not be picked up on trash day?

- Any items such as carpet or construction debris will not be picked up by our trash service and must be disposed of by the unit's residents.
- No recycling will be picked up except on Mondays.
- Any trash not in a trash bag will not be picked up.

What should I do if I have large items to dispose of?

- For large items such as appliances or furniture call AAA/Republic Services at (703) 818-8222 in advance of Thursday's pick up to notify them of bulk items. These pick-ups are scheduled for Thursdays only. Please be advised that depending on the items left for pick up there may be a charge, which will be billed to you directly.
- If Management is required to call for a special pick up on your behalf, a charge may be assessed to your account.

Tips and suggestions

- If there is a lot of snow on the ground, please use black trash bags since white bags may be hard to see and could be missed.
- If your trash is still out after 10am or your recycling still out after 4pm please place these items back in your trash storage area until the next scheduled pick up day.
- If you see a neighbor has left trash/recycling out before or after trash day, please contact the Management Office at (703) 830-4464 or via e-mail at meadowsoffice@verizon.net.

Since The Meadows is a multi-family community it is important that we all fulfill our responsibilities as owners/residents. We appreciate your cooperation in our efforts to keep your community clean and orderly.

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.



Meadows Website www.mymeadows.net



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.