

The Meadow Lark



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



Spring, Finally!

Yard Sale, Clean-Up

After a record-setting winter for snow (and inconvenience from blizzards), spring has finally arrived. Some of the spring flowers are already in bloom, and residents will soon be out planting more flowers. The Meadows will conduct a full recognition of spring on the weekend of May 1-2.

The annual Yard Sale will be held that Saturday (May 1). It will once again be a yard sale right here in the community (really a "Sidewalk Sale"), just like was tried last fall but that sale was rained out. You may place your wares for sale in front of your unit, on your front balcony or porch, or in the common areas near your unit. Be careful not to block access to any parking spaces or to the sidewalks which will be used for passage throughout the community. The sale will be held from 8:00 AM until 1:00 PM. There will be a rain date this year (just in case), it is May 8.

In keeping with the spring (and spring cleaning) theme, a dumpster will be provided near the clubhouse for use by all residents the weekend of May 1. You can place items you no longer need in the dumpster for disposal, but there are some things you cannot throw away here. Any hazardous materials such as paint, batteries, and tires may not be disposed of here. The dumpster will be here rain or shine over the first weekend of May.

2010 Rules & Regulations Now on Our Website!

Please take time to review The Meadows revised *Rules and Regulations* and become familiar with the updates and changes. For your convenience we have bolded the areas of the document that have been changed from the 2009 version.

The revised *Rules and Regulations* have been published on our website at www.mymeadows.net. Of course if you would like to receive a paper copy of the *Rules and Regulations* you can email, fax or drop a note in the office and we will print a copy for you.

We hope the information contained in the *Rules and Regulations* will be helpful to you and enhance your experience at The Meadows.



Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, April 15, 7:30 PM in the Clubhouse. (*Note: No April 1 meeting.*) 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.

Swim Team Parents Committee: Thursday, April 8, 7:00 PM

Social and Recreation Committee: Tuesday, April 13 at 7:00 PM

Pool Committee: Tuesday, April 13 at 7:30 PM

Landscape Committee: Wednesday, April 14, 7:30 PM

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

The President's Corner

Things are starting to bloom, the sun is shining, and the snow is gone! The Board of Directors has a lot on their agenda; let me inform you of a few items. Many residents are distressed about the amount of trash, cigarette butts, and dog defecation on the common grounds. With everyone out and about, please remember to keep your refuse with you until you reach a trashcan. Please tell your children to use the trashcans in the play areas. It helps us all. And remember, repeated occurrences of not picking up after your dog can result in a \$50 fine.

We are planning a Sidewalk Sale for May 1, rain date on May 8. Please put your items for sale out on your patio, front porch, in the common areas next to your unit; you can even use your reserved parking space. We will have signs up directing people into the Meadows, and the Swim Team plans on having a fund raiser that day as well. And speaking of the Swim Team, registration and signup will be coming up soon. Come join the team and the Parents' Committee; you are assured of a good time.

We are also looking at a proposal to change our parking and vehicle registration rules. The Board is working on this now, and we will keep the Community informed by notices in *The Meadow Lark* and by flyers. We are planning to have an open comment Board meeting on these new rules, once we have reached that stage.

And finally, special thank yous to the people who attended the reception for Lydia Miller. We had a wonderful time; good company and good food. And thank you to all the volunteers who helped make it possible, Linda and Kelton. To all those who send in suggestions and comments regarding our snow removal this winter, thank you as well. We received some good suggestions which will be mentioned to our snow removal company.

Have a safe and happy April!

~ Joy C. Foshier

Board of Directors Motions

At the March 4 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to approve an Architectural Review Form (ARF) for window replacement.
- Passed a motion to not hold a Board meeting on April 1.
- Passed a motion to spend a maximum of \$200 for an appreciation reception.
- Passed a motion to spend a maximum of \$1000 for a dumpster for the spring cleanup.
- Passed a motion to allow a resident to temporarily place a mat on the common elements.
- Passed a motion to approve the proposed changes to the rules and regulations.
- Passed a motion concerning a pet issue.
- Passed a motion to deny a request to allow an existing satellite dish.

- Passed a motion to reduce a violation charge.
- Passed a motion to conduct an asset search for a delinquent former owner.

At the March 18 Meeting:

- Passed motions to approve two ARFs for windows/doors and deny an ARF for indoor furniture on a patio.
- Passed a motion to approve a bid of \$4380 from Culbertson for brick work.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS
AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE

Meadows Rules Changes

At the March 4th Board of Directors meeting the Board approved several changes to *The Meadows Rules and Regulations*. Most of these changes were very small, changing or adding a word here or there, usually in order to more clearly explain an existing rule. This article will summarize the few new rules that really are different, but you will need to look at the complete document on The Meadows website (www.mymeadows.net) to see all of the changes.

A new rule has been added to the section on Rules Governing Property indicating that residents cannot feed birds, animals or pets on the Common Elements. This rule was actually in place previously and was inadvertently dropped from the book last year. A change has been added in the section for Rules Governing Modifications to make it clear that attic space cannot be converted and additional bedrooms cannot be created when converting one's unit.

Another new rule, which was actually adopted last year, appears in the Modifications section which replaces a rule related to replacement of air conditioning units. These units may now be placed on the Common Elements when certain criteria set forth in the new rule are met.

Finally, the dates when outside water spigots must be turned off has been changed from December 1 through April 15 to the new dates of November 15 through April 1.

There will be more rule changes as the Rules Governing Motor Vehicles is undergoing an overhaul by an ad-hoc committee. Those changes will be implemented later this spring and the new rules will be placed on the website into the rule book at that time.

Swim Team Parents

The Swim Team Parents Committee will hold their next meeting on Thursday, April 8, at 7 PM in the Clubhouse. We need as many parents as possible to attend this meeting. Much of the planning for the upcoming season will take place at this meeting. This meeting is the place to make your views known, so please attend.

Bits & Pieces

■ Spring Planting

Spring is fast approaching and many residents are planning on putting in flowers and other plants. Before planting, please check the 'Meadows Rules and Regulations'. If you have any questions, please contact the Meadows Office. The contact information is on the back of this issue.

■ 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.

■ Lost & Found

In the Meadows Office, 703-830-4464.

Security Totals

February 16 – March 15, 2010

Vehicles Ticketed: 22

Vehicles Towed: 3

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

Avocado Court: 0

Cool Oak Lane: 7

Golden Oak Court/Road: 5

Rustling Leaves Lane: 2

Saguaro Place: 5

Saint Germain Drive: 4

Strasburg Drive: 1

Turin Lane: 1

Calls referred to police/fire/rescue: 9

Lydia's Reception

A dozen or so residents attended a very nice appreciation reception for Lydia Miller on March 13. The reception was held to recognize her service of 30 years to the community as editor of *The Meadow Lark*. Lydia was presented with a plaque and a gift card to Starbucks, one of her favorite places to go.

Parking Changes Proposed

The Parking Enforcement Committee was tasked by the Board of Directors to make recommendations for changes to the way parking is handled here in The Meadows. We have a limited number of parking spaces, and in at least some areas of the community have a parking problem. They have worked very hard over the last couple of months to come up with a revised parking plan, and now have a draft proposal. The Board is in the process of reviewing this, and will hold a work session to do this on April 21. The Board would like to then give the community input into this review process, this will be at 7 PM on May 6.

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.

You might ask what the reason for this is. 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.

Requirements for Installing Exterior HVAC Units

Recent EPA changes in air conditioning and heating standards have made future maintenance and availability of interior HVAC units much more difficult. While there should be no problem maintaining an existing interior unit for the rest of its useful life, units installed in the near future will have difficulty finding a machine that will fit into the utility closet and obtaining the refrigerant for these units will become pricey. Eventually, the refrigerant currently used will no longer be available and these units will not be able to be recharged.

As a result of these changes, The Meadows Board of Directors has reconsidered allowing HVAC units to be installed on the Common Elements. Going forward, Co-Owner's who would like to install an HVAC unit on the grounds will need to follow the steps below:

Any Co-Owner wishing to install an HVAC unit on the Common Elements must submit their request in writing to the Management Office.

Once a request is received an appointment will be made for The Meadows Maintenance Supervisor to meet with the Co-Owner and/or the Co-Owner's HVAC contractor to review the specifications and provide detailed requirements for the installation.

After this meeting the Co-Owner must submit a completed Architectural Review Form (ARF) outlining the agreed upon details of the proposed installation, an Installation Agreement and a copy of the contractor's license. The Board of Directors will then review the documents and make a determination on whether or not to approve the installation.

REMEMBER: ANY HVAC UNIT INSTALLED ON THE COMMON ELEMENTS WITHOUT WRITTEN BOARD APPROVAL MAY BE REQUIRED TO BE REMOVED AT THE CO-OWNER'S EXPENSE.



Important Pool Pass Information for New And Renewal Passes

It's hard to believe, but pool season is right around the corner! Below please find instructions on how to obtain your pool passes for 2010.

Renewal Passes – If in the past you received a pool pass with your photo on it, you will not need to come to the Management Office or a pool pass session to get your 2010 pool pass. Simply complete the Pool Registration form (on the website or enclosed if this newsletter was mailed to you) and return it to the Management Office by mail, email, fax or hand delivery. For after-hours convenience you can also leave the form in the council mailbox located in front of the Clubhouse. Provided your account is in good standing, once we have received your completed registration form your pool passes will be updated and either mailed to you or left at your front door. Keep in mind that it will take several days for your passes to reach you once the registration is received, so plan ahead to ensure you are able to enjoy the pools as soon as possible. Only the 2010 pool passes will be accepted by pool staff.

New Passes – For new residents or those who have not had a photo pool pass before, you will need to attend one of the pool pass sessions at the Clubhouse in order to have your photo taken and pool pass issued. The pool pass sessions for 2010 will be *Saturday, May 15 from 10 AM until 12 Noon and Wednesday, May 26 from 6 to 8 PM*. If you are a new resident you will need to be sure that a copy of your settlement sheet or lease agreement is on file with the office. If not, please bring the document with you to the pool pass session. If you are not sure, feel free to contact the Management Office to find out if we have your documents already on file. You will also need photo identification and completed Pool Registration Form (on the website or enclosed if this newsletter was mailed to you). Be sure to attend one of these sessions as you must have a 2010 pool pass to enter the pools.

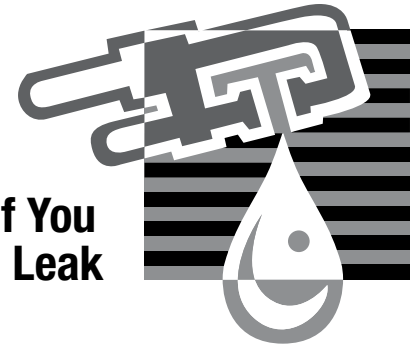
All Residents – It is important for new and existing residents to remember that your account must be in good standing in order to receive a new or renewal pool pass. Tenants should check with their Landlord to confirm account status as The Meadows is unable to discuss accounting information with Tenants under any circumstances.

As always, if you have any questions please contact the Management Office.

We Need Your Eyes

The Meadows employs only four full-time and one part-time staff members. Since staff can't be in all places at all times we ask that you contact the Management Office by phone, fax or email when you see an issue needing attention, such as a detached shutter, loose railing or missing shingle. Staff may already be aware of the issue or actively working on getting the issue resolved, but it is possible that the issue you observed has not yet been detected by our staff. As they say, it's better to be safe than sorry, so please call/email the office with the details.

Our staff does all they can to keep up with the ever-present maintenance needs of our 39-year-old property, but we need our residents to take part in the process. Also keep in mind that the maintenance work on the property must be prioritized to ensure that safety issues are resolved before those that are of a more cosmetic nature.



What To Do If You Experience a Leak

If you are experiencing 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, you should 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 does not get involved. 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 may not be 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.

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 or emailed to meadowsoffice@verizon.net. The deadline is the 20th of each month. Personal ads must be 25 words or less, on 8½x11-inch paper or emailed to meadowsoffice@verizon.net. Include your name, Meadows address, and telephone number. The Meadows does not endorse any advertisers. EDITORS: Bill Liedtke and Joan Orvis

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Website: mymeadows.net

24-Hour EMERGENCY ONLY
Service First: 1-800-309-4709

Security
703-628-9481

Towing
Battlefield Towing: 703-378-0059

American Disposal Services
703-368-0500
Call for special pick up, Thursdays only

Satellite Dishes in The Meadows



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 making the change.

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.



Fuel type heaters are *strictly forbidden* by Meadows regulations. In the past fire has occurred here in the Meadows due to the use of kerosene or other fuel heaters. Fire and smoke quickly spread to surrounding units and are a real threat to life, limb and property.

- 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.

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The Visitors Parking Pass can be located at www.mymeadows.net
Click on Meadows Business in the sidebar menu, then on Forms and Files and scroll down to On-line Forms and click to find the Visitors Pass. If you prefer, visit the Meadows Office to pick up copies.