

# The Meadow Lark

October 2011



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

## Election Approaches

Each year at the Annual Meeting there is an election for some of the members of the Board of Directors, this year there are four seats being contested. At this point there are seven candidates running for these positions. The candidates are: Joe Fusari, Joan Orvis, Lynn Piercey, Kelton Reynolds, Joe Ann Rice, Tabitha Roberts and Eric Sokolowski.

The Annual Meeting will be held in December. More information will appear in next month's *Meadow Lark*.

## Community Improvement Series

by Jason Spessard

This is the first edition of a new series of articles I will be writing over the next several months. My intention is to bring the residents of our Meadows community together in a way that will improve our little community. I will provide my tips and experiences hoping you can build on them and avoid the missteps I have encountered. I hope you enjoy and I look forward to your feedback!

### Edition I: Good Neighbor Top Ten

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

## Meadows Budget

The Board of Directors is in the process of preparing a budget for 2012. In order to keep The Meadows in a good financial position, it appears that there will be an increase in the condo fee next year. It is possible that this increase will be larger than in the past several years.

Our community is now 40 years old and more work is needed to keep things in the proper shape, which of course adds to the expenses needed to be paid for by the condo fee.



**Board of Directors Meeting:** Thursday, October 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](http://mymeadows.net).

**Executive Committee:** Thursday, October 20, immediately after Board meeting.

**Landscape Committee:** October 5, 12:00 Noon in the Clubhouse.

*Residents and Co-Owners are welcomed and encouraged to attend any committee meeting.*

**Meadows Website**  
[www.mymeadows.net](http://www.mymeadows.net)

*continued on page 3*

## President's Corner

Even though it's a bit early, now is a good time to begin thinking about cold weather. Preparations include having the heating units serviced and making sure that windows and doors won't leak cold air and thereby raise the cost of keeping our homes warm. Do you clean or replace filters so that the units will be more efficient? Also, do you have a shovel and a proper melting medium (not rock salt) so that when snow and ice do come, the outside stairs and sidewalks can be kept clear? A little preparation will go a long way!

~ Joan Orvis

## Board of Directors Motions

### At the September 15 Meeting

- Passed motions to approve installation of a patio fence and allow interior improvements.
- Passed a motion to reaffirm two email votes which approved roof repairs.
- Passed a motion to go out to bid for the grounds contractor.
- Passed a motion to accept a bid from Reliable Rails of \$375 to install a railing.
- Passed a motion to purchase new parking tickets.
- Defeated a motion to remove funding for the swim team.
- Passed a motion to approve issuance of a parking sticker.
- Passed a motion to accept a bid of \$935.60 from National Antenna for antenna repairs.
- Passed a motion to deny reimbursement of violation charges.
- Passed a motion to accept the recommendation of our attorney regarding a collection case.
- Passed a motion to accept our attorney's recommendation regarding a personnel matter.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS  
AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE

## 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.

## Security Totals

August 15 – September 14, 2011

Vehicles Ticketed: 62

Vehicles Towed: 8

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

Avocado Court: 1

Cool Oak Lane: 2

Golden Oak Court/Road: 11

Rustling Leaves Lane: 2

Saguaro Place: 3

Saint Germain Drive: 7

Strasburg Drive: 4


Turin Lane: 3

Calls referred to FCPD/FCFD: 3

### 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.

## 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.*

## Bits & Pieces

Community Improvement Series, continued from page 1

### ■ Leaves, Leaves, Leaves!

The leaves will soon begin to fall. Downstairs residents are urged to keep window wells and entryways clear of leaves to prevent possible water backup and damage to units. All residents should keep porches, balconies, patios and sidewalks clear of leaves which can become slippery when it rains. The Meadows does provide leaf pickup. However, trees shed their leaves at different rates, so it is not possible for all of the leaves to be gathered at once.

### ■ 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 in the fall.

### ■ 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.

### ■ Security Corner

Please be aware of the 15 MPH speed limit within the community. Also, please secure your vehicle and remove or hide items such as GPS units. This will lessen your chances of a vehicle tampering IF area thieves do decide to enter The Meadows.

### ■ Lost & Found

In the Meadows Office, 703-830-4464.

### Satellite Dishes in The Meadows



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.”

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

---

If you replace your AIR CONDITIONING UNIT, you may install it inside your utility room or submit an ARF for proposed exterior installation.

---

**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: 1-800-309-4709**

**Security**

703-628-9481

**Towing**

Battlefield Towing: 703-378-0059

**American Disposal Services**

703-368-0500

Call for special pick up, Thursdays only

PAID AD

**GS-Handyman.com**

*31 Years Meadows Resident &  
Good Samaritan Handyman*

**Fire hazards:**

Lint & bird nest filled dryer vents.  
40 year old outlets, switches and  
breakers, with a shelf life of 20.

Specializing in The Meadows  
with all your household needs.

Tried and True.

Website [www.GS-Handyman.com](http://www.GS-Handyman.com)

Email [GSHandyman@cox.net](mailto:GSHandyman@cox.net)

**S&S  
HEATING & COOLING**

Heat, Air Conditioning & Plumbing

40 Years Experience

Service • Repair • Maintenance  
Installation • Duct Work

10% Off to Meadows Residents

**(703) 406-9410**

Proud Sponsor of  
The Meadows Sharks Swim Team

PAID AD

**WINDOWS & DOORS**

**25% OFF**

QUALITY REPLACEMENT  
WINDOWS AND DOORS

*Serving the residents of  
The Meadows since 1998*

**FREE ESTIMATES!**

**NuHome Inc.**

**703-273-0101**

[www.nuhomeonline.com](http://www.nuhomeonline.com)

PAID AD

**A. Heatwole  
Plumbing Service Co.**

32 years experience  
in the Centreville area!

Complete plumbing repairs

No travel charges

Emergency services

Master Plumber on each job

**703-830-4242**

*Mention this ad and receive  
\$12 off every service call!*

PAID AD

**McCarthy  
SERVICES**

**AIR CONDITIONING  
HEATING, ELECTRICAL  
AND PLUMBING**

**1-866-924-1650**

*Serving Residential and Commercial  
customers in DC, Maryland & Virginia*

**\$50 OFF**

*any quoted repair with this coupon  
Not valid with any other offer*