

# The Meadow Lark

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

*Happy New Year!*

## Annual Meeting Held

The Meadows Annual Council of Co-Owners Annual Meeting was held on Tuesday, December 8 with thirty-four folks in attendance. Since quorum was not met, the Board of Directors appointed the following candidates who acquired the highest number of votes in the election for the Board of Directors: Christopher Hill, new Board member; returning Board members Lynn Percey and Kelton Reynolds and write-in candidate, Joan Orvis, who is returning to the Board after a two-year break. Please see the zoning article on the presentation made by two people from the County Zoning office below.

## Zoning Officials at Annual Meeting

Two representatives from the Fairfax County Zoning Department made a presentation and answered questions for those in attendance (over 30 residents) at the Annual Meeting. Their discussion dealt primarily with overcrowding, but also touched on limitations on pets.

It has been noted by some of our residents that a few of the units here in The Meadows seem to have a large number of people residing in them. The zoning officials indicated that this is occurring in other parts of the county as well. If it is suspected that a unit is overcrowded, it can be reported to the Zoning Department at 703-324-1300. They will open an investigation, which will include a visit to the residence. Your complaint will be kept confidential.

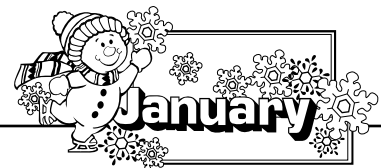
Zoning also can check on items within a unit such as how many people are allowed based on square footage and that window egress from the building is required from any sleeping area.

The officials also indicated that the zoning laws only allow a maximum of two dogs per any unit here in The Meadows.

## Here's to the Volunteers!

The Meadows has remained viable both financially and fiscally through 38 years, despite recessions, real estate market down-turns, myriad changes in the Virginia Condo Act, state and county laws and ordinances. We've all heard the horror stories about condominium associations not making it financially, which required restructuring or having to make special assessments and the like. The Meadows has remained sound because of its dedicated volunteers who served on its governing bodies and committees. This commitment and general sound judgment is to be commended.

The list of The Meadows Standing Committees was published in last month's *Meadow Lark*. Additional copies are available through the office. Most of the committees meet on an as needed basis. It is a great way to get involved and to contribute to the well being of your community and to meet neighbors. Please contact the office by phone, fax or email to express your interest in serving on a committee or attend a Board of Directors meeting. See the contact information on the back of this issue.



**Board of Directors Meeting:** Thursdays, January 7 & 21, 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).

**Parking Committee:** Tuesday, January 12, 7:00 PM in the Clubhouse. Note the date change this month.

**Christmas Tree Pickup:** December 26 – January 16.

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



## 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 is located next to the Clubhouse on Strasburg Drive until January 16. All decorations, including tinsel and garlands, must be removed. If you use a carry plastic bag, this must be removed also.

## The President's Corner

Here it is January already, and the beginning of a new year at The Meadows. Here's hoping everyone had a wonderful Holiday season. I would like to thank all the residents who attended the Annual Meeting. We had two representatives from the Fairfax County Zoning Department, and they fielded a lot of questions regarding over-occupation and further explained the Department's procedures. Please feel free to contact Zoning with any questions concerning matters under their purview at 703-324-1300.

For anyone who desires to get more involved in our community, please contact the office and join one of our many committees. There is room for everyone whether or not you own your unit. There is a Social Committee, which handles all our social functions, a Pool Committee, which oversees the maintenance of the pools, Community Relations Committee, Landscaping Committee, and our newly formed Parking Policy Committee. Please check the on-line calendar at [www.mymeadows.net](http://www.mymeadows.net) for any upcoming meetings, and feel free to attend.

~ Joy C. Foshier

## Board of Directors Motions

### At the December 3 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to accept the recommendation of Edward Jones regarding purchase of two CDs.
- Passed a motion approving a request for Washington Gas to do a survey regarding adding gas service to a unit.
- Passed a motion to approve an Architectural Review Form for an outside air conditioner.
- Passed a motion to approve new requirements for the installation of outside air conditioners.
- Passed a motion to purchase a card and gift card for a hospitalized Board member.
- Passed a motion to write off a total of \$34,905 which is uncollectible.
- Passed a motion to close one collection account and report the debt to the credit bureaus.
- Passed a motion to approve the evaluation of our Property Manager.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS  
AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE



## Fire Safety

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.

## Satellite Dishes in The Meadows



## 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.

## 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

### ■ Furnaces

For safe and efficient operation, please have your furnace checked if you haven't yet done so this season. Make sure to use a licensed and insured contractor.

### ■ 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.

### ■ Helping Hands

If you can lend a hand in shoveling snow and ice from entry ways, stairs, walks and parking spaces for those residents who may not be able to do so, contact the office at 703-830-4464. The Meadows, its employees or the Board of Directors are in no way endorsing any individual or their services and are in no way liable.

### ■ Lost & Found

In the Meadows Office, 703-830-4464.

## Utilities Must Remain On!

ALL Co-Owners are required to keep the utilities on in your 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 area.

*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 Regulations 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 accessed against the unit owner.*

## Important Winter Information

To help prevent frozen pipes, breakage, and the resulting water damage during severe cold weather (consider the wind chill factor), you should do the following:

- Slow-drip all inside faucets located on outer walls (bathroom and kitchen) night and day.
- Use electric space heaters, if you have them, in bathrooms and kitchens (fuel heaters are prohibited).
- Leave the bathroom door and kitchen sink cabinet doors open.
- Wrap a heating coil, available at hardware stores, around pipes to keep them warm. This is a "preventative maintenance" option.

If a pipe freezes, please do the following things immediately:

- If there is no water or it flows at a below-normal pressure, check with your neighbors to see if the cause is a

freeze in the main line or in yours alone. If the freeze is in your unit alone, contact a plumber immediately.

- If it is a main line freeze, call the office at 703-830-4464. If no one is in the office, or it's after regular hours, call Service First at 703-551-6642.
- Open the faucet; if the pipe isn't broken, you may wish to thaw it with a blow dryer. Do not use an open flame to thaw pipes.
- If water is coming from an upstairs unit, notify the occupants at once. If the unit is empty or the residents are not at home and maintenance is not immediately available, climb onto the balcony—or get someone else to do it if you are unable—and turn off the water. Contact a plumber. Notify the Office on the next business day.
- If you call for emergency service, please remain home until service arrives.

## When it Snows

You never know just when it may snow or how much it will snow. But you can be aware of what to do when it does come! Please review the following regulations and tips on snow and ice.

Residents are required to remove snow and ice from the steps, railings, stairwells, and sidewalks relating to their units within 12 hours of a snowfall. Vacant units are included in this requirement.

Please remove snow and ice from the front and rear porches and balconies. As snow or ice melts, the water runs down the wall seams and leaks through the walls into the lower units. Water also melts onto the lower units' steps and patios and re-freezes during the night, re-creating hazards and nuisances.

Do not use salt to melt snow or ice. It damages the concrete, and you may be liable for repairs.

Free parking spaces are just that—free space. If you clear out a free parking space, this does not entitle you to keep it. Do not pile snow behind other vehicles or into vacant parking spaces. Do not park your vehicle's bumper over the curb. This allows space for snow removal on the sidewalks.

## New Condo Payment Coupons

New condo payment coupons for 2010 have been mailed. If you did not receive your coupons, please get in touch with the management folks at The Meadows Office at 703-830-4464 or email: meadowsoffice@verizon.net ASAP.

These folks will be able to give you the contact information in order for you to obtain your 2010 condo payment coupons.

Thank you.

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

**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

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: Dick and Lydia Miller

PAID AD

# WINDOW SALE

**SAVE UP TO 40%  
ON YOUR HEATING  
AND COOLING BILLS.**

**FREE ESTIMATES**

**703-273-0101**  
**WWW.NUHOMEWINDOWS.  
COM**

*Fully Licensed, Bonded & Insured*  
VA # 2705-064938A

PAID AD

## A. Heatwole Plumbing Service Co.

31 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!*

## Classified Ads

*Email your ad to meadowsoffice@verizon.net*

**CARPET INSTALLER** – 20 years experience.  
Free estimates. Repair, restretch, water damaged areas. One room up to 20 yards is \$75.  
Call 703-815-2549.

***The Visitors Parking Pass no long appears in The Meadow Lark.***

***Please visit [www.mymeadows.net](http://www.mymeadows.net) and 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.***