

The Meadow Lark



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

Commentary

Winter Good – and Bad

It seems that the recent snowstorm(s) have brought out the worst in some of us. The adverse weather we had in February should have been a time for everyone to band together against the elements – in many cases this did happen, but not in all cases. Neighbor should be helping neighbor. There were many good deeds done during the storms, where one neighbor dug out a neighbor who couldn't do so themselves, or there were groups of neighbors who got together to remove snow from a large area. But there were also some selfish acts, instances of shoveling snow from your sidewalk area onto an area that had already been cleared by someone else, or throwing the snow from your parking space into a neighboring space that happened to be empty. Would you like to come home after being away on a trip and find about four feet of snow in your parking space? This happened to one resident. And finally, there were acts of vandalism. Our snow removal contractor worked very hard, almost around the clock, for several days to remove the snow from our streets and parking areas. On three separate occasions, when they came into work after a few hours of rest their machines had been tampered with, and as a result would not start. How can they clear out the snow if people have disabled their equipment? These acts are indeed disturbing.

There were also many complaints about the snow removal made to the office. While our snow contractor is not perfect, they are certainly better than most. Other communities in our area were in much worse shape than we were a few days after the storm.

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Thank You for 30 Years of Service

Hearty thanks go out to Lydia Miller, who served as the editor of this newsletter for the last 30 years. Lydia has retired from that position, and her contributions will be missed. In order to recognize her considerable efforts over the years, the community will host a reception to honor Lydia. It will be held on Saturday, March 13 at 2:00 PM in the Clubhouse. Everyone in the community is invited to attend.

A Fond Farewell

It has been my privilege to serve as the Editor of *The Meadow Lark* for almost thirty years. During my tenure, I have witnessed many changes in our community. In collaboration with the Board of Directors, both the format *and* contents of *The Meadow Lark* were changed several times to reflect and address these changes in order to better serve The Meadows residents. I've enjoyed meeting many residents through the years. I greatly appreciate the support I've received from these residents, Management and the Board of Directors. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

~ Lydia Miller



Board of Directors Meeting: Thursdays, March 4 & 18, 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.

Social & Recreation Committee: Monday, March 8, 7:30 PM in the Clubhouse.

Parking Enforcement Committee: Tuesday, March 9, 7:00 PM in the Clubhouse.

Reception for Lydia Miller: Saturday, March 13, 2:00 PM in the Clubhouse. Everyone is invited!

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

Invitation

The community is invited to attend a reception to thank the Editor of the *Meadow Lark* for her many years of service.

Lydia Miller, who has edited this newsletter since 1980, is retiring from that position. Her contributions to the neighborhood were truly appreciated and will be missed.

Reception
Saturday, March 13
Clubhouse, 2:00 PM

Everyone is invited

The President's Corner

Wow! February was a hard month for The Meadows. The snow that fell will be around for awhile longer, and as it melts, we have ice flows in its place. Please, everyone be careful when walking the neighborhood. And speaking of walking, when walking your pets, please be sure to pick up any "leavings". There is no place, common area or otherwise, on the premises of The Meadows where it is allowable to let your dogs defecate and not pick it up. It's not worth the violation letter or fines, so please pick it up.

We will begin the snow damage cleanup as soon as possible; removing large tree limbs that broke, leaking gutters and downspouts, and assessing other damages to neighborhood landscaping and such. If you notice any such damage, please notify The Meadows Office at once.

This was a hard month for all of us. However, it was so rewarding to watch neighbors come together on each street to help each other out. I, myself, was able to talk to neighbors I really haven't talked to in ages. Even those that could not shovel were helping in other ways, offering hot drinks, supplies, etc. That is what "neighborhood" is all about.

A special thanks to our snow removal company for their many and long hours helping us through this month. They were onsite from the onset of the first storm, working long, exhausting hours, and even had to take a lot of verbal abuse, but they kept working at it.

~ Joy C. Foshier

Board of Directors Motions

At the February 4 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to accept a bid for regrading around a unit of \$296.63 from HLS.
- Passed a motion to deny use of the clubhouse without a fee.
- Passed a motion to conduct an employment search related to a delinquency case.
- Passed a motion to approve the evaluation for an employee and elevate him to permanent status.
- Passed a motion to not waive a violation fee.

At the February 18 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to approve an Interior Alteration Form for a remodeling project.
- Passed a motion to adopt a policy resolution regarding taping of Board of Directors meetings.
- Passed a motion to accept a bid submitted by Middendorf of \$76,710 for power washing and exterior painting.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS
AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE

Satellite Dishes in The Meadows



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.

Security Totals

Janury 16 – February 15, 2010

Vehicles Ticketed: 16

Vehicles Towed: 5

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

Avocado Court: 0

Cool Oak Lane: 3

Golden Oak Court/Road: 5

Rustling Leaves Lane: 2

Saguaro Place: 4

Saint Germain Drive: 8

Strasburg Drive: 6

Turin Lane: 9

Calls referred to police/fire/rescue: 3



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.

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.

■ Lost & Found

In the Meadows Office, 703-830-4464.

Are You Exposed?

During recent property inspections it has been noticed that at some Units the insulation covering the electric wiring and gas lines running from the meters into the utility closet have deteriorated, which could eventually result in exposed wiring.

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 will often perform this work at no cost.

Please take a moment to inspect your wiring and gas line and contact the utility company or a certified electrician to make any necessary repairs as soon as possible. You can reach Washington Gas at (703) 750-1000 and NOVEC at (703) 335-0500.

St. Germain Resident Dies

Long-time Meadows resident Virginia Sutton, age 82, who lived on St. Germain Drive for more than 25 years passed away on Valentine's Day, February 14. She died after a short illness.

Virginia moved to the Meadows as a renter in 1982 and purchased her unit two years later. She had previously survived lung cancer. She is survived by a son who lives in Manassas and a daughter who lives in California.

Winter, from page 1

Many residential streets had not been plowed by VDOT or were poorly plowed by private services if their streets are not state roads. VDOT did not even plow St. Germain for several days after the storm, so you know that residential streets inside of communities were not plowed until after that. Three separate people actually complained (days after the storm) that the snow contractor never even came into our community or onto their street! Patience is the key in snow removal, especially with the depth of snow we had. It cannot be moved within a few hours, like it usually is after the normal 4 or 5 inch snowfall. With a storm the magnitude of what we had, bare pavement and no ice is not possible. Streets were opened initially to allow passage, primarily for emergency vehicles, then were slowly widened to allow normal two-way traffic after a few days. The mere volume of snow that had to be moved was part of the issue, the other part was finding places to deposit the snow that did not interfere with safety, etc.

While we hope there are no storms like what we just had, common courtesy should be used whenever it does snow. Help out your neighbor, do not shovel into areas that have already been cleared, and give the contractor a break – they are here to help us. Thank them for what they do, rather than complain about them, or sabotage their equipment.

Snow Issues, Give us Your Ideas

The Meadows office and the Board of Directors received some comments, complaints and suggestions about snow removal after our latest blizzards. Some residents do have opinions about how snow removal was handled, and the Board would like to hear from you about it. You can forward any comments you have about snow (by March 12) either by email (meadowsoffice@verizon.net) or in writing delivered to the office or dropped in the black Council mailbox in front of the Clubhouse.

It is requested that you use the word "Snow" in the subject line of your emails, and also please provide what you feel are solutions to any problems with snow removal. All comments received will be reviewed by the Board at an upcoming Board meeting. Again, please submit your concerns along with suggestions for improvement by March 12.

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.

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: Bill Liedtke and Joan Orvis

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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.