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Notes from the Board

Dear Friends in Fairlington Meadows—

Your Board of Directors wishes you a happy and healthy new year. Things are going pretty well in the community aside from the major water main break on Christmas Eve and the usual items that pop up on a day-to-day basis. We are very lucky to have Jack and José on our staff to keep ahead of things.

The County did an excellent and timely job of fixing that break on 35th Street and has promised to repair the damaged parking lot in Court 9, as well as the grassy area that was damaged, when the weather gets warmer. Middeldorf, our painting contractor, is done for this cycle, which included Courts 3, 14 and 15. We are very pleased with the quality of work they did; we not only received very few resident complaints about the painters, we actually got many compliments! We hope that Middeldorf can give us another competitive bid when we put out requests for proposals for the next painting cycle in the summer, which will focus on Courts 4, 5, and 6. Additionally, the roof work in Court 10 is nearing completion and we are very pleased with the quality of work Ruff Roofing is doing, as well as the care

they are taking to avoid damaging the buildings and grounds.

Judy Pisciotta, a Board member for more than two years now, is moving to Alexandria. She resigned from the Board last month and will be very much missed by all of us. She



was a very talented and thoughtful Board member and contributed significantly to the progress we have made in the past several years. After thorough consideration, the Board has appointed Debbie Diener, to fill the vacant position until the elections of new members at the coming annual meeting. Debbie is a lawyer with the Department of Treasury and has been a Meadows resident for 15 years. She is energetic, has concern for the well-being of the community, and will be excellent Board mem-

ber. Welcome, Debbie, and thank you for volunteering to serve the Meadows.

Believe it or not, the pool season is right around the corner. As I mentioned at the annual meeting, we have contracted with Century Pools to manage our pool this summer. Century will provide all the services we require, including hiring and managing the lifeguards, payroll management, pool operations, routine maintenance, provision of chemicals and supplies, and lifeguard training—all this for a very competitive price. The Pool Committee is already planning fun social events for the season and is looking for additional members to assist with pool oversight and running the events. Contact Cliff Beasley for more information.

We are in the process of soliciting proposals for the first round of sewer lateral repair and relining. This is work that is sorely needed and hopefully will commence as soon as the weather warms up a bit. The Board is putting the finishing touches on the Exterior Architectural Criteria policy paper. This policy paper builds upon criteria and standards currently in place in our By-laws and in the Residents' Manual. It is

-Continued on page 5

Buildings & Grounds Update

By Chuck Edwards and Judi Garth, Co-chairs

Winter Pruning: Committee members Linnea Barry and Judi Garth have made recommendations for pruning some of the large hollies around our buildings. They have also made suggestions for pruning some of the older crepe myrtles. We will present our findings to the Board at their February meeting with the suggestion that any necessary work be done in late winter, which is the best time to prune hollies and crepe myrtles.

Spring Planting: Even in the cold of winter, the Committee is already making plans for a spring planting. Please check the Meadows Web site for request forms or write to Judi Garth at 3445 South Utah Street or Chuck Edwards at 3460 A-I South Stafford.

Residents are reminded that the Buildings and Grounds Committee has two plantings each year, one in the spring and one in the fall.

Grounds Work: Valley-Crest, our grounds contractor, will remove leaves and debris from the grounds throughout the winter. After the threat of snow, they will clean our parking lots and begin general grounds work.

Common Area Plantings: Residents who are interested in planting a small flower garden outside a patio, whether in the rear or side of the patio, must

first receive permission from the Buildings and Grounds Committee. Please send a request to one of the two co-chairs, and the Committee will review it. Such gardens are subject to removal if the resident does not maintain the space. Please remember that permission is needed for any planting in common areas and that these additional plantings become the property of the condominium association. There are many things to consider when planting. Some of these include the existence of sewer lines and underground utility lines, as well as the type of material planted and its impact on the community.

Trees

The Committee would like to remind residents that our trees are living things that need to be nurtured and protected. They should never be used for signposts; nailing or stapling into a tree opens it up for disease. The community spends many hours and dollars protecting our trees, and they are essential to the overall ambiance of the Meadows and all of Fairlington. Additionally, our by-laws prohibit tree-climbing. Please do not allow your children to climb on any trees in the Meadows. It can result in broken limbs—of both the trees and the children!—and cause significant damage.

Community Pride: The Meadows covers about 22 acres and we all need to help with keeping our homes as attractive as possible. Therefore, if you see a bit of debris on the grounds please pick it up and dispose of it properly. By pitching in and working together, we can all help keep the community looking great.

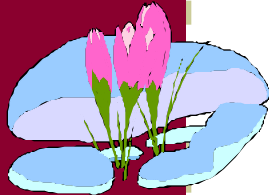
If you are interested in joining the Fairlington Meadows Buildings and Grounds Committee, please feel free to attend the upcoming meetings. All begin at 7:30 p.m. and last approximately one hour. Please check the Messenger or the Meadows Web site for meeting dates and locations.

March 1

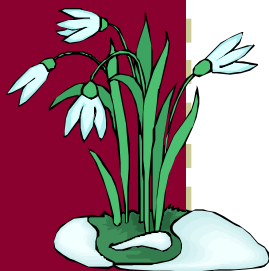
Hosted by Diane Thurber
4241A-2 South 35th Street
(Court 8)

April 5

Hosted by Judi Garth
3445 South Utah Street
(Court 11)



With the mild winter thus far, the first brave blossoms will soon emerge to beckon the coming spring in the Meadows!



New Fairlington Web Resource for Residents

Embarking on Home Improvement Projects

Now that you've decided to begin that renovation project or to purchase new appliances, you need to find just the perfect contractor. The Fairlington.org Web site has just instituted a "Community Forum"—a kind of electronic bulletin board—to facilitate the location of good contractors.

This Forum, named "Speak Out," permits residents to post their experiences on home repairs, renovations, appliance replacements, and installations. It also allows other residents to add "replies" to such postings if they want to share their own experiences.

This new service is in response to Web site visitor suggestions made through the site's search engine, and the Webmaster's own experiences, that such a service

would be welcome and useful. Residents now must rely on happenstance communications from their neighbors, references from realtors, or advertisements. "Speak Out" will permit direct feedback from neighbors who have actually experienced a contractor's work.

"Speak Out" also provides a link (with the company's permission) to "Angie's List"—a national Web service for reviews of home improvement contractors. At the present time, more than 250,000 homeowners in 31 major cities use "Angie's List." This is a non-commercial membership service with a small monthly fee.

Fairlington residents can post their own comments on a contractor's work

using "Speak Out" and then provide a rating (from A to F) on "Angie's List" for a greater audience.

Check out this new resource at www.fairlington.org/speakout.htm.



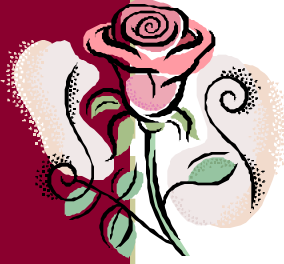
Thirty-Something?

Then It's Time to Mix and Mingle with Your Neighbors!



Meet your Fairlington neighbors at the monthly "30-Somethings Happy Hour." The next event will take place on March 15 at 7 p.m. at Guapo's in Shirlington.

Happy hours are the third Wednesday of every month. Everyone (both singles and couples) is welcome. Other events are being planned. If you're interested in the group, but can't attend the happy hour, we can add you to the email list. Contact Jennifer Sledge at jennsledge@aol.com or Natalie Halpern at natalie-halpern@yahoo.com.



Rambling Rose

Longtime Meadows resident and distribution manager for the Messenger Rose Stack is wearing a new hat these days. As our new roving correspondent, Rose is scouring the community in an attempt to showcase some of the interesting characters that live or work in the Meadows and its environs. For this issue, she chatted with José Rameriz, our on-site maintenance assistant.

Rose: José, thanks for talking with me during your lunch break. I must ask you first, how is Jack as a boss?

José: Oh, of course Jack is a wonderful boss! Seriously, he's very kind and understanding. He's fair. He knows I work hard, and he lets me do my job. When I am too sick to come in or have something I have to take care of, he is very understanding.

Rose: Do you and Jack each have separate chores?

José: Yes, I'm in charge of cleaning the shop and office. I'm also in charge of emptying all the Meadows' trash bins. But special things come up all the time and then those are my duties for the day or week.

Rose: Like that couple of inches of snow in December or that wind in January?

José: Right. The morning of the snow, clearing the walks was the main priority and it was a lot easier with our new snow blower. And during those two days of high winds, I filled two dumpsters with downed branches from just half of the streets and lawns. We also had to re-coat a couple of the brown court signs that fell down.

Rose [looking around the shop]: This place is

filled with tools and equipment. Do you all use this stuff in any given week?

José: Of course. The level, the electric saw, the gutter vacuum. Even that tiniest bolt in that cabinet, I know why that is needed. How do you like our mini-tractor?

Rose: Oooh! May I borrow that some time?



José: No, sorry Rose. Residents ask to borrow our ladders now and then, and that's okay, but that's about it. This is a wonderful place to work because of the great supply of tools and other shop gear. But some things around here are my own tools as well. I worked as a custodian before coming to Fairlington.

Rose: So, what season is the hardest work-wise; it must be winter, right?

José: I feel they are about the same. But freezing cold weather is the worst, you're right. Otherwise, summer or winter, it's about the same to me.

Rose: Were you born in the States? What about your family?

José: No, I was born in El Salvador, a beautiful country in Central America. I really like it here in Virginia, though. Fairfax County is my home now. I have three daughters—two live in El Salvador and one lives here in Virginia with their mother. My son, Ricardo, who will be four in June, lives with me.

Rose: I guess on the weekend at home, it is more of the same cleaning and fixing up around the house, right?

José: Not really. I make a point of spending time with my son, and there's not so much fix-up work that he can't be a part of.

Rose: José, thanks so much for talking with me for the Messenger. The Meadows is very lucky to have you on the staff.

José: Thank you. This job is perfect for me. You'll see me around the neighborhood!

Pet Peeves...



Dog Person? Cat Person?

It Doesn't Matter As Long As You Are a Good Neighbor!



There's no question that owning a pet can enhance a person's life. Studies have revealed that spending time with a companion animal can help improve conditions ranging from hypertension to depression. But with all the unconditional love a cat or dog can bestow upon his or her people comes a great deal of responsibility.

Pet owners need to provide their animals with a safe home, food and water, and proper medical care, as well as kindness, love, and attention. And, a big

part of that attention includes cleaning up after Fluffy or Fido and making sure your pet does not become a nuisance to your neighbors.

According to Jack Clark, on-site maintenance manager for the Meadows, one of the most frequent complaints he receives from residents relates to man's best friend. Doggy-do, poo-poo... whatever you call it, if you own a dog it is your responsibility to clean up after your animal when he or she makes a "deposit" outside.

Cats, too, can be a problem when they are left to roam freely. Many residents have complained about neighborhood felines that use their patios or planting beds as litter boxes or prey on birds or

pet rabbits. As one Meadows homeowner explains, "Fences mean nothing to these cats and once they designate your patio as a personal rest stop, it quickly becomes an odorous fecal dump."

So, what's a pet owner to do? If you're a dog owner, the first step is to follow Meadows by-laws and clean up after your pet. If you have a cat, keep him or her inside or on a leash during outings. By exercising courtesy toward your neighbors, you'll be helping to make the Meadows more comfortable for all its residents.



Notes from the Board

-Continued from page 1

designed to better clarify our standards and criteria and will cover exterior doors, exterior lighting, patio gates, cable installation, decks, patios, sheds, and porch railings. This will be very helpful in maintaining the architectural harmony of our beautiful community.

Vandals continue to kick over and destroy our sidewalk lights on the sidewalk adjacent to Fairlington Glen's tennis courts along the walk to 7-Eleven. The cost to

repair these lights is in the thousands of dollars and our budget can no longer sustain this continuing problem. We have asked the Building and Grounds Committee and residents living adjacent to that sidewalk for suggestions on alternative lighting. As ground level lights will not work without a very large investment, we are considering either building mounted spotlights or pole-mounted light.

If you have some other ideas, contact Chuck Edwards, the chairman of the B&G committee. If you see people vandalizing our property, do not hesitate to call the County po-

lice. It is your property you are protecting.

Again, we wish you the best for 2006 and hope to see all of you at the pool this summer.

—John Thurber
President, Board of Directors



Recycling Q & A

We have been notified that some of what we intend to recycle is being treated as garbage—mainly because items are not being placed in the proper receptacles or haven't been cleaned.

As a follow-up to a recent Messenger article, Building and Grounds Committee Co-chair Judi Garth answers some common questions about recycling...



What goes in the bins?
Glass containers, cans, and plastic (marked with 1, 2, or 3).

Do the items I place in the bins need to be clean?
YES. If they are contaminated by food or drink, they will wind up in the garbage, which is just what you were trying to avoid.

Can I put Styrofoam or deli containers in the bins? NO. Even though they may be marked 1, 2, or 3, they are not recyclable at this time and should be put discarded with your trash.

Where do newspapers go?
Newspapers, magazines, and flattened cardboard boxes must either be placed in paper bags or tied in bundles and put on the ground next to the bins, NOT in the bins.

Will they take cardboard boxes that haven't been broken down? NO. Boxes must be flattened.

Can large moving boxes be recycled? YES. Boxes of any size may be recycled if they are flattened first.

Can waxed cardboard juice and milk containers be recycled? NO, not at this time.

What happens if I put out a bag with glass, cans, plastic, and paper items all mixed together? Everything that is not put in its proper receptacle will be thrown in the garbage.

What items CANNOT be recycled? Pizza boxes, wax paper, light bulbs, mirrors, window glass, lids, yogurt containers, Styrofoam, strawberry and other berry containers. *When in doubt, leave it out.*

Does recycling really make a difference? YES! The more we recycle, the less we pay for garbage pick up and the less we put in land fills.

Note to Unit Owners

Meadows By-laws require you to submit a written request for any changes in excess of \$1,000 that you are considering making inside your unit.

The Board of Directors must approve these changes before any work is begun.

Community Directory

Board of Directors

John Thurber, president
David Andrews, 1st vice pres.
Judy Pisciotta, 2nd vice pres.
Lisa Farbstein, treasurer
Bryan Hochstein, secretary

Send correspondence to the Fairlington Meadows Board of Directors in care of Community Management Corp. at the address listed below. For copies of Board meeting minutes, see the Fairlington Meadows Web site (www.FairlingtonMeadows.com), view them on the community bulletin at the pool house, or contact Paul Leddy at CMC.

Messenger Volunteers

Kathryn Utan, editor
Rose Stack, distribution

Send letters, article ideas, or other items to the editor at 3407B South Stafford Street or via e-mail to kathryn_utan@yahoo.com. Include your name, address, and contact information with all correspondence. Items will be printed at the editor's discretion.



Property Management

John Kilkenny
Community Management Corp
12701 Fair Lakes Circle
Suite 400, PO Box 10821
Chantilly, Va. 20153
Tel. 703-631-7200
Fax 703-631-9786

On-site Maintenance

Jack Clark, manager
José Rameriz, assistant
Tel. 703-820-6799

Towing Requests

A-1 Towing of Northern VA
Tel. 703-979-2110

Dryer Vents: Is Yours a Hidden Hazard?

Editor's Note: This is a reprint of an article written by Ed Girovasi, which was published in 2004. One of our neighbors here in the Meadows recently experienced a fire caused by an old dryer vent, so please check yours in an effort to prevent what could be a costly and potentially deadly hazard.

I've been a resident of Fairlington Meadows since 1978 and for the past 17 years my family has lived in a Dominion unit. When we decided to renovate our basement and bathrooms in 1998, both were still in their original condition as constructed during the redevelopment of Fairlington Meadows from an apartment complex to condominiums in the early '70s. While we spent a lot of time choosing tile colors and sizes, vanity styles, and thinking about other aesthetic issues, the most significant change was one we almost decided to omit—the replacement of our dryer vent.

In Meadows townhouses (Clarendon and Dominion units), the washer and dryer are generally located in the basement bathroom. The dryer is vented by a short duct—often metal—that runs from the rear of the dryer into the back wall of the bathroom. This short duct attaches to a longer duct that runs up the inside of the rear wall, across the ceiling and within the kitchen sub-floor, and exits to an external vent at the base of the rear brick wall. The problem and potential hazard is this longer, hidden duct; the original one installed during the conversion is made of plastic and wire.

In the interest of economy, I didn't include duct replacement

in my initial renovation contract. Because my basement bathroom renovation involved demolition of the shower ceiling, my contractor was able to check the type of vent used and its condition—namely if it was indeed plastic throughout and how much lint had accumulated inside the vent over the years.

I had a clue that I had a problem because my dryer was taking longer to dry clothes, even though I had cleaned the external vent and it appeared that the exhaust air flow was fairly strong. My contractor confirmed my suspicions and added a sense of urgency I had not expected. The duct was plastic throughout, it was full of lint, and the trapped heat had charred some portions of my sub-floor joists. In short, I was faced with a fire hazard. At that point, I authorized the complete replacement with a metal duct throughout. In 1998, the incremental cost for this portion of the work was \$300-400. [In 2004], a neighbor reported that contractors had quoted \$600-\$700 to replace the ductwork as a separate job. The work involves cutting a path in the wall and ceiling, removing the plastic duct, installing a sheet metal or aluminum duct, and patching the wall and ceiling with drywall.

The use of plastic ductwork within walls and sub-floors is no longer allowed under Arlington County's building code. It is a fire hazard and residents should investigate their situation.

In Clarendon and Dominion units, check the duct within the wall by moving your dryer away

from the wall, disconnecting the shorter duct from the one within the wall, and inspecting it visually and/or by touch. If it is plastic at that point, you can be 98 percent certain that you have the original equipment and it's plastic throughout.

This article is designed to raise your awareness, not your anxiety level! If you have plastic ductwork, your first step should be the removal of any blockage or lint build-up in your external vent. A strong exhaust of dryer air indicates that the heat is escaping. You could also choose to disconnect the shorter vent from the wall and attach an in-room venting system (the dryer will vent into your bathroom). This can be as simple as attaching a nylon stocking to the short duct to trap the lint and allow the exhaust to enter your bathroom, or installing a more sophisticated system that may be purchased at Lowe's, Home Depot, or most other hardware or home improvement stores. Keep in mind that these systems add to the overall level of dust in your home and increase interior humidity levels. You can also have a contractor clean out your existing ductwork to remove the lint. This option, though, may also prove ineffective because the plastic may be broken and create other problems. The best solution, albeit the most costly, is the removal of all plastic ductwork and replacement with sheet metal or aluminum. This is a responsibility and expense that falls on the shoulders of individual homeowners because we own the interior of our units.



The use of plastic ductwork within walls and sub-floors is ... a fire hazard and residents should investigate their situation.

Epicurean Adventures

This recipe—adapted from one of the winners at the 2005 Cornbread Festival in Pittsburgh, Tennessee—is an interesting take on traditional chili. With just the right amount of spice, this comfort food is certain to become a stick-to-your ribs favorite that will warm you up on a long winter's night!

White Chicken Chili with Cheddar-Cornbread Crust

Filling:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup finely chopped onion
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1 medium green bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 19-ounce can cannellini beans
- 2 cups cooked chicken, chopped
- 1 14-ounce can chicken broth
- 1 4.5-ounce can mild green chilies, drained

Crust:

- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 6-ounce package cornbread mix
- 1/4 cup chopped scallions or chives
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese



Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add 1 cup onion, garlic, green pepper, cumin, and chili powder. Cook for 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add lime juice, cannellini beans, chicken, broth, and green chilies, stirring until just combined. Remove from heat, place in a casserole dish, and set aside.

In a medium bowl, beat egg then add milk, butter, and cornbread mix, blending well. Stir in 1/4 cup scallions and shredded cheese. Pour over the chili mixture.

Bake for 25-30 minutes or until the cornbread is golden brown.

Remove from the oven and let set for 5 minutes. Garnish with sour cream, salsa, and/or chopped cilantro and serve.

Thanks, Janet!

For more than five years, Janet Filer has contributed recipes for the *Messenger's* "Food Bytes" column. The November-December issue marked her retirement as the Meadows' resident "foodie."

We're grateful for all the delicious meals, snacks, and treats we've had thanks to her and wish her all the best.

