



Photo by Dick Ruddy

Your Homeowners News

NEWS AND EVENTS



It's Annual Meeting Time

Mark your calendar! We'll be holding the annual meeting of the Meadows on Rio Grande Homeowners Association on May 2. Join us as we review the association's 2009 income and expenses, summarize our major accomplishments for the year, ratify the 2009 budget and elect new board members to fill two vacating positions.

Annual Meeting

Sunday, May 2 • 2:00 pm
Dulcinea Park



Year in Review
Meet the Neighbors
Great Snacks!

Attending the annual meeting is a great way to stay abreast of how your association fees are being used, and to voice your views on priorities for the coming year. Probably the best part of the event is getting to meet your neighbors.

So, take a stroll down to the park on the first Sunday afternoon in May. At the very least, you'll get to enjoy some great homemade treats. More than likely, you'll see old friends and make new ones. And most important of all, you'll learn what's new and noteworthy in our favorite neighborhood. Hope to see you there.



FINANCIAL UPDATE

Irrigation and Wall Repairs Planned

By Jim Nelson, Treasurer

The Meadows on Rio Grande Homeowners Association continues use the annual assessments we collect to maintain and improve our community's common areas. Here's a snapshot of our financial picture:

Financial Condition as of March 2010 (Operating Year 5/1/09 – 4/30/10)

- Year-to-date Assessment income : \$21,065 (97% of budget)
- As of February 28, 2010, 104 property owners (96%) have paid their assessments for the current operating year.
- Year-to-date operating expenses: \$16,023 (80% of budget) at 11 months of operation. The next month of our fiscal year should bring our expenses slightly below the budget amounts. Funds not used for current expenses will be transferred to a contingency reserve for anticipated future maintenance, repairs and improvements to the common areas.



Your HOA has adequate resources to implement Phase 2 of our planned wall repairs and to begin needed repairs to our irrigation system. The scope of this work will include repair of wall surfaces not repaired under Phase 1 (June 2008) as well

as sprinkler system repairs to ensure sufficient service for the upcoming summer season. We estimate that this work will require a \$5,000 - \$6,000 expenditure of reserve funds.

Please mail outstanding assessments to:

Meadows on Rio Grande HOA
PO Box 7185
Albuquerque, NM 87194 -7185

Thank you!

QUARTERLY QUOTE

"If you do not sow in the spring, you will not reap in the autumn." — Irish proverb

Special thanks to Denise Davis for printing this newsletter.



Photo by Dick Ruddy

NEIGHBOR PENS MOTIVATIONAL BOOK

"I accidentally removed my hand from the motorcycle throttle while in first gear. The next instant I was slammed onto the garage floor, the air knocked out of me, with a 500-pound motorcycle covering my body ... The owner anxiously asked, 'Are you still going to buy it?' I jumped up, dusted off my jeans and responded, 'Absolutely!'"

That's how **Mary Lou Dobbs** opens her soon-to-be-published book, "Repotting Yourself: Financial-Emotional-Spiritual Flow." The "motorcycle moment" she describes was the defining incident that began a journey of personal transformation for the long-time Meadows resident.



Photo courtesy of Mary Lou Dobbs

Mary Lou Dobbs

"Repotting Yourself" begins with Mary Lou's realization that her life had become "root-bound." It goes on to describe how she learned to embrace change, release fears and activate her "fun-meter." Only then, Mary Lou explains, was she able to become "unstuck."

"My book is about learning to live life full-throttle," she says. "It's written specifically for people who have already helped themselves to successful careers in business and professional endeavors." The book is a good read for those

"who have enjoyed successful careers and are looking to create a more meaningful next phase of life, one richer in professional, personal and spiritual dimensions."

One of the Meadows' first board members, Mary Lou is the owner of Executive Benefit Strategies, which provides executive compensation services to business owners and other professionals. Her first book, "The Cinderella Saleswoman," earned an endorsement from now-deceased sales guru Og Mandino.

You'll find "Repotting Yourself" at Page One in Albuquerque or online at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or www.repottingyourself.com. You're also invited to attend Mary Lou's book launch and autograph party at Sandia BMW Motorcycles — see below for details.

"Repotting Yourself" Launch Party

Friday, May 7 • 5-6:30 p.m.

Sandia BMW Motorcycles • 6001 Pan American Fwy. NE
RSVPs: 884-0066

\$25 fee includes a copy of the book, hors d'oeuvres, and a \$5 donation to the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation.

Please Send Story Ideas, Photos

The staff of *Your Homeowners News* could use your ideas and photos. Do you know of a neighbor who has had an accomplishment? Have you photographed something out of the ordinary recently? Please share your ideas by contacting Dick Ruddy, ruddy@comcast.net. Thanks!

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS



**Members' terms expire this May.*

Marilyn Smith, President
Stann Sandoval, Vice President
Jim Nelson, Treasurer
Alvan Romero, Secretary
*Gene Finch, Landscaping
*Susan Finch, Newsletter
Murl Moore
Kent Morrison, ARC chairman
Gene Vance

244-8346
228-3611
246-8515
242-6663
765-5944
764-8262
764-8489
242-6541
244-9046

msmith8659@msn.com
stann.wendy@yahoo.com
nelson2308@comcast.net
aromero8@comcast.net
gnfinch2@aol.com
sfinch64@comcast.net
murlmoore@comcast.net
lkm@unm.edu
gene@vancefirm.com

MEADOWS LIFE

Help Wanted

By Marilyn Smith, President, Board of Directors
Meadows on Rio Grande Homeowners Association



Each year, two or three members of the Meadows on Rio Grande Board of Directors complete their three-year terms, and some members opt not to serve another term. New board members are elected during the Annual Meeting of our

homeowners association, and we'll be seeking to fill two vacating board positions this year.

What do we look for? We need individuals who are comfortable making a three-year commitment and who can regularly attend board meetings, which occur once every other month. Also, directors must be available to do more than just attend board meetings: Each serves either as an officer or as a member of one of the Board's working committees.

What do the meetings require? First, attendance and participation are important. Between annual meetings there are six regular board meetings held on the fourth Wednesday of every other month. These two-hour meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. so that employed members of the Board can attend. The agenda typically includes reports by officers and committees, followed by a discussion of ad hoc issues.

How will the board be changing in the coming year? We'll be losing two people, each of whom hold important positions. **Gene Finch** has been our one-man Landscaping Committee on and off for several years, and his will be big shoes to fill. Gene's experience dealing with our landscaping company, the City and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District have been invaluable. For the future, we'll be looking to one new board member, supported by current "old hands" on the Board, to keep things running smoothly.

Susan Finch, the editor of this newsletter, will also be leaving the board. Susan became editor some two years ago and has risen to the occasion since then to put out these quarterly issues. Due to her efforts, and with assistance from **Dick Ruddy**, **Gayle Vance** and our board members, the quality of the newsletter has remained consistently high, giving homeowners a vital communications link with the board on issues that affect us all. We'll be looking for a new board member to take on editorship of this key publication.

Whether or not you choose to run for one of these positions, please join us for the Annual Meeting on May 2. It's the best way to stay abreast of the activities of your homeowners' association — and we welcome your input!

LANDSCAPING

Please Report Irrigation Leaks

By Gene Finch

Now that winter has passed, it's time once again to turn the water on for the Meadows' irrigation system. As you might remember, the association received water bills that exceeded the minimum charge after shutting the water off this past winter, leading to the quick realization that we had a leak in our system. Heads Up was called and the leak was repaired.

We're hopeful that the system is now in good shape, but it's 16 years old — so if you spot a water leak, please report it immediately.



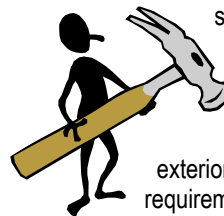
We lost five pyracantha bushes because of the problems we experienced, but they have now been replaced. We hope you'll take some time to enjoy the landscaping this spring and summer.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Making Improvements?

By Kent Morrison

The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) has had a busy year. Neighbors have been making improvements to their homes and they're going about it the right way, by submitting a Request for Design Approval form to the ARC. We at the ARC are pleased to help you make sure your plans for new construction or modifications to the exterior of your home satisfy the requirements of the Protective Covenants for our neighborhood. This includes walls as well as changes to the exterior appearance of the home, including any color change.



Please remember that you need to submit a Request for Design Approval to the Board of Directors and get ARC approval before beginning to make changes. Forms are available on our website, www.meadowsonriogrande.org.

We would like to thank all neighbors who have submitted plans to the ARC and look forward to working with those considering exterior renovations in the future. We are all in this together and have the same goal, the preservation of our beautiful neighborhood.



CLOSE TO HOME

Eat Fresh, Buy Local

By Susan Finch

The average tomato travels 1,500 miles to reach our dinner plates. It's no wonder that the typical grocery store tomato may *look* like a tomato, yet *taste* bland and unappealing. The antidote is to buy locally grown food. It tastes better, it supports our community, and it reduces our carbon footprint by reducing the need to truck food along miles of highways.



The best local choice is growing food at home. However, if you lack time or a green thumb, we have two excellent alternatives in the near vicinity: **La Montanita Co-op**, just across the street, and **Los Poblanos Ranch**, about two miles up the road on Rio Grande. Both of these businesses specialize in organic foods grown in our immediate community. In the off-growing season, each business reaches out to the rest of the state, region and nation for their produce supplies.

La Montanita Co-op is a community-owned, consumer cooperative offering fresh organic produce, bulk foods, local organic beef, lamb and other meats and cheeses, and fair trade products. They also sell a wide variety of natural and organic groceries, freshly prepared deli foods, natural body care, vitamins and supplements.

The organization is committed to local farmers and producers through its regional Co-op Trade Food-Shed Project. This initiative creates wholesale markets and provides product pick-up and distribution, supply delivery service and refrigerated storage for local farmers and producers. The Co-op offers more than 1,100 local products from 400 local producers. Moreover, 20 percent of its total purchases and sales are in local food, making it a leader in the local foods movement.



Photo courtesy of La Montanita Co-op

La Montanita's North Valley store is on Rio Grande Blvd. just across from the Meadows.

You may think **Los Poblanos Ranch** is just a bed and breakfast or the place where the Lavender Festival is held every June. Actually, it's also home to a 16-acre farm where **Los Poblanos Organics** cultivates over 75 varieties of fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers without the use of synthetic fertilizers or chemicals. Produce ranges from heirloom tomatoes and baby salad greens to strawberries, melons and flower bouquets.



Photo by Susan Finch

The gorgeous growing fields of Los Poblanos

In addition to growing their own wide variety of crops, Los Poblanos also distributes produce from other small, regional, certified organic farms. This ensures members will receive the widest possible selection of fruits and vegetables not just during the local growing season, but year round.

Los Poblanos is a Community Supported Agriculture program. A CSA can be defined as a special relationship that a farmer or group of farmers engages in with local consumers. Members of the CSA sign up in advance for a "share" of all the fruits, vegetables, and flowers that a farmer will produce in a given season. They can either come to the farm once a week to pick up their share of the bounty or have the produce delivered to their homes.

Those who join the CSA receive a Harvest Box every week (or every other week) of the freshest in-season produce, enough to feed a family of four for a week. Each box costs \$28.00 if you pick up your boxes, or \$32.95 with home delivery. To keep costs down, some CSA members participate in a workshare program in which they pay just half the cost of membership and do farm work in exchange for the other half. Workshare participants get an eight-week membership for just \$112 (the cost for a four-week membership) and commit to working two and a half hours per week during each of the eight weeks.

Organic food products do cost more. Instead of relying on herbicides to kill weeds, organic farmers pull weeds. Organic farming is more labor intensive and thus more costly, but the health benefits of eating food that has not been treated with synthetic chemicals or other unsafe treatments may make it a fair trade.