



Photo by Dick Ruddy

Your

Homeowners News

The Meadows on Rio Grande

News and Events

Making Our Community Better

The Meadows on Rio Grande Homeowners Association appreciates your support of our efforts to maintain and improve our shared community. Here are some of the improvements your membership assessments have made possible over the past six months:

Regular Maintenance Makes a Difference

Before our homeowners association was formed, the Meadows' shared landscaping had been neglected for more than two years. Without regular watering and care, the condition of the plants had deteriorated, and many plants had died because of this neglect. With the regular maintenance made possible by your Association assessments these past two years, the condition of the landscaping has been greatly improved. Our next step will be to replace lost plants and shrubs to return our common areas to their fullest beauty.

Unightly Weeds Removed Along Subdivision's Southern Border

On its southern border, the Meadows subdivision includes a strip of landscaping that runs along Los Anayas Road, the street immediately adjacent to the subdivision. In 2006, several Meadows residents whose homes border Los Anayas Road were cited by the City of Albuquerque for unsightly weeds that had grown on this strip of land. Though maintenance of this area is not part of our contract with Heads Up, the Board approved use of Association funds for cleanup of this part of our subdivision. Heads Up mowed the site and removed dead bushes, greatly improving the area's appearance.

Intersection Safety

After a homeowner alerted the Association to an unsafe intersection at Don Fernando Ave. and Via Cadiz Court, Board member Dick Ruddy contacted the City of Albuquerque for assistance. Dick worked with City officials to arrange for a safety inspection of the intersection. When the City recommended removal of several tall bushes to improve visibility, the Association arranged for this work to be completed by our contracted landscaping company. Our next step will be to have the landscape company plant low-growing vegetation to replace the old shrubbery.

Ornamental Boulders at New Pedestrian Trail

After noticing that service vehicles were driving over (and threatening to damage) the pedestrian path along Don Fernando Ave. near Rio Grande Blvd., the Association's board of directors approved installation of ornamental boulders to bar vehicles from entering the area, and to protect the walkway for residents' use. Board President Cindy Lewis solicited competitive bids and oversaw installation of the boulders.

Repair of Los Anayas Gate

The Association learned from a Meadows homeowner that the gate (which was erected on the south side of the subdivision to allow access to Dulcinea Park by Duranes residents) had been broken for some time. Board members solicited competitive bids and Dick Ruddy oversaw the gate repair.

Funds Set-Aside for Wall Repairs

It's only a matter of time before our common stucco wall begins to deteriorate. Since wall repairs are quite costly, Board Treasurer Jim Nelson recently opened an interest-bearing savings account for annual deposits to cover these future costs. Our first deposit of \$3,000.00 came from Association assessment fees from Fiscal Year 2005. Future deposits will be made at the end of each fiscal year and will vary depending upon available resources. Please note that the fund will be used for minor repairs to the exterior of the wall.

By the Numbers: Meadows Real Estate Sales

By Nancy Pierce and Connie Johnson
Keller Williams Realty

Here's a snapshot of home sales in The Meadows on Rio Grande subdivision:

- During the past 13 months, six homes closed and sold in the area. The average price per square foot for these homes was \$177, and the median price was \$169.
- As of February 7, there are two homes for sale in The Meadows. Two additional houses are under contract (sale pending).

The main change we see in the Albuquerque housing market is that there are now about 4,800 homes for sale – nearly twice as many as a year ago. This reflects a downturn in the market, which translates into softer sales.



Photo by Dick Ruddy

Homeowners Association Board Members:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
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Homeowners' Assessments: Where We Stand

Since its inception, your association has worked to keep assessments reasonable by using the funds you provide in the most cost-effective manner possible. Here is information we collected informally on homeowner assessments in other Albuquerque communities:

Community	Assessment	Additional Information
Trillium at High Desert	\$900/yr.	Gated community, no guard on duty, common-area landscaping similar in scope to Meadows. (\$50 of each \$75 monthly payment goes to High Desert ; the remaining \$25 goes to Trillium Homeowners Association.)
High Desert (Various)	\$600/yr.	Non-gated communities.
Oxbow	\$960/yr.	Dues may have increased since gate was installed.
Thomas Village Patio Homes	\$395/yr.	Non-gated community.
Important Note: Data was gathered informally during January 2007 and may be subject to change or correction.		

One of the new offerings will be to maintain a list of contractors used by you the homeowners with your feedback. This resource will be only as good as your input. All submittals should be e-mailed to Gerry Barr. Gerry's e-mail address is gwbarr115@comcast.net.

Board Report

From Your President

By Cindy Lewis, President

Since the new Board of Directors for the Meadows on Rio Grande Homeowners Association took over last August, we have organized ourselves into various committees to become as productive as possible. I would like to recognize the Landscaping Committee, Architectural Review Committee and Newsletter Committee for their efforts. This issue of the newsletter goes into detail about what each of these committees have been doing. It has been wonderful to work with such a dedicated group of people.

Despite all our volunteer efforts, the Board has come to the consensus that an increase in our annual assessment is now necessary, based on a thorough review of annual budgeted expenses. Please refer to the Treasurer's Report in this newsletter for more details. Considering that we haven't had an increase in more than three years, the increase seems modest – especially when compared to the assessments of other associations. The increased funding will ensure our association's ability to cover annual grounds maintenance expenses, which will help to keep our home values intact.

Architectural Review Committee

The Meadows on Rio Grande Architectural Review Committee (ARC) continues to define its role as your representative to assist homeowners in the interpretation and adherence to the Protective Covenants. A more detailed release will be forthcoming.

In recognition of this important work, the Thomas Village Neighborhood Association has once again donated a generous portion of their annual dues to our homeowners association. TVNA voluntarily set aside \$10 of every \$35 dues payment they received, providing us with an \$820 donation. We thank TVNA for helping us beautify the common areas of our shared neighborhood!



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Quarterly Quote

Timeless quote: "Employ thy time well, if thou meanest to get leisure."

Benjamin Franklin.

*US author, diplomat, inventor, physicist, politician, & printer
(1706 - 1790)*

A special thanks to Dick Ruddy for the beautiful photos

Please pay your assessment for 2006-2007 if you have not done so, new invoices will be coming soon; you may contact Jim Nelson at 246-8515.

Financial Report

How are Your Monies Spent?

By Jim Nelson, Treasurer

The annual assessment you provide to the Meadows on Rio Grande Homeowners Association makes it possible for the association to maintain and beautify our shared spaces. As of February 28, 2007, 91 families—about 83 percent of all Meadows homeowners—have paid all or part of the May 2006-April 2007 annual assessment. Your board of directors greatly appreciates this support.

Thanks again, TVNA

Once again this year, the Thomas Village Neighborhood Association donated a generous portion of their dues collection to our association. TVNA appreciates and values the work we do to keep our shared spaces beautiful, so they set aside \$10 of every \$35 dues payment they received in 2006, and provided our association with a contribution of \$820. Thank you, good neighbors, for your help!

Here is where we stand as of February 28, 2007:

Year-to-date income: \$18,000

Year-to-date expenses: \$14,177 (74% of budget)

We've been able to stay on budget so far, despite extra costs incurred to remove snow and broken tree limbs after Albuquerque's January snowstorm.

We'll soon begin the association's May 2007-April 2008 fiscal year, and annual assessments will be due. Attached to this newsletter is a Proposed Operating Budget for the year 2007/2008. To meet the forecasted expenses, it will be necessary to increase the annual assessment \$20.00 to a total of \$200.00. This is the first increase in three operating years, and this annual assessment remains well below comparable Homeowner Associations. Invoices will be mailed before April 30, with payment in full due by May 30. Please watch your mail for an invoice.

Thank you very much for supporting your homeowners association. Together, we are doing what is needed to preserve the beauty – and value – of our shared community.

Neighborly Advice

Give 311 a Try --- It Works

By Peggy Tilghman

Looking for weekend hours at the zoo, collection days for green waste or instructions for paying your water bill online? Whatever your question about city services might be, dialing 311 is your straight shot to the answer. The goal of this city-sponsored Citizen Contact Center is to get you the info you need without passing your call around from department to department. Try it! But *don't* call 311 for emergencies – use 911 instead.

Your Local "Link" to Great Sausages

By Peggy Tilghman

Joe S. Sausage and Ravioli is one of those North Valley jewels that you find out about through word of mouth. Joe is passionate about his made-from-scratch sausage, pasta, and ravioli recipes, some handed down by his grandfather, Leo Gentila. He sells fresh, uncooked products for you to take home and transform into savory meals. Just a few of his 15 sausage types include Sweet Red Italian, Spicy Southern Italian, Bratwurst w/Green Chili and North Valley Garlic Polish. More in the mood for ravioli? Try the Dolce Mare, Goat Cheese with Red Pepper and Garlic, Toscana, or another of Joe's nine awesome varieties. Joe's is a one-man operation, open Monday through Friday from 11 am to 1 pm and from 4 pm to 7 pm. On weekends, he's open to neighbors only, but you need to call first: 688-0445. You'll find Joe's at the southeast corner of Griegos and Rio Grande. The entrance, on Griegos behind the dog-grooming shop, looks kind of like an alley. *Mangia!*

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