



Photo by Dick Ruddy

Your

Homeowners News

The Meadows on Rio Grande

NEWS AND EVENTS



Where to Put the Dish?

By Cindy Lewis, President
Meadows on Rio Grande
Homeowners Association

Did you know that our covenants prohibit the use of satellite TV dishes? Back in 1993 when the covenants were executed, satellite dishes ranged anywhere from five to eight feet in diameter and were owned by only a select few. Because of their size, they detracted from the beauty of our neighborhood and most certainly were prohibited because of this.

Then in 1996, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted rules for Over-the-Air-Reception Devices. The rules provide for property owner rights to install or use satellite dishes as long as they meet the requirement of being one meter (39.37 inches) or less in diameter and are designed to receive direct broadcast satellite service, such as those available through Dish Network or DIRECTV here in Albuquerque.

Although the FCC Guidelines "trump" the satellite dish restriction of our covenants, the Meadows on Rio Grande Homeowners Association Board of Directors asks that homeowners install their satellite dishes with the following guidelines in mind.

Please note: Any deviation from these guidelines requires a Design Approval Request form completed and submitted to the Architectural Review Committee (see info box above).

The Dish on Dishes

- The Satellite Dish should be no larger than 39.37 total inches in diameter, limited to one dish per home.
- Install the dish in such a way that it does not detract from the appearance of the home from the front.
- Conceal excessive cabling where possible, or paint it to match the exterior stucco finish.

Before Making Changes to Your Property's Exterior

Thinking about a new color for your trim, or another change to the exterior of your property? Let the Meadows' Architectural Review Committee know your plans **before** you start. Contact any committee member by phone or email, or submit a Request for Design Approval form to the ARC chairperson for review. (You'll find the form at www.meadowsonriogrande.org)

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Check It Out:

www.meadowsonriogrande.org

Visit www.meadowsonriogrande.org for documents and information about The Meadows on Rio Grande Homeowners Association. The new Web site contains:

- The basic governing documents of our Association (covenants, covenant amendments and bylaws).
- Architectural Review Committee information, including a downloadable copy of the Request for Design Approval form.
- A list of members of the Board of Directors and a direct email link for correspondence.

Please let us know what you think of the new site.



Photo by Dick Ruddy

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The Meadows on Rio Grande

MEET THE NEIGHBORS



Photo by Dick Ruddy

Carl Smith Gets Around

By Dick Ruddy

Carl Smith is the kind of guy who likes to kick back in retirement, but he does it on two wheels. Perhaps you've seen him riding through the neighborhood on one of his recumbent or off-road bicycles. He's usually headed to (or coming from) some place 20 or so miles away, and that's just his daily exercise. A *real* ride for Carl is 100 miles long, give or take a few miles. He easily racks up more miles cycling than he does in the family car.

Carl has been riding, hiking and climbing most of his adult life. He and his wife, Marilyn, a chemist, biologist and computer programmer, moved to Albuquerque in 1976, when Carl was hired by Sandia Corporation as a physicist. The couple has lived in the neighborhood all those years, first in Thomas Village and now in The Meadows. Carl often commuted to work by bike, of course.

Carl got serious about recumbent cycling as a result of a rock climbing accident in 1997. After the accident, leaning over the handlebars of a classic, skinny-tired road bike caused serious back discomfort. The recumbent was easier on his back, but there was more: Carl found that he could see a lot more of the world with his legs out in front of him and his head upright. Besides, the seat is more like a comfy lawn chair than the classic bike saddle. Rest assured, though, this cycle is no slowpoke: Carl can do 15 miles per hour for a sustained period. You would have to classify him as one of the most serious recumbent cyclists around.

If you'd like to learn more about these nifty bikes, Carl will gladly spend some time with you. He said that people who ride a recumbent for the first time are a bit apprehensive for the first hundred yards or

so, and then they break into a big grin. Contact Carl at smithfoto@msn.com.

About the "foto" in Carl's email address: His other love is photography, and he's good at it. Last year, University of New Mexico Press published *The Mountains of New Mexico* by Robert Julyan. The photos in the book are Carl's.

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This newsletter issue sponsored by Meadows homeowner M.L. Dobbs



Photo by Dick Ruddy

QUARTERLY QUOTE

"And in the end it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years."

— Abraham Lincoln

Special thanks to Dick Ruddy for the beautiful photos and to Denise Davis for printing this newsletter.

The Meadows on Rio Grande

FINANCIAL REPORT

Here's Where We Stand

By Jim Nelson, Treasurer

Thanks to the timely payment of assessments by most Meadows homeowners, your Association has the financial resources needed to continue maintaining and improving The Meadows' common spaces.

Financial Condition as of October 31, 2007

Operating Year: 5-1-07 to 4-30-08

Year-to-date income: \$21,252 (97 % of budget)

Total year-to-date expenses: \$11,692 (54% of budget)

Payment of Assessments

As of October 31, 103 families, or 94 percent of Meadows homeowners, have paid all or part of the current assessment. In November, the Association mailed a second invoice to those who have not yet paid.

Landscaping Services to Continue

We have retained HeadsUp Landscaping Contractors to maintain our common spaces for another year. While the cost of these services is slightly higher than last year, the scope of the work has been expanded to include upkeep of the area adjacent to Los Anayas Street (along the south edge of The Meadows). We appreciate the efforts of HeadsUp to preserve the appearance of these well-traveled areas.

Wall Repairs on Association's To-Do List

Readers of this publication will recall that the Association has been directing a portion of your assessments to a reserve fund specifically designated for repairs to the common-area stucco walls. While costly, these repairs are essential to the upkeep of our community. The Board of Directors is currently preparing a scope of work and will be meeting with contractors interested in bidding on the project. Budget permitting, we hope to be able to repair many of the wall's cracks, breaks and chipped-stucco areas (including the damage that occurred in November, when a hit-and-run driver struck the wall in a vehicle believed to have been stolen.) This first-phase repair effort should be concluded within a few months; upkeep of the wall will be an ongoing project.

REAL ESTATE WATCH

How Our Homes Are Selling

Is the Albuquerque real estate market as weak as we're hearing, or is news of the *national* real estate downturn coloring our perspective?

The data below suggest a market that has clearly softened, though perhaps not as much as we think. The following Greater Albuquerque stats are from the Albuquerque Metropolitan Board of REALTORS® (abqrealtors.com); the Meadows-specific info is from Connie Johnson, Keller Williams Realty, 948-0001.

GREATER ALBUQUERQUE

Total Active Listings (existing, single-family, detached homes)

October 2007: 6,131

October 2006: 4,266

Closed Sales

October 2007: 687

October 2006: 917

Average Sales Price

October 2007: \$246,522

October 2006: \$229,163

Average Days on Market

October 2007: 51

October 2006: 37

THE MEADOWS ON RIO GRANDE

Homes sold since January 1, 2007: 8

Average sales price: \$523,675

Average size: 2,667 square feet

Average days on market: 75

Homes currently on market: 3

Average price: \$577,667

Average size: 2,860 square feet

Average days on market: 88

So, how do you make your home stand out in a crowded field? We'd love to hear your ideas. Contact any Meadows board member, and we'll publish your tips in a future issue of this newsletter.



In the Time Before The Meadows

By the Mann Sisters

Curious about the history of our community, Meadows Board Member Dick Ruddy recently contacted the previous owners of our property, who graciously agreed to share memories of the farm their family operated on this land until 1968. This is their story.

We're well into fall, and the trees in your yards are vibrant with color as we drive down Memory Lane. Your homes weren't here when we lived in this area. There were no paved streets, street signs, mail boxes, or street lights. In those days, there were beautiful fruit trees and fields full of produce. This was the Charles Mann Produce Farm, known to the family simply as "The Ranch."

The land that many Meadows and Thomas Village homes occupy today was purchased some 95 years ago by our father, Charles Mann, Jr. Daddy loved the outdoors and created a produce farm with fruits and vegetables starting with nearly every letter of the alphabet. It has been said that his celery made it all the way to the White House.

Our farm consisted of approximately 100 acres. We were bounded to the west by the Bosque, to the north by Campbell Road and its mobile home park (which still stands), to the east by Rio Grande Boulevard and to the south by Gabaldon Road.

Harvests of Color

The farm was especially beautiful in Spring, with orchards in full bloom and fields full of strawberries. From Spring to Fall, the stick-straight rows of crops were a sight to behold, with vegetables ripening into a multitude of colors. The show continued through Fall, with yellow-tasseled corn stalks, purple-flowering alfalfa fields, golden-hued cottonwood trees, and ristras drying in the sun.

Our parents worked long hours preparing young seedlings and then planting and caring for the crops. Daddy hired local farm help and young students from the Albuquerque Indian School to work in the vast produce fields and orchards. During World War II, our father created "victory gardens" to encourage people to grow their own fruits and vegetables.

The farm house had been built by our father. It was a large, adobe home with a metal roof. We could hear the rain on the roof and felt cooled by the large cottonwood trees that surrounded the house.

Not Without Water

Daddy was a member of the first-ever board of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD). This was a huge responsibility as,



Albuquerque Museum Photo

The Charles Mann Produce Farm operated on much of the present-day Meadows and Thomas Village communities until 1968.

without water, the land would not have been productive. Back then, the Duranes Ditch was quite large, with water flowing southward through our property. This water fed the fields and orchards that produced the Mann farm bounty. Local folks would drive over to buy their fruits and vegetables; we also sold produce to specialty stores and big grocery stores. Produce was also trucked to Santa Fe, Espanola and other Northern New Mexico communities.

The farm was especially beautiful in Spring, with orchards in bloom and fields full of red, ripening strawberries.

Daddy was outnumbered by females on the farm. There was our mother, Beulah, seven sisters, and just one brother, James, who died at age two from measles. Mother stayed extremely busy caring for our family, but always found time to can and freeze an abundance of vegetables and fruits. She also managed to care for a small dairy "in her free time." We always had fresh milk to drink and whipped cream for our pumpkin pies.

Beyond the Farm

Over the years, my sisters and I attended Albuquerque Public Schools, the St. Vincent Academy (which no longer exists) and Harwood Girls School (now a center for the arts). We attended the University of New Mexico when we were older.

Of course, we girls had our farm chores. But we found time to ride our horses almost daily, play baseball with the neighbor kids, and participate in 4-H activities. We also performed square dances on horseback at the State Fair. Our parents were both musically talented and they encouraged us in this direction, too. The Mann sisters participated in a number of Albuquerque concerts.

Daddy died in 1968. Three years later, the family sold the farm to a developer, who would sell the land once more. Eventually, the homes of Thomas Village, and then The Meadows, would sprout where our fields had been. Our mother died in 1988.

Today, the Mann sisters live in New Mexico, Colorado and Louisiana, enjoying life in a world that has vastly changed since we were girls. And the Mann Farm, which nurtured and shaped us, lives on in our memories – and our hearts.