

Pond Meadows Condominium Association, Inc.

Mahwah, NJ 07430

Newsletter June 2014

Spring Revival

The ancient Egyptians considered the seasonal cycle to be a cosmic and eternal moral cycle. The universe was *born* every year in Spring, *grew and flourished* in Summer, *decayed* in Autumn, and *died* every Winter, only to be *reborn* and *resurrected* the following Spring. The Egyptians of the Old Kingdom were a confident and hopeful people because of the cosmic assurance of the eternal return. And how could we at Pond Meadows not also be when we witness the blossoming of the beautiful azaleas and Rhododendrons here every Spring? Even one of the better known curmudgeons on campus was heard



to remark on the beauty of the courtyards when all the shrubs and flowers are in full bloom. Let the sunshine in.

Badges? We don't need no stinking badges

You will note the installation of "Authorized Parking Only" signs at five entrances to the parking lots and at the ends of both Southerly and Northerly Drives at Chapel Road. This was among the last steps taken in a very long process for Pond Meadows to be able to remove abandoned and unauthorized vehicles from the grounds in accordance with State law. Up to this point, we had continual abuses by complete strangers who used to store and park their vehicles on the lots for personal convenience. That will now be remedied.

Residents have generally been quite sensitive to the parking needs of their neighbors, despite the occasional predatory urge to appropriate a preferred spot. At the April 22, 2014, meeting of the Board, a "**Resolution: Pond Meadows**

Condominium Parking Policies" was adopted and subsequently published on the community website (<http://www.arthuredwardsinc.com/PondMeadows>). Please review its provisions, which, by in large, merely memorialize common understandings and practices.

In the next few weeks, as among the last stages of this initiative, "hang tags" (on the rear view mirror), identifying the vehicles as "authorized" to be parked on the grounds will be distributed in accordance with the vehicle information provided by the certified census. (Landlords were required to identify the vehicles of tenants in that form.) Those not so identified will be required to register by providing independent evidence of registration/ownership and the affiliations of vehicles with specific residential units. Other accommodations will be made for visitors.



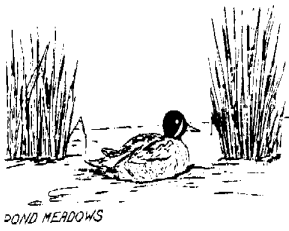
The lots are not public and they cannot be used by people who are not authorized to use them. It is private land.

So, badges? You'll need them.

The Rule of Law

To abide by the laws of a community has always been an expected civic obligation – whether in ancient Athens, modern Louisiana, or here in Pond Meadows. It surely is the exception not to accept that obligation. The social perils posed by acts of the non-compliant used to be addressed by the practice of "exile," a casting out of the community. We still practice it in modern life in subtler forms.

Condominiums cannot *exile* the non-compliant. But, like any other community, they do have the legal capacity to enforce the provisions of both the



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Master Deed and the By-Laws. Each of these governing documents has distinct purposes. The Master Deed directs how people can use the land they own and sets forth their obligations to it and to other owners. The By-Laws establish a governing *Association* of owners and a Board of Trustees authorized to conduct the business of the *Association* as a non-profit “home association” corporation.

Board members are elected by the members of the *Association* and can be removed by them in accordance with the By-Laws.



The primary function of the Board of Trustees is to *enforce all of the provisions and restrictions of the Master Deed* for the benefit of the members of the *Association* and to enact rules and regulations which promote the common purposes of the condominium complex and the ends of ownership and residency. The authority of the Board to enforce the provisions of the Master Deed and the rules and regulations of the condominium is set forth with clarity in the By-Laws. (Please, at your leisure, review the contents of both documents just to be fully informed.) They are posted in full on the community website,

<http://www.arthuredwardsinc.com/PondMeadows>.

Also posted are “Resolutions” recently adopted by the Board of Trustees at its meeting on June 9, 2014. The first is “**Resolution: Protocols of the Meetings of the Board of Trustees**” which memorializes the State’s “Sunshine Law” with respect to the conduct of the “open” Board meetings and establishes protocols intended to avoid untimely disruptions. Please review it.

The second is “**Resolution: Members in ‘Good Standing’**” which merely makes explicit what is set forth both expressly and impliedly in the governing

documents about what is required to maintain status as a member (owner) of the Association in “good standing.” The loss of such status has consequences and may result in the loss of certain privileges as may be enjoyed by members (owners) (and the derivative privileges of tenants and occupants) as set forth in the governing documents. (Note, for example, that a member must be in “good standing” to be authorized to park on the grounds.) This “Resolution” is also published on the community website. Again, please review it for your information.

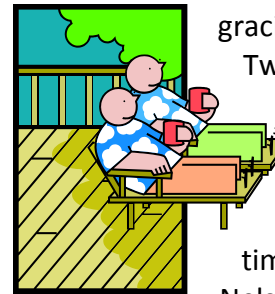
Projects

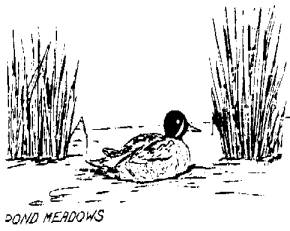
Decks: The initiative to rehabilitate the decks has been an overwhelming success, thanks to both the willing and to the reluctant – who graciously proceeded eventually.

Twenty-five (25) decks required replacement and another sixteen (16) required repair. The project has essentially been completed within the time more or less predicted.

Nelson was very efficient in performing the work. This was close to a \$20,000 project which was funded by owner participation (as required by the Master Deed, Section 9, p. 17), and not as a cost to the Association. A “WELL DONE!” to all who worked to make the initiative a success.

Utility Doors/Frame: Repairs have been made to the doors and door frames of utility sheds as the need was found. It turns out that expectation of the need of repair exceeded the actual need because the frames were found to be in better shape than anticipated.





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Painting: The painting project shall commence shortly. This will consist of but limited to the scraping of all loose paint, sanding when needed to attain smooth paintable surfaces, spot priming on all exposed wood, and the painting, using high grade Benjamin Moore Quality Exterior Paint, of the undersides of decks, posts, fascia boards, thresholds for all doors, front doors, and all utility doors and frames. Bids were received and considered from three contractors, all more or less within the same price range. The Board considered the number of painters on the crew to be devoted to the project and the time within which it would be completed, preferring the shorter without compromising the quality of work. Realistic times of completion ranged (accounting for weather and other intervening circumstances) from a month to almost two months. The Board chose a contractor and expects that the final agreement will be firmed up shortly and the work begun without delay.



Landscape Architect/Planning: MKW's team will be starting the landscape review process this month, with particular focus on the following preliminary issues: 1) trees and tree roots competing with foundations, buildings, sidewalks, structures; 2) other flora competing with trees for light necessary for maintenance and growth; 3) drainage; 4) design value of existing plants and plant materials; and 5) sustained turf growth. Once the preliminary report is issued, we will try to schedule a meeting of MKW and the membership to discuss any particular issues and items of interest and attention.



Loss Assessment

Owners of condominiums are insured for loss under standard HO-6 policies as well as a blanket Association policy on the entire complex. Nothing evidences how bound together condominium owners are like casualty or personal injury losses. Any monetary loss excluded by the Association's blanket policy is assessed, in equal proportions, against the unit owners. So, for example, if \$960,000 of a loss is uncovered by the blanket policy and must be recovered (the cost to rebuild after a fire, for instance), then a \$10,000 payment will be assessed against each of the 96 unit owners in Pond Meadows.



HO-6 policies conventionally include a "loss assessment" endorsement to anticipate such rare events, but the usual coverage is about \$1,000. It is an inexpensive endorsement and most experts recommend that you increase your "loss assessment" coverage to between \$25,000 and \$50,000. You never know.



*Best wishes from the
Pond Meadows Board of Trustees
for a healthy and serene summer season.*