Annual HOA Meeting

The Homeowner’s Association held their Annual Election on June 23rd and elected two homeowner’s to the HOA Board;

Joseph Caplan from the Meadows
Al Campanaro from the Glen.

The voters also approved the planned installation of swipe card readers at both the front and side doors to the Clubhouse. The swing gates to the Pool and Recreation Courts are planned to receive the installation of swipe card readers mounted inside weather proof enclosures.

Homeowner’s approved the issuance of wrist bands to identify themselves and family members at the Clubhouse, Pool and Recreation Courts. The Recreation Committee is responsible for the implementation of the bands, and the enforcement of subsequent policies with regard to the number of bands issued, loss replacement and other questions.

Your support is mandatory when it comes to the success of the wrist band program. A homeowner is absolutely responsible for their wrist bands and lost or otherwise unaccountable bands are not subject to automatic no cost replacement. Treat the bands like your house keys and enjoy the pool this summer!

Breaking News about Merritt Blvd.

Traffic Signal Information: There is no project scheduled for Merritt.

In response to a number of letters and emails from Van Wyck Meadows and Glen homeowners the State DOT (Department of Transportation) conducted a study of pedestrian crossing safety. The DOT study involved the Wappingers School Board directly with school bus stop safety issues.

Mr. Steven Ferguson, a member of the Town Board emailed this reply to a request for information by the Gazette “the Town has taken the position that a crosswalk without a signal light would only cause a false sense of security and possibly make the situation worse.

The State DOT is doing a traffic light warrant study. The recommendations of the DOT have not come in yet but, failing the ability to get a positive recommendation from DOT for a traffic light there is always the ability to install a pedestrian triggered light that can remain green until manually triggered by a crossing pedestrian.

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Breaking News about Merritt Blvd. - continued

At this time here has been no decision made. Updates to this concern will be immediately posted to the Community Website.

School Bus Sign Information: The numerous homeowner requests for signs that warn Merritt motorists of the School Bus pick-up/drop-off points met with Town of Fishkill approval. The Town Highway Department plans to install four signs, each the regulation 30 inches by 30 inches, with a fluorescent yellow and green background and with a black legend and border. The planned installation of the signs is 500 feet in advance of the bus stops; Merritt and Vanderbilt Way, also Merritt and Creekside Lane. Expect to notice the signs along the side of Merritt.

Please use our website for any information you need. More often than not, any forms you need are available online. The “Resolve!” eForm is a huge success with almost 50 issues well, resolved! The McGrath Management Company serves The Meadows, Glen, Mews and Regency.

Out and About the Community by Joseph Caplan

First a note of appreciation to every homeowner that attended the HOA Board Election on a warm June Tuesday night. If you were not there you missed quite a performance by six homeowners, each very determined to convince you of their merits.

A campaign starts years before the actual night of the election, with the selfless work of homeowners who volunteer countless hours on your behalf.

Of course the campaign is waged everyday by your neighbors who work behind the scenes to negotiate cost-effective and time sensitive solutions to a vast array of issues.

The Newsletter Committee approved the continued publication of the Van Wyck Gazette. Typical time per issue to develop, write, revise, and format the paper is over 200 unpaid, volunteer hours!

Fishkill Farmer’s Market is home to the fabulous baked goods of two generous to a fault women Bev and Diane Cohen. Their anticipated Restaurant Reviews have always been featured in the Gazette. If you ever wanted a taste of homemade goodness, simply visit their white tent located at the Fishkill Farmer’s Market every Thursday from 9 to 3.

Change of Address labels must be in short supply at the Fishkill Post Office with quite a few homeowners that have decided to leave or already have. Although the numbers change weekly there are 14 homes in the Meadows for sale and about the same number leased to tenants.

Please review the Online Survey that reveals the real Community opinions about repeated property rentals at community expense.

Six signs planned for Community to discourage dog waste left behind by owners. If I made a dollar for each pile of dog waste I have seen left on a lawn, well you guess. Although the sheer volume of dog waste is less, the violations continue, by both owners and guests.

The second major expense in the community is lawn care, just behind insurance premiums. Lawn care involves cuts, as well as chemical applications to control insects, weeds, and fertilizer. Yet despite repeated efforts to reseed, cultivate grass, eliminate brush, and increase the value of the community, some homeowners simply fail to realize the cost and destroy the progress.

So any owner caught, based upon at least two independent reports, will be fined, without appeal. Notice of the Community rules is available online, thru McGrath memos, and the Gazette.

As your HOA Board Member and Website Administrator, I am proud to announce that based upon my efforts and initiative the Van Wyck Communities Website has been selected as the “Community in the Spotlight” by AtHomeNet, our current site host provider.

After a rigorous selection process and a personal interview, the host company approved of the remarkable success demonstrated by adaptation of the site by the Community.
“Community in the Spotlight” showcases our Website!

Your Web Admin gains AtHomeNet “Innovation” 2009 Special Award Recognition!

To quote AtHomeNet “The program lends national recognition and showcases communities using AtHomeNet Community and Association websites in creative and innovative ways. Recipients of the 2009 Community in the Spotlight Award will receive a national press release, free web consultations, and a showcase article in the company's client publication, The AtHomeNet Gazette.”

I am pleased to function as both website Administrator and editor/developer of “The Van Wyck Gazette” Community Newsletter and continue to promote the channels of communication available to every resident of the Van Wyck Communities.

Although I stress innovation with the Website, a quote from their Director of Marketing seems appropriate, “As we've seen time and time again, when the fifty plus features (AtHomeNet offers) are deployed within an Association, their community's online presence helps them to streamline processes, and increase a sense of community in the neighborhood. We've put these particular clients on a pedestal and sing their praises so that other Associations can see what is possible.”

Media features such as these have been proven to increase the demand for and value of homes within the communities that enjoy them!

I always trumpet the available features of the Website, and now suggest that you participate in our “Award Winning” Internet site.

The Official AtHomeNet Announcement is planned for a Broadcast Email to everyone currently listed. If you would like to receive such emails simply contact McGrath.

Also just a brief mention that “The Van Wyck Gazette Summer 2009 Edition goes to press soon, but is planned for an Exclusive Online Edition in full color!

Finally, please review the results and analysis of the three Online Surveys I have posted. To everyone that appreciates a discussion as much as I do, you know I kept the lid on this news for quite awhile! I have another major news event to reveal, but for that you need to check out the Special Edition Gazette online!

Online Survey Results:
Here are the results of the last three online surveys and an analysis of the opinions they represent:

All-Purpose Fields:
1) 22% Move b-ball hoops there
2) 17% Forget about it
3) 14% Prep for a garden
4) 17% Build a bar-b-que pit
5) 14% Build a baseball field
6) 06% Build a soccer field
7) 06% Build a volley ball court
8) 06% Build a doggie park

Rental Fee:
1) 63% I support a small fee
2) 37% I oppose a small fee

Newsletter, Flyer & Mail Delivery:
1) 10% Save the money - deliver all you can
2) 41% Deliver the Newsletter but mail Official Documents
3) 00% Mail the HOA stuff and keep the rest
4) 19% Spend the money and mail everything
5) 21% Send everyone emails except the Proxy
6) 28% Go online, who needs snail mail?

Current Meadows Listings:
974 Huntington - lock box
860 Huntington - lock box
854 Huntington - lock box
835 Huntington - lock box
825 Huntington - lock box
815 Huntington - lock box
813 Huntington - FSBO
793 Huntington - lock box foreclosure
785 Huntington -
774 Huntington - FSBO
767 Huntington - no lb, but was for sale
763 Huntington - no lb but was for sale
752 Huntington - lock box
727 Huntington - lock box

Why not place your for sale notice on our website?
Here we are again, a little older and wiser, ready for a new restaurant review. We hope many of you have enjoyed some of the prior restaurants that we have recommended.

You must be aware by now that there is more than an ample quantity of Italian eateries, in and out of the area. Still we have managed to uncover one that has become our new favorite. It is called IL CONTINORI on Main Street in Wappingers Falls. Everything is made to order and the chef is more than obliging. We love the scampi, calamari, and marinals. You may order any pasta that you like. The atmosphere is Tuscan-comfortable and on weekends, there is even a piano player taking your requests. Lunch: Tuesday-Friday 12-3:00pm. Dinner begins at 4:00pm. IL CONTINORI is closed on Monday.

Now that the weather is travel-friendly, we thought we’d include a couple of restaurants in Orange and Ulster Counties. The first in Ulster County has been a favorite of our family for over 50yrs. and has only changed for the best with the passing of ownership to the third generation. MOUNTAIN BRAUHAUS serves German fare along with nouvelle cuisine. You can get a wonderful sauerbraten along side an acorn squash soup, made fresh, or the best potato pancakes and spaetzele, along side of cold watermelon soup. There are lighter dishes and all the traditional German favorites. As an added touch, the restaurant also serves the Famous Cohen’s Bakery dark pumpernickel, with or without raisins, which we are selling at the Fishkill Farmer’s Market (among other things) on Thursdays. Since the area surrounding the restaurant is at the foot of the Shawangunks, where mountain-climbing reigns king you can even order a gunksburger, which is a huge hamburger on the dark raisin pumpernickel. They are closed on Monday and Tuesday and are open for lunch Tuesday through Friday and dinner only on the weekends.

It’s always wise to call ahead in all three cases, as sometimes the hours change.

Since we live in such a spectacularly beautiful part of the country, it is an adventure to us to see Mother Nature in all its glory and then go for a wonderful meal. Hope you can take advantage!!

Until next time, we remain “THE FAMOUS COHEN SISTERS” Enjoy!!

14th Annual Women’s Golf Event

From Poughkeepsie Journal July 21, 2009:

Myung Ja Chun moved to the Mid-Hudson Valley in 1963 from her native South Korea and started playing golf in her early 50’s. A highlight for her in her amateur career was winning a course championship at Dutchess Golf & Country Club in Poughkeepsie last year.

“It’s tough to play with the kids!” Chun exclaimed after completing the 18 hole course with a score of 14 over par 85 on Friday at Dutchess, for a two day total of 172, good for a fourth-place tie with Marist College women’s associate basketball coach.

“I just tried to play my best,” Chun said. They hit much longer balls and I just keep up my pace. I enjoyed it, being young.

I became eighteen today.” Myung Ja is a homeowner in Van Wyck Meadows, and in addition to golf, enjoys her traditional gardens.

Congratulations on your spectacular game, Myung Ja!

If you have a sports event that you participate in contact the editor.
New! Focus Groups

Community Focus Group Talks at our Van Wyck Clubhouse are planned by your newly elected HOA Board member Joseph Caplan to discuss your concerns. After all, homeowners pay the bills that support the Community and Management Company, and are certainly entitled to a voice. Of course, meetings are not a forum to address warranty issues or other complaints. The purpose is to allow a flow of information back and forth, as appropriate and within acceptable guidelines.

HOA Board discussions and business matters currently before the Board are confidential, as agreed upon and expected. In general though, topics that affect the Community at large, such as policies or health and safety concerns are subject to your opinions, suggestions, or comments.

The success and continuation of Focus Group Meetings requires your attendance and participation within reasonable guidelines.

To participate in any of the planned Focus Group Sessions, simply submit a Focus Group Ticket Request eForm available on the Community website. A ticket ensures that every interested Homeowner is seated, as the Clubhouse is limited to 35 occupants. Every Ticket Request receives both a date and time to attend the Focus Group Sessions.

VanWyck Community Update

What are those yellow signs that appear on the lawns every once in awhile? Actually lawn treatments to eliminate grubs or fertilizer with broadleaf weed control. Second only to insurance, lawn care is the most expensive budget item.

Do they really have to build a few more town homes on either side of the Meadows entrance? Well, yes, unless you have an extra few million.

What is the Enclave all about? The remainder of the Meadows is located in the “Enclave” and contains 16 buildings with a total of 80 units.

What about speeders on our roads? The Town supports two patrol cars on weekdays and three on weekends to cover 32 square miles. Discussion is underway to enforce the speed limit within the community.

It really is only fair to suggest that every driver within the community follow the posted 15 mile per hour limit. At some point radar speed enforcement is planned to occur.

What about the dog urine spots in the common areas? No one wants the ugly dead grass holes in their lawns but there is less vacant land every week available to walk a dog.

What few green areas there are need to remain healthy for quite a few reasons. Lawn care costs every homeowner more than any other expense except property insurance.

The expense to treat grass, trees, and plants with pesticide and fertilizer costs several thousand additional dollars.

Probably an excellent topic to discuss at the Focus Group Meetings scheduled to occur at the Clubhouse.

HOMEOWNERS SURVEY

I urge everyone to participate in the 2009 Survey for a number of reasons;

1) Unless you attend one of the Focus Group sessions planned to discuss your opinions, the paper survey is your second opportunity to voice your opinion to your HOA representative.

2) The Survey was designed by a qualified homeowner (Master of Arts - Psychology) and covers the basic current issues.

3) The data available after the survey period is completed is planned to become available online, or in print form.

Friends of the Community:

K-9 Clippers - Pet Grooming; Anniel (845) 897-5595

Salon of New York - Hair Salon; Roger 298 4390

Famous Cohery's - Baked Goodies; Bev & Diane
Fishkill Farmer's Market - Thursdays from 9 am to 3 pm

Bill Mumane - Mr. Repair
wmur938920@aim.com

L. G. Home Designs - Carpentry; Lenny 234 2999

Tony Lopez - Home Tech
891-8714

Artifact Studio - wicoppee@hotmail.com
A review of the Security Proposal recently approved by Homeowners seems to offer a remedy to the unfortunate issue of trespass on the facilities.

The installation of multiple cameras in undisclosed places at least offers the chance to detect any problems caused by uninvited users.

The details of the wrist band program are planned to be discussed by the Recreation Committee in the near future.

A few thoughts to keep in mind once the improvements take effect. Do not allow anyone without a wrist band to tailgate behind you into the clubhouse, pool or recreation courts. That defeats the purpose of the program and totally reverses the effort to improve security. The clubhouse, pool and other facilities are, after all, private property and commonly owned by every homeowner in the Van Wyck Community.

The Landscape Committee has drafted a memo that is planned to arrive in your mailbox any time now. Unlike other memos, this requires you to select from the several options, and return it to the McGrath office.

Rather than discuss the options available, your choices are basically to decide to stain your deck or stairs yourself, or have McGrath assign a pre-approved contractor to complete the work for you. Of course, the cost will appear as an assessment on your common charge statement.

If you fail to select an option, a contractor will perform the necessary work whether you agree or not. The purpose is to offer everyone several choices, with the intent to maintain a uniform look to the wooden structures within the community.

So please review the memo, make your selection, and return it to the Management Company by the deadline.

Here is a review of the programs completed to benefit the community by your Committee and Board Members:

1) Driveway seal coating
2) Deck staining
3) Clubhouse security
4) Pool staffing
5) Sidewalk spreadsheet
6) Tree inventory
7) Removal of window signs
8) Reduction of dog waste
9) Removal of junk vehicles
10) Website Award
11) New “Gazette”
12) Move of gym equipment

Quite a list of accomplishments done by unpaid volunteers.

Margot’s Summer Linzer Fruit Tart Recipe

**Linzer Cookie Recipe:**

1 cup blanched or sliced almonds, toasted and ground (hazelnuts, or pecans can also be used)  
2 cups all purpose flour  
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature  
2/3 cup granulated white sugar, divided  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
2 large egg yolks

Zest of 1 Lemon  
Confectioners’ (Icing or Powdered) Sugar for dusting  
1/2 cup seedless Raspberry or Black Currant Preserves or Jam (can use other flavored preserves or jam)

In a separate bowl, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy (approx. 3 min.) Beat in the vanilla extract, egg yolks, and lemon zest. Beat in the ground nuts. Add the flour, cinnamon, and salt mixture, beating just until incorporated. Divide dough and refrigerate for until firm. On a lightly floured surface roll out the dough until it is about 1/4 inch thick. Cut out dough with a 2 to 3 inch cookie cutter. Place on cookie sheet about 1 inch apart. Cut out center on half of the cookies with a smaller cookie cutter (3/4 - 1 inch) and bake all at 350º for 12 to 14 minutes. Let cool. Spread raspberry jam and sandwich cookies. Dust with confectioners’ sugar (see picture).

Best when stored in a tin can or ziplog bag for several days. Enjoy!
Pet Tips by Janet Conte

Canine Care Guide

Keeping your pet safe in a home should be easy .... But is it???

Safety tips: Watch your pet as much as possible. Keep an eye on your pets, whether in the house or out in the yard. Our community is frequently spraying, cars are traveling our roads and construction is still ongoing.

Contain them: Make sure your pet is safely contained and can’t escape from house or yard. When you are out and they can’t accompany you, consider crate training or a safe room in your house, so that your pet cannot get into trouble.

Train them: Proper training can keep your pet safe, both outside and indoors. Rule of the house, such as not jumping on counter and staying out of garbage cans can also keep them safe.

Household poisons: House and garden plants such as rhododendrons, lilies, mistletoe, geraniums and foxglove are poisonous.

Insecticides: Rodent poisons and car antifreeze are common sources of pet poisoning.

People food: Chocolate, coffee grounds, beans, onions, grapes and raisins are toxic to pets. Don’t feed them … Purchase only pet healthy treats.

Your pets has become a family member, and losing them is a heartbreak. Stay safe & enjoy the summer with them.

Janet is an award winning trainer and owner of a obedience champion collie.

SpongeBob: Ummmm, maybe!

Patrick: SpongeBob, if you don’t want to pollute Bikini Bottom you have to recycle.

Patrick: Will you save Bikini Bottom before it gets over polluted?

Patrick said it, most of all oceans, rivers, and lakes are being or will be polluted.

Reduce - Reuse - Recycle

Please follow Janrell’s advice and help the community in our efforts to “go green”.

Energy Saving Tips by Bill Murnane

Drafty windows - on a windy day check your windows for drafts. The windows in these communities are made by Superseal. They will replace the foam-tite seal (aka pyle) if necessary with a heavier seal if needed, usually in the first year. You also have a 25 year warranty on the glass and a lifetime warranty on the frames. You can contact them by calling 1-800-521-6704 or their web site is www.supersealwindows.com. Superseal also manufactures all the sliding glass doors used in the community.

Front and rear swinging entry doors are made by Peachtree. Close your door and see if any daylight is coming through along the edges. If there is you’re losing heat / ac. It is not unusual to need adjustments to your door gaskets. Worst case scenario you may need to add a second set of door gaskets available at any home supply store. Peachtree will also supply you with gasket shims free of charge. You can contact Peachtree through their web-site. www.peachtreedoor.com or by calling 1-800-732-2499. Peachtree doors have a 20 year warranty on their frames and a 10 year warranty on the glass.

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Recycling Tips and Art by Janrell

Patrick: SpongeBob have you been recycling?

SpongeBob: Please follow Janrell’s advice and help the community in our efforts to “go green”.

Help save natural resources and recycle every Friday.

If your child wants to submit original art works, please forward your request thru the Gazette e Form available on our website. Please consider that art must be scanned.
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Joseph Caplan: Publisher / Editor / Ad Sales
Margot Cantone: Graphics and Photos

Gazette Contributors:
Kevin McGrath: Update 2009
Bev and Diane Cohen: Restaurant Reviews
Janet Conte: Pet Training Column
Bill Murmane: Top Ways to Energy Savings

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The opportunity to share your unique ability or discuss your point of view is available, through both media.

I welcome the opportunity to serve the Community and appreciate the insightful comment quoted above.

I relish a challenge, so bring it on!

Energy Savings Tips by Bill Murnane ...continued

Install a Storm door. The community has specific parameters on storm doors used in the community. It’s best to let the supplier install the door as they can become troublesome to install and maintain.

The manufacturers actually supplement the costs of installation to the suppliers. Cost savings, additional comfort and security make the installation of a storm door well worth it.

HVAC filters. Make sure your filtration system is clean. Replace disposable filters regularly or make sure your electronic filter is cleaned. Remember the better the filter, the faster it will get dirty, the more it needs to be replaced/cleaned. The cleaner the filter the easier it is for your HVAC to breath.

Humidifiers. Forced air heating systems are notoriously dry. Dry air will escape from a home MUCH easier than moist heat. Adding a humidifier to your home will lower your heating costs and greatly increase your own comfort levels (dry noses and skin). A humidifier also is better for your wood floors, furniture and sheetrock by lessening the normal expansion and contraction due to changes in humidity levels. A portable humidifier can be used or a wide range of ones are available to be installed on your heating.

Hot Water Heaters: Check the temperature on your heater, after a year they normally need adjustment. Temperatures of 110 to 120 degrees are normal, a lot has to do with personal taste. Make sure the hot water supply pipes have pipe insulation on them.

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The Van Wyck Gazette is a true labor of love, and I spend quite a few hours on each issue. Again, the value of a Community is judged by the array of amenities and media offered.

No doubt I am aware, as you, of the vast array of culture and talent within the Community.

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View down Huntington with clubhouse on left. The photo taken in 2005.