

# What's Flowing in the Creek

Volume 1, Issue 5  
12/15/2007



Welcome to the Winter edition of *What's Flowing in the Creek*, Steele Creek's community newsletter published quarterly:

Fall - September  
Winter - December  
Spring - March  
Summer - June

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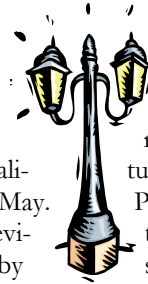
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## Annual HOA Meeting Notes

Neighbors elected Charles Williams to the Board of Directors on November 12, 2007. Board elections are held annually in November and voted on by members of the community. Please be informed that Keystone will be releasing their control over the BOD in February. When this happens, we the community, will have full control of the BOD and will be able to add three new board members from within the community. We will elect a Board Chair and have the ability to enforce liens and other penalties for violations. Officer John Furr from the CMPD came out to our meeting discuss crime report stats for Steele Creek. He noticed Steele Creek has a slightly higher than normal amount of incidents and offered some tips on how to protect ourselves and our property. In addition, he strongly advised that getting the street lights installed will reduce many incidents.

## Streetlight Update

Residents our board of directors wants everyone to be clear on the reason for the special assessment Re-Vote. Per a prior email sent to everyone on the community e-news list, the reason for the second special assessment vote on the lights is because Keystone decided to use their "voting shares" control to invalidate our vote back in May. Although we were previously given clearance by Jon Perdue to move forward with the special assessment process, he did not inform Keystone of any of these developments. As a result, Keystone did not have the opportunity to use their "voting shares" to cast their vote in the process. Because Keystone still controls the BOD, they forced us to re-vote on the special assessment so they could have their vote formally on record. The ballots were



sent mailed out by Hawthorne in November along with an explanation for the re-vote. If neighbors did not get a chance to return their ballot to Hawthorne, please mail them in as soon as possible. Volunteers are currently going door to door to collect the rest of the ballots-again and to get the additional required streetlight signatures required by Duke Power. We must have all the ballots and streetlight signatures collected and turned in by 12/31/07. If we fail, we will be required to start the entire process over. Because the cost of streetlights is going up in 2008, we will also face a higher cost. So please sign the maps and ballots as volunteers visit your home over the next several days. Please email [board@steelecreekhoa.org](mailto:board@steelecreekhoa.org) if there are questions. Note: Keystone has indicated that they will pay for the all lots they still own.

## Speed Hump Update

Our Community is on track to have speed humps installed on Steele Meadow and Cades Cove Drive in Late 2008 or earlier 2009. The City of Charlotte (not the HOA) will pay for

installation of the humps. Neighbors living within 600 ft of the speed bumps will have to vote for the installation. The Voting will not be until sometime in 2008. More information will follow.

## Did You Know?

### Reporting Maintenance Problems

Contact Kelly Parker at 704-377-0114 to report issues related to litter, entrance lighting, and HOA covenant violations. You may also report issues online via the FAQ section on our website. <http://steelecreekhoa.org>

### Community Advertisements

We have real estate and insurance agents, tutoring and after school care services, a notary public, Avon and body oil sales reps, a PC service technician, and a handyman all right here in Steele Creek. **To view contact details**, please visit our website's classifieds section.

### Street Sign Repair

Street signs that are damaged can be repaired by reporting it to 311. 311 also provides a host of services to city residents all paid for by your tax dollars.

**For more info, visit:** <http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/CharMeck311/Home.htm>

## Holiday Events

### Christmas Decoration and Lighting Contest

Get ready everyone. Be creative, unique, and have fun. Have your house decorated and ready for the judges by December 22nd. The Steele Creek Carolers will present a prize to the house with the best decoration and lighting display on Christmas Eve. The winning house will be also listed on the website. Good luck to all participants and Happy Holidays!!

**Note:** If you are interested in being a judge please email Shay at [events@steelecreek.org](mailto:events@steelecreek.org). Judges, committee and board members are not eligible to participate in the contest.

### Steele Creek Carolers

Do you love to sing? Is this your favorite time of the year? Join us for our second annual caroling on Christmas Eve as we spread joy to our friends and neighbors. We will meet at 5:30 pm at the model home on Steele Meadow. From there we'll romp around the neighborhood sharing our Christmas spirit with all our neighbors who have there porch lights blazing. Please email Shay at [events@steelecreek.org](mailto:events@steelecreek.org) for copies of the songs we will sing. See you on Christmas Eve!!

## Community Watch

The community watch committee would like to remind residents to get to know as many of your neighbors on your street as possible. Establish a "lookout system" whereby you keep an eye out for each other's property. Share cell phone numbers with each other for emergencies. Call the police if you notice any suspicious activity or anyone who looks suspicious at your neighbor's property. There are many excellent tips on **our website** on how to protect yourself and your property. Look for the November 2006 newsletter in the documents section of our website.

Residents have been emailing about a well known teenager who lives in the community and seems to be frequently the source of many criminal incidents. We encourage you all to call the police on this teenager or any teen who exhibits criminal behavior, whether it be trespassing, selling drugs, gang gathering and activities, breaking and entering, etc.

Finally, we want to remind residents that **damaging fire hydrants** is a serious crime and presents a major problem for firefighters responding to an emergency. Please do not tamper with our fire hydrants for the safety of everyone.

## County Water Restriction Update

### New Water Restriction rules:

Mecklenburg County continues to suffer from drought conditions despite cooler weather. While the car-washing and swimming pool rules are the same as they've been since original mandatory restrictions were enacted on August 28, there were new rules effective September 26:

- \* Lawn watering and the operation of any sprinkler system are prohibited at all times.
- \* The operation of ornamental fountains (without fish) is not allowed.
- \* Residential car washing and refilling of swimming pools is

not allowed (topping off is OK)  
\*Drip irrigation and hand-held use of watering containers and hoses with spray nozzles will still be permitted to sustain flower beds, shrubs and trees.

Civil penalties for violating mandatory water use rules continue at \$100 for most residential customers, and \$200 for most commercial customers.

### Water Saving Tips:

Mecklenburg County citizens are urged to commit to changing your water use routines and reducing daily use at home - and at work - by at least 20 percent. **Here's how:**

- \* **Cut down on how long you stay in the shower**
- \* **If you run your dishwasher or wash clothes every day, start washing only every other day.**
- \* **Toilets are your home's largest indoor water user. Only flush when you have to.**
- \* **Inspect for leaks in your plumbing and repair them as soon as you can.**
- \* **Turn off the water when brushing teeth or shaving.**
- \* **Run dishwashers and clothes washers only when full.**
- \* **Use a broom rather than a hose to clean pavement and decks.**

# WINTER LAWN CARE

## Steele Creek Neighborhood Winter Lawn Care

The drought our area has experienced this summer has extended right through the fall, and unfortunately, no end appears in sight. With lawn watering prohibited in Charlotte and our neighborhood, any seeds planted this past fall have struggled to germinate and establish roots. We have pretty much been on cruise control, with little to mow and little to take care of.

For fescue growers, now is the time to decide if you will try to grow any grass this spring, or just maintain the existing lawn (or what is left of it!) and eliminate weeds and crabgrass. It is difficult to do both at the same time, so consider your options carefully.

### **To maintain an existing lawn:**

In order to prevent weeds and crabgrass later this spring and summer, a pre-emergence weed control must be used. The effect will last several months. These solutions work by preventing weed seeds from germinating. However, they prevent grass seeds from germinating as well. Also, if you break the ground after the pre-emergent has been applied, the chemical barrier will be broken and weed seeds will have openings to germinate. It is OK to apply one application now and another in late February/early March, but be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions. A post-emergence type weed control is also OK to use at this time for weeds that are lingering in your yard, but be careful to select one for use with fescue and spray on a warm day. Remember that non-selective products like Round-up will also kill the grass you want! Wait until February before applying fertilizer.

### **To establish a new lawn:**

The fall is the best time for planting, and the beginning of March is the second best time (although a distant second!). But with our continuing drought conditions, it is difficult to predict if it will be worth the time. If we cannot water and if it doesn't rain regularly once the temps become warmer, the new seedlings with small root systems simply will not make it through the end of spring and summer. If you find it your best option to go ahead and seed this spring (March) when soil temps rise to at least 55°F, then do not apply any pre-emergent weed control. This could prevent the seed from germinating.

The good news is there are some things that you can do to keep yourself busy in the yard to keep it beautiful during these winter months before the spring activities become necessary:

- Sharpen the blade of your lawnmower, or have it professionally sharpened.
- Change the oil and perform maintenance on your lawnmower to have it ready to go for spring.
- Rake leaves that may smother your existing grass, or if you only have a few trees, consider mowing the leaves with a mulching blade to break them up into small pieces. These will decompose and act as free fertilizer for your yard.
- Plan some other landscaping activities for early spring.
- Continue to pull weeds.
- If you mow, be sure to keep the blade on the highest setting, and do not remove more than one 1/3 of the grass height at a time, to prevent shocking the plant. Apply new landscaping mulch to shrub/flower beds for a fresh look and great curb appeal.

Until next time...

**PJ Fronczkiewicz**



## CONTACTS

### Board of Directors

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### Newsletter/Website

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### Property Manager

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### Community Watch

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### Social Committee

Shay Jenkins  
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To Submit your articles and ideas for the newsletter visit <http://steelecreekhoa.org> and click on Newsletter

## Common Community Complaints/Concerns

The board of directors would like to reiterate the following:

**Pet Owners:** Bring a poop scoop or plastic bag to clean up after pets when walking them. Remember, Charlotte leash law requires dogs be on a leash or contained in a fence.

**Trespassing:** Parents, don't allow your children to ride bikes or walk through other's yards. It's disrespectful.

**Litter:** is still a major problem. Parents PLEASE encourage your children not to litter and let's set good examples by not littering ourselves.

**Garbage Cans:** On the **day of** collection, promptly return garbage cans to the rear of the home or out of sight from the street after pickup. (See covenants for more details including fines for violation.) Covenants are available on our website.

**For Sale Signs:** The current Declaration of Covenants and city ordinance require that signs advertising your home for sale or garage sales must be placed **ONLY in your yard (not at street corners or the entrance)**. The only exception is temporary signs on weekends for yard sales and open houses. Please remove these signs promptly after your event or you will be fined. See our website to advertise personal items for sale.

## Stuff Your Turkey, Not Your Drain Pipes

Cooking grease and oils poured down kitchen sinks is the leading cause of sanitary sewer overflows in Charlotte. The grease accumulates in sewer pipes as it cools and can clog private plumbing or the City's sewer system. These blocked pipes lead to overflows from street manholes or backups into homes and apartments causing property damage and pollute our creeks and streams, but they are preventable. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities reminds residents to properly dispose of grease and oils this Holiday Season:

- \* Cool leftover fats, oil and grease in a lidded container, and throw it in the trash.
- \* To help solidify grease, freeze your container, or add coffee grounds or kitty litter before disposing.
- \* Residents also may recycle grease at any full-service Mecklenburg County Recycling Center.

If Charlotteans see or suspect a sewer overflow, Utilities encourages them to report it to 311.

## Steele Creek Website

Logon to our HOA website at <http://steelecreekhoa.org> to:

1. Sign up for regular email updates (view our privacy policy)
2. Advertise your business or items for sale (view classifieds)
3. Get important announcements and event information
4. View or download HOA Declaration of Covenants & Bylaws
5. Get quick access to important contacts
6. Send feedback to our Board of Directors or other committees
7. View past newsletter issues