

What's Flowing in the Creek

Volume 1, Issue 4

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Welcome to the Fall 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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Streetlight Update



Residents, as of Sept. 9, our HOA has collected more than the required amount of signatures for our streetlight placement petition. We are now in the final phase which is the collection of the assessment that pays for the fixtures. The invoices for the assessment will be billed in two \$90 installments due in October and November. Please pay these assessments promptly as **'late fees'** will be assessed. Considering the increase in crime and vandalism (see page 2) our community has suffered, **we desperately need streetlights**. In the meantime, please continue to leave your outside lights on at night, monitor your surroundings, and **dial 911** to report suspicious activity.

Litter in the Creek

Attention Steele Creek !! Why is there so much trash in our community? Have we forgotten our manners? Do we not care about the appearance of our neighborhood or our property value? Trash is on the curbs, in streets, yards, driveways, and common areas. We have particularly seen an increase in candy wrappers, soda cans and snack bags since the start of school. Parents, please talk to your children and ask them not to litter. Set a good example by not littering yourself and by keeping your own yards free of trash. Recent email discussions from the community have brought some good ideas to the table for our Board of Directors to consider for controlling litter. However they each have pros and cons. There will be more discussion and hopefully some solutions presented at our

annual community meeting in November. Some ideas are:

1. Report litter bugs by calling 704-336-4465
2. Put trash cans at bus stops
3. Increase HOA dues to cover costs to employ a cleaning company
4. Fine all parents of children at bus stops with litter
5. Create a cleanup committee for each street to clean weekly
6. Install video cameras
7. Report littering children at bus stops to CMS . Note: CMS has advised the HOA that **children will lose their privilege to ride school buses** if they are found to litter or cause damage to personal property while at bus stops. If your home is at a bus stop and you witness these activities, call the appropriate school to report it. All school phone numbers can be found on our HOA website. **Note: NC litter law penalties begin at a \$100 fine and 4-8 hours of community service.**

Speed Hump Update

Our Board of Directors is still working hard to control speeding within our community. Despite new 25-mph limit signs recently posted, the City of Charlotte has indicated that radar tracking shows continued

excessive speeding on Steele Meadow and Cades Cove. We have therefore been moved to the next stage of obtaining speed humps. The City covers 100% of the cost. We hope to have the petition from the City

by late spring and will communicate additional information once received. In the meantime: **REPORT SPEEDERS in our community by calling the CMPD Traffic Hotline at 704-432-2120.**

Did You Know?



John Perdue...is no longer with Keystone. If you have questions related to your property, see Tim Price at the construction trailer or the Keystone sales agent in the model home.



GARBAGE LIDS

Have a broken garbage can lid? Simply call 311 to request a free replacement or repair



APARTMENT CONSTRUCTION

Alta Steele Creek is the new Apartment Complex currently under construction adjacent to Steele Creek. For additional details, please see the Steele Creek website announcement page. Look for the 7/25/07 update.

VIOLATION OF DECLARATIONS AND VANDALISM

Residents, did you know that the NC Planned Community Act (enacted Sept. 2004) gives HOAs the legal power “to impose reasonable fines” for violation of the Declarations and By-laws? With that said, it has come to the attention of our HOA that certain activities are taking place that represent an outright crime or a violation of the Steele Creek Bylaws. A couple of weeks ago, several homeowners’ fences were spray painted with **gang graffiti** (similar to what has happened in some other Charlotte neighborhoods recently). We have learned that a ‘certain group’ of our own neighborhood teens who have been spotted roaming our streets during late night and early hours were likely the culprits. Where are their parents? The city has established a curfew for public areas. Now, our Board is strongly considering enacting a community curfew in our Bylaws so that we may legally call the police on these children to keep them off our streets after a decent hour. Expect to hear more on the curfew if these types of acts continue. We also have incidents where resident’s garage doors have been shot at with a firearm. Even I have picked up fired gun shells in my own driveway. **Our Bylaws Article 8 Section D, clearly state “discharging of firearms is strictly prohibited” in our community.** There is no need to state the dangers of firearms. Clearly, whoever is committing these

random acts of vandalism simply must stop !! Our community will not tolerate this. The perpetrators will eventually be exposed, fined by the HOA, and dealt with by police. Our **CMPD community officer Brian Hofert advises: Get to know your neighbors and take the initiative to look out for each other. Share stories and learn what is happening in our community. Leave front/back porch lights on at night. If you hear noises outside or dogs barking late at night, get up to see what is happening. If something seems suspicious, call the police immediately.** You just may prevent your neighbor’s or your own property from being damaged. Criminals don’t want to be in neighborhoods where people are constantly calling the police on them. Our board of directors will discuss options for hiring **security patrol** at the November community meeting. Obviously IF this step is necessary, it will cause an **increase in HOA dues.** **NOTE:** If you want to add additional security to your home, replace your existing outdoor lights with **motion detector lights or add landscaped lighting** near windows/doors. Also consider a **home video security system.** Weatherproof video security systems with night vision, color, two cameras, and wireless technology are available for around \$150 at Wal-Mart and are simple to install.

Street Parking and Junk Vehicles

The HOA is happy to report some residents have already received warnings tickets issued by police, received fines from the city, or had their vehicles towed for parking violations. Thanks concerned neighbors for your efforts! Please continue to call 311 or the police to report parking violations. Parking on lawns and curbs violates the city parking ordinance. You can search details on this and

other city ordinances online at: <http://www.charmeck.org>. Street parking also continues to be a big problem when cars are parked on both sides of the street. It makes it very difficult to pass. Please be considerate and use all available space in your driveways. Also encourage your guests to use available space in your driveway. Additionally, it is unlawful to have a junk motor vehicle parked on

private or public streets or in front or side yards. A **junk vehicle** is defined as one not having a valid inspection sticker, missing required parts for operation, is partially dismantled or wrecked, is more than 5 years old and appears to worth less than \$100, etc. If you spot such a vehicle in our community, please report it by calling 311 or call a tow company.

FALL LAWN CARE submitted by PJ Fronczkiewicz

Tall Fescue is a common lawn grass in the Charlotte area and in our Steele Creek neighborhood. Early fall, when daytime temperatures are between 60 and 75 degrees, is the best time to plant Tall Fescue. For us, that typically means October. Timing is everything - planting in the fall gives the roots more time to establish than spring planting, making it more likely to withstand the heat and stress of summer.

Follow these practical suggestions in late September to early October to have a beautiful lawn this fall and winter that will carry over to spring:

1. Two weeks before planting, kill weeds with a non-selective herbicide, such as Round-up. Be careful to avoid spraying grass you want to keep (it will be killed too!).
2. Core aeration is critical for breaking up compacted soil and introducing oxygen to the soil, which creates a healthy lawn. The day of or the day before planting, aerate your entire yard with a core aerator, or "plugger". These can be rented for roughly \$50 per day. It will only take about an hour, so several neighbors can split the cost and make good use of the rental. Lawn care companies can also do the work for about the same price. Keep a lookout for their flyers and special offers in your mailbox. The day before you aerate, mow your lawn to 2 - 2.5 inches, and water well in order to soften the ground for the aerator.
3. Bare spots should be raked or tilled to further break up the soil for the seed. Ideally, soil amendments such as compost should be tilled into the existing soil, but raking is better than nothing.
4. Buy and spread good quality Tall Fescue seed. For bare patches or very thin lawns, plan on spreading 5 - 10 lbs of seed per 1000 square feet of lawn. Most lawns in our neighborhood are between 5000 and 7000 square feet, so 50 lbs of seed will do. However, if your lawn is already in pretty good shape and you just want to rejuvenate it, use a rate of 3 - 5 lbs / 1000 square feet, or about 25 lbs.
5. Spread fertilizer at the rate recommended on the bag. Make sure it is "slow release" fertilizer. While most balanced fertilizers will work, now is a good time to use a "starter fertilizer" that has extra phosphorus to encourage root development.
6. If necessary, spread lime pellets to increase the pH of your soil to make it more favorable for growing Tall Fescue. A soil test is recommended and can more accurately determine if you should add lime. Chances are with acidic clay type soil being common in our area, if it has been a while since lime was added to your lawn, you should be perfectly safe to apply 20 lbs per 1000 sq ft, or in most cases, 100 to 140 lbs per yard.
7. Rake soil over the seeds in bare spots, so that they are covered to a depth of 1/8 - 1/4 inch.
8. LIGHTLY cover newly seeded bare spots with wheat straw. Use 1 bale of wheat straw for every 1000 square foot.
9. Apply an initial inch of water to soak everything in. Keep the seeds moist for 2 weeks with frequent, short, daily watering (1/4 inch of water).
10. After 2 weeks, water every other day for a week, then twice a week for two weeks (1/2 inch of water), then once a week (1 inch of water). If it rains, skip the watering. Mow to 3 - 3.5 inches when the new grass grows to 4 inches. After this, mow as high as your mower will allow, never removing more than 1/3 of the grass blade height at a time. Mowing too short causes the grass to expend it's energy repairing itself rather than sinking it's roots deeper into the soil. In fact, mowing fescue too low can shock the plant and kill it. Mowing high with a sharp blade will create a healthier, thicker lawn with fewer weeds and other problems.

With a day or two of moderate to hard work followed by periodic maintenance, you can create a beautiful and rewarding lawn. Besides the great feeling of accomplishment, landscaping can add 15% to the value of your home! Help make Steele Creek the most attractive neighborhood in Southwest Charlotte by investing in your yard this fall.





CONTACTS

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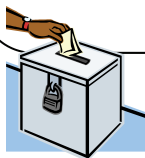
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To Submit your articles and ideas for the newsletter visit <http://steelecreekhoa.org> and click on Newsletter

Watch your mail later this fall for notice of our November meeting. We will elect a new Board member and discuss pertinent community issues.



Steele Creek Night Out !!

Our first ever Steele Creek Night held on August 11 was a big success thanks to the Charlotte Mecklenburg Fire and Police departments, the Crime Watch Committee, and all the wonderful neighbors who came out to show their support for a crime free neighborhood. Thanks to Donessa & Jeff Fletcher, we have a wonderful photo slideshow of the big event at:

<http://www.photoshow.com/watch/wT8Wg8jZ>

FOR SALE SIGNS

Residents, we are still having problems with unsightly garage sale signs posted on street name signs or speed limit signs. Real estate signs are still being posted at the entrance and corners then left for the HOA to remove. The current Declaration of Covenants require that signs advertising such sales be placed **ONLY in your yard (not at street corners or at the entrance)**. Please note: the Board is considering a change to the Declarations that will allow such signs but with specific regulations on the quality of the signs, how/where to post signs and when they should be removed. Violation penalties will still be assessed. More details will follow when a decision has been made. For now, continue to follow current guidelines.

Steele Creek Website

Residents, 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
4. View or download HOA Declaration of Covenants & Bylaws
5. Get quick access to important contacts
6. Provide feedback to our Board of Directors or other committees

Street Washing

In response to complaints of an overwhelming amount of mud from trucks involved with our neighborhood construction and development, our Board of Directors brought the issue to the attention of Keystone. Keystone has indicated that the community is now undergoing street cleaning on Steele Meadow and Anna Rose Road twice a week, and Elm Bend once every two weeks. If you live on these streets and this is not happening, please email the Board.

A Letter From Our Neighbors at Jacobsen



Dear Neighbor,

On Tuesday, September 25, 2007, Jacobsen, A Textron Company will be hosting an outdoor gathering at our location on Quality Drive. That evening, between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m., we will have a band performing as live entertainment for our guests. Since our relationship with you and our reputation as a good neighbor are important to us, we want to make sure you are aware of our plans. We realize this date falls in the middle of the week during the school year, and have taken this into consideration. The music will be in accordance with all Mecklenburg County Noise Ordinances and will be over by 8 p.m. in order to allow you and your family to enjoy a peaceful night. If you have any questions or comments in regards to this event, please call Amanda Bostian at 704-714-6109. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in regards to this event.

Sincerely,
Sharon DeWolfe
Events Specialist
Jacobsen, A Textron Company