

MESSAGE FROM GARY NEUBAUER, PRESIDENT

After a challenging summer last year, the Board has assessed our landscaping needs and is making some slight alterations in our approach to maintaining the beauty and functionality of our entrance areas. I think you will agree with me that the entrances look beautiful this year – a nice bed of mulch and wonderful colors make quite the impression when passing these areas.

Most of the rest of my message will focus on the pond.

1. We have updated our pond usage and visitor guidelines. Changes have been highlighted and underlined.

For those not living on the pond, it can be accessed by an easement area on Lillian Dr. between house numbers 2309 and 2313. The pond is surrounded by rip rap that serves a vital role in maintaining the integrity of the shoreline while enhancing the appearance of the pond. Visitors to the pond are prohibited from walking on the rip rap and the rocks should be kept in place to mitigate erosion and help with drainage. While the pond's primary function is to serve as a water retention area, we also want members and guests to enjoy the pond safely and responsibly. Accordingly, there are certain restrictions on the use of the pond to promote safety and to minimize liability concerns as follows:

- Swimming in the pond is prohibited.
- Using watercraft (including, but not limited to, boats, canoes, rafts, kayaks and paddleboats) on the pond is prohibited.
- Throwing rip rap rocks in the pond is prohibited.
- The rip rap can be unstable, therefore, accessing it is prohibited.
- Skating on or accessing the pond in the winter is prohibited.
- Use of bicycles, including motorized bicycles, around the pond is prohibited. Members and authorized guests may access the pond by bicycle via the easement, but all bicycles must be parked by the pond utility shed.
- The pond and easement area is to be left as it was found. No trash shall be left behind.
- Those using the pond shall avoid entering any member's property without specific prior approval of the member.
- We have seen an increase in ducks and geese in and around the pond. The waterfowl can be a nuisance, so please refrain from feeding them.
- **Anyone violating the above guidelines and restrictions does so at their own risk.**

In addition, the Association has instituted the following guest policies:

- There is no limit on the number of guests a member may invite to use the pond when the member is present with guests at the pond. If there are many members/guests using the pond, they are asked to be respectful of the members living around the pond.
- There is a limit of two unaccompanied guests at the pond. Unaccompanied guests cannot invite additional friends/acquaintances to use the pond without a specific member invitation. Guests

should be informed they may be asked which member extended the invitation, and the Association may reach out to the member to confirm.

- If a member wishes to extend an open-ended invitation to unaccompanied guests, they shall notify the Association of such invitation and provide the names of each guest so invited. The notification shall be made to the Association President via email, text or phone call.
 - If a member intends to invite more than two unaccompanied guests, the member shall specifically request permission from the Association in advance. Such permission will be reasonably granted if the member provides the number of guests invited and explains their relationship to the guest(s). The request shall be made to the Association President.
 - Homeowners around the pond are not expected to monitor compliance with these guidelines. However, any such homeowner may ask visitors the name of the member who invited them to use the pond. If any visitor does not have a member invitation, they will be asked to leave.
 - Any guest found to be in violation of the above stated guidelines will be asked to leave.
2. The rip rap around the pond has held up very well over the past 20 or so years. However, certain areas have suffered some erosion and need to be addressed. The Board has approved working with the company that originally installed the rip rap to repair areas in need. This project will take place in the late fall when the ground is firmer, and the extent of the repairs will be determined later with budgetary constraints in mind.
 3. The pond was stocked with fish a number of years ago. The Department of Natural Resources recommends that a pond our size has approximately 40-45 pounds of fish removed annually to avoid overpopulation. It is our understanding that most who fish the pond utilize a catch-and-release approach and, as such, there is no removal of fish from our pond. Overpopulation can be identified through an expensive fish count, but there are other signs this is occurring. One is that we start to see dead fish because there are not enough nutrients and oxygen to support the number of fish in the pond. To date, this has not occurred. Another sign is that fish growth is stunted (the fish do not get as big as they should). We know this is occurring. In order to help mitigate the situation in a cost-effective manner, the Board has approved stocking the pond with three sterile Muskies. Muskie will eat the smaller fish, thereby helping to effectively manage the fish population. The Muskie are evasive and hard to catch, but they can grow to be 30 pounds and they have teeth. Anyone catching a Muskie should be very careful removing the hook and should return the Muskie to the pond.
 4. The Board has developed three documents to help educate members about various issues relating to the pond. These documents are being posted to the FMW website and are as follows
 - FMW Common Area and Pond Maintenance Requirements
 - FMW Pond History and Purpose
 - FMW Pond Usage Guidelines (revised 2026)

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Project Safe Neighborhoods - This program allows residents to register the locations of their outdoor video surveillance systems with the Springfield Police Department. When an incident occurs, police will be able to identify the locations of nearby video cameras and enlist residents to help officers collect video evidence and follow up on leads. More information is available on the City of Springfield website ([City of Springfield, IL City of Springfield - Home of Abraham Lincoln](#)).

There is a new feature on the City website ([City of Springfield, IL City of Springfield - Home of Abraham Lincoln](#)) called "See' Click, Fix", a one-stop shop for citizen concerns on a variety of issues. See the city website for more details.

FMW residents are eligible to participate in the City's free large item pickup program, making it easy to dispose/donate bulky household items responsibly. This program is available to residents who pay the \$4.50 monthly waste and recycling fee. Residents can schedule a curbside pickup by calling 217-523-2710 or by going to the City website ([City of Springfield, IL City of Springfield - Home of Abraham Lincoln](#)).

If you have old cans of paint stashed in your basement or garage, you can now recycle latex paint products and oil-based architectural paint products at numerous retail hardware and paint stores as a result of the Paint Stewardship Act launched in late 2025. Among the stores participating in the Springfield area are Ace Hardware, R.P. Lumber and Sherwin-Williams stores as well as the PPG store on S. Sixth Street (Full disclosure: I took a number of old paint cans to the Sherwin-Williams store on Hedley and Koke Mill and the entire process went seamlessly).

Some of the following news has been presented in the past but is worth repeating as reminders to us all.

The Neighborhood Police Officer for Ward 7 that encompasses FMW is Joshua Davis. Please feel free to contact him by phone at 217-891-1526 or email at Joshua.Davis@springfield.il.us with any appropriate concerns. Other helpful phone numbers include:

Police Non-Emergency: (217) 788-8311

Public Works Dispatch: (217) 789-2246

CWLP Electrical Outage: (217) 789-2121

Water Service Outage or Emergency: (217) 789-2323 ext 2

The FMW Facebook page is a great way to connect with other residents in our neighborhood whether it be photos, announcements, questions, concerns, or general discussions. Consider joining the group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/4963912290403205>.

Now that Summer is in full swing many of our neighbors are outside walking, pushing the stroller, walking the dog or just enjoying the nice weather. Let's be good neighbors and be mindful of the stop signs and speed limits in our community to ensure the safety of everyone.

For the past several years FMW has had a tradition that sets our community apart from other neighborhoods in Springfield; flying a flag over the Fourth of July weekend. It's truly an impressive sight

to see Old Glory flying proudly throughout our neighborhood. See the FMW website (foxmeadowswest.com) for pictures from past years. This year as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States, please consider flying an American flag at your home either from a flagpole, putting one or more flags in your yard, or flying one from your house or mailbox. It's a tremendous opportunity to show our pride in FMW and our nation.

Fox Tales is looking to update the pictures on the FMW website. Please send any photos (Fall, Winter, holiday, nature/weather) to Chuck Coleman, (chuckcoleman@msn.com), so they can be included on the FMW website.

Fox Tales is always looking for activities that can promote a sense of community here in our neighborhood. Block parties, house walks, progressive dinners, "First Fridays", book clubs, kid's activities? Send your thoughts to me, Bill Bentivegna, at the email listed below. Let's get to know each other and build our community.

FMW WEBSITE

Just a reminder that the Fox Meadows West Property Owners Association website can be found at www.foxmeadowswest.com.

EDITOR

Please feel free to share any questions, comments, contributions or suggestions with me at BbentivegnaFMW@gmail.com
Bill Bentivegna