



Cottonwood Meadows Homeowners Association

Community News • 4th Quarter Fall 2011



You're Invited to the Annual General Membership Meeting

The annual meeting of the Association is scheduled for the month of **November 2011**. The main purpose is to hold Board member elections and present the 2012 budget. **In order to meet the quorum requirement, we need a majority of the homeowners to vote.** To vote, homeowners must be in good standing with their assessments/dues.

Stay tuned for additional information as we confirm the date, location and time. **You will receive a formal notice in the mail within 10 days prior to the meeting.**



Kudos to Homeowners for Keeping Lawns Looking Nice!

A big thanks to all of the homeowners and residents who kept their yards looking great throughout the summer months. The Board appreciates your hard work and diligence in keeping your yard (and the community) looking great.

Snow-shoveling Reminder!

Cleared sidewalks provide a safe way for pedestrians in our community (especially children, people with disabilities and senior citizens) to get around. Property owners should also be aware they may be held liable for claims resulting from an un-cleared sidewalk. If you live near the mailbox clusters, it is your responsibility to clear that area as well.



The Holiday Season

As the days start getting shorter and the nights cooler, we realize that the fall season is upon us in Colorado. Soon the Aspens will be turning to the native Colorado gold and we will take our family treks into the mountains to enjoy the beautiful colors and the early snows... Did someone say "Ski Season?" Thanksgiving and Christmas are not far behind. The Board would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a fun and safe fall and a happy holiday season with their friends and families.

Fall and Winter Yard Maintenance

We know last winter was tough on a lot of lawns. We wanted to suggest a few things to do to help your lawn make it to next spring. First, if you haven't aerated your lawn in a couple of years, please do so, as the lawn needs to breathe. Do that in September or early October and then follow up with winterizing fertilizer and water well before the ground freezes. This will allow the roots to grow or take hold before winter. Also, over-seed if you have some thin spots or areas that need some repair. Finally, when there are warm days in the winter and very early in the spring, give the lawn a good soaking again. As long as the water is not draining off of the lawn and into the streets, it is soaking into the sod. It will help the roots get moisture for an early start in the spring. Remember, the time you invest in your lawn this fall will help earn you lush, healthier grass next spring.



Home Maintenance FYI

Just a friendly reminder regarding homes with window wells. Check the drains in the window wells and make sure they are not capped which can prevent water from draining properly. And, make sure you have a drain grate on the pipe located in the center window up against the foundation. During some of the heavy rains this year, some homeowners had issues with water getting into their basements and we wanted to pass this information along.



Fall Tip

Your gutters are an important part in keeping your home in good working order. Did you know that clogged gutters can lead to everything from roof damage to a flooded basement?

The gutters should be collecting the water from your roof and safely diverting it down and away from the house. Clogged gutters mean the water will not flow away from the house and will fall right next to your foundation. Heavy rains could then lead to water entering your basement. Even worse, this could pose a significant problem in freezing weather when the water freezes and you end up with heavy ice dams on your roof. The weight and leaking water can also cause significant roof damage.

Cleaning your gutters is as easy as getting a ladder and going up and pulling out all of the junk that has collected in there. A pair of gloves makes this job a little more enjoyable. If you live in an area surrounded by trees you may have significant buildup in the fall as the leaves drop, so you might want to do this chore a few times. And don't neglect the downspouts. These can also get clogged and they are vital in moving the water away from the house. If you can't see if they are clogged you can take a small bucket of water up and dump it down the spout and see how fast the water flows out at the bottom. If it doesn't rush right out there might be some blockage. You can try using a long pole or pipe of some sort to dislodge what's in there. If you can't reach it you might want to opt for replacing the downspout. The materials are fairly inexpensive and it's usually a simple job.

Pumpkin Cupcakes

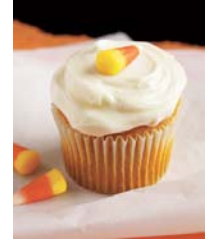
Ingredients

● CUPCAKES:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup canned pumpkin

CREAM CHEESE FROSTING:

- 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1 8-ounce package cream cheese
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- Yellow and red food coloring
- Pretzel nuggets (stems)



Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 350° and line a 12-cup muffin tin with bake cups. In a large mixing bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and salt. Set the mixture aside.
2. In a separate mixing bowl, stir together the oil and sugar. Whisk in the eggs and stir in the vanilla extract.
3. Pour the wet ingredients over the dry ingredients and gently stir the mixture until well combined. Explain to your child that s/he should stir only until there are no longer any pockets or streaks of flour.
4. Stir the pumpkin into the batter until it is thoroughly combined. Spoon the batter into the lined muffin tins. Bake for 20 minutes or until a knife inserted in the middle of one cupcake comes out clean. Let the cupcakes sit in the tin for 10 minutes and then remove to a rack to cool thoroughly.
5. Meanwhile, make the Cream Cheese Frosting. In a medium-size mixing bowl, beat together the confectioners' sugar, cream cheese, butter, and lemon juice until smooth. Add about 12 drops of yellow food coloring and 4 drops of red food coloring and beat until the frosting turns orange.
6. For authentic-looking pumpkins, pipe on the frosting to resemble a pumpkin's ridges. Fill a sealable plastic bag with frosting, snip a small hole in the corner, and pipe curved lines over each cupcake. (An easier option is simply to frost each cupcake orange and draw ridges from top to bottom with a butter knife.) Use pretzel nuggets for the pumpkin stems and cut flattened green gumdrops into leaves. Makes 12 cupcakes.

Seasons Greetings