

Hi Neighbor!

Happy New Year! But really, how can it be the middle of January already?

This means it's time for the neighborhood's quarterly Board Meeting! I'd like to reiterate that you are very welcome to come to our first quarterly meeting of 2026, especially this one, this year. We have some news for you that we are sure you'll want to hear. The agenda will be out soon to give you some idea of what to expect.

In the meantime, I'm so pleased to let you know that the pond special project (assessment) has been completed. The pond drain facilitates an additional 4"-6" water level, so dredging can be delayed and more properly planned. The spillway has been replaced, and the "keyway" into it from the siltation basin has been replaced with a new and improved solid wall. Even though a confirmed sighting of an adult muskrat means we've called the wildlife trapper, this wall won't be penetrable, unlike the rock wall. The old bridge has been replaced with a new, more easily accessible bridge. Just like when cleaning your house, there are some areas that still need to be addressed. They've been planned for but must wait for either the equipment or optimum weather for the final "icing on the cake". The fence will have a removable section once parts are installed. Eight slabs of the walking path around the pond will be replaced. The bridge will be stained once the pretreated wood accepts the stain, later in the spring or summer. And, lastly, when the season is right, the bare ground will be contoured and seeded.

Even though the weather has recently been warmer, three new KEEP OFF THE ICE signs have been purchased and placed. As a reminder, please advise your grandchildren or friends that the rocks around the pond are called "rip rap" and help prevent erosion and stabilize the shoreline from heavy runoff. As tempting as it might be, they are not skipping stones.

You may have noticed that the fall cleanup was not as smooth as in years past. It was a strange year for the weather, with the leaves falling early but not fully, and the maidenhair grasses were not trimmed.

You also made it clear that our lawn care service had deteriorated over the last year, with incomplete and inconsistent mowing and trimming. Over-edging, skipped/thin fertilizer treatment, damaged walls, and lawns with ruts were also reported. Snow removal service and response were not acceptable in both 2024 and 2025.

With any type of service, we can always expect mistakes, but what really matters is how a company recovers from them. Are they responsive? Do they listen? Are there compromises? Is there respect for the customer? After numerous discussions with Outdoor Solutions, we could not reach an agreement on how to remedy the HOA issues.

With our attorney's advice, the contract with Outdoor Solutions was terminated, effective at the start of this month.

Our new Lawn care and snow removal contractor is Envision Lawn and Tree. They service Alexander Creek, Foxwoods Springs, and Cobblestone (have you seen how they collect the leaves?). You may see them in the neighborhood before the mowing season begins, as they get a head start on the grasses and the unfinished fall cleanup. Remember, they are learning our neighborhood, and some time will be needed for them to feel comfortable with what we need. As usual, if you experience any problems, be sure to call or email AREA so they can correct them.

They will be at the meeting on Thursday to share more about their work and address any questions you may have. Please come so you can hear it firsthand.

I'm so looking forward to this year in the neighborhood. I hope you are, too!