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Picture perfect: 'Treasured Lands' photo exhibit featured at Meadow Lakes

By Mike Morsch, Executive editor Jan 13, 2017 Updated Jan 13, 2017



Meadow Lakes is inviting the outside in.

The senior living community in East Windsor has partnered with the Hightstown Parks and Recreation Department to host "Treasured Lands," a traveling photographic exhibit of all 59 national parks in the United States.

The exhibit, which will be on display at Meadow Lakes through the end of January, is helping celebrate the 100th anniversary of the U.S. National Park Service, which was created in 1916 by Congress through the National Park Service Organic Act, and also the 100th anniversary of Springpoint Communities, which owns Meadow Lakes.

Meadow Lakes is one of only three venues on the East Coast that has hosted the exhibit in the past two years.

"When you see it, it's really spectacular," said Stacey Judge, community wellness program director for Springpoint Senior Living and chairwoman of the Hightstown Parks and Recreation Department. "This exhibit gives us a better appreciation of our parks and nature. The winter is a great time to think about visiting a park, even if the weather is not so good. Or even to visit a park virtually, through this exhibit."

Ms. Judge was looking for a way to marry her full-time job at Springpoint with her role as chair of the Parks and Recreation Department. Meadow Lakes has something called The Academy, which is a lifelong learning component of its Wellness Program. The Academy at Meadow Lakes delivers themed education throughout the year through a group of retired college professors and experts in different fields that put together courses for Meadow Lakes residents.

Once a year, The Academy opens up to the public and offers things like the “Treasured Lands” exhibit or similar themed events usually related to nature and the natural world.

Ms. Judge approached Paul Rockman, resident director of The Academy, and Jay Whiteman, executive director of Meadow Lakes, about possibly hosting the photo exhibit, and they both agreed that it was a good idea. She also approached the Hightstown Parks and Recreation Department to see if it would be interested in partnering with Meadow Lakes to offer the exhibit for public viewing and got agreement there as well.

So she contacted the exhibit photographer, QT Luong, and secured the hosting opportunity.

“I don’t think when we were looking at it on the Internet that we realized how spectacular the photos were until we got them hung and had the placards up” said Ms. Judge. “The placards not only describe the park and where the photo was taken but also have some of the artists’ feelings, emotions and impressions on how they got the shot. It’s so impressive.”

There is no charge for the public to view the exhibit. It is available for viewing on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays between 2 and 3 p.m. through the end of January. Meadow Lakes residents have volunteers to serve as docents to guide the public through the exhibit, which features 59 photos with descriptive placards on each one. It takes about an hour to view the entire exhibit.

Ms. Judge said Meadow Lakes and the Hightstown Parks and Recreation Department are planning an invitation-only reception the night before the exhibit is taken down at the end of the month. Although it won’t be billed as a fundraiser per se, those attending may take the opportunity to make a contribution that would benefit the parks and recreation department.

“We want to make sure people in the community get a chance to see this exhibit,” said Ms. Judge. “I’d had people come through here who have been to many of these locations and are just in awe of the photographs. It’s an opportunity to virtually visit a park, or even revisit some memories.”

For the open public viewing time, call Meadow Lakes concierge desk at (609) 448-4100. The address is 300 Etra Road and the website is www.meadowlakesonline.org. For information about the Treasured Lands exhibit, <http://treasuredlandsproject.com>.