

Volume 05, Issue 4

April 2005

The Hickory Farms Newsletter

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*Hickory Farms Community Association
Fairfax County, Virginia*

President's Letter

Dear Neighbors,

By the time you read this letter, I sure hope Spring will have sprung. March came in like a lion, but hasn't turned into much of a lamb at this time.

The Spring will bring several exciting activities. Pete Scala is once again organizing the Spring Yard Sale. Please read the article inside for more information. We will have our Spring Clean-up, as well as a social event. More information will be forthcoming, both via the monthly newsletter as well as the list server.

The Neighborhood has decided, decisively, against a speed bump on Still Meadow Rd. However, there are a number of other traffic-calming measures that we are exploring (see article in the newsletter).

Foremost, though, it comes down to you. With kids out and about this time of the year, please remember that we are a community with lots of families and children. Be vigilant, be careful, and please slow down through the neighborhood streets.

Have a wonderful Spring, and I hope to see you out and about at our events over the next couple of months.

Sincerely,
Jeff Altman

Inside this issue:

President's Letter

Neighborhood News

Treasurer's Report

Pool Memberships

**Community Yard
Sale**

Neighborhood Watch

**Springtime in
Hickory Farms**

**Home Improvement
Information**

Assessment Notice

REMINDER: Hickory Farms HOA annual dues were due March 31. Dues are \$100. Late fees are \$25, and are charged based on postmark date. If you have any questions, please contact Hickory Farms' Treasurer, Jamie Gutierrez, at jagutierrez1@cox.net.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Speed Bump Update

The Board has decided against having a Speed Bump put in on Still Meadow. We are exploring other "traffic calming" tools. Sharon Bulova's office is providing information that will help, and these will be explored over the next several months. Thanks to all residents who provided input.

New Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

Dave Dempster has volunteered to take on the role of Neighborhood Watch Coordinator. Dave will be joining the Board, effective immediately. Thanks to Marc Fogleman for his leading this effort over the past several years, and to Bob Cosgriff for stepping in as temporary Coordinator during the past couple months.

Watch volunteers are also welcome. Please contact Dave if you are interested in helping out in this critical area of the Community.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Jaime Gutierrez

As of March 18, 2005 we have received the annual dues from 147 homeowners—the equivalent of 74% of the 198 homeowners in Hickory Farms. Hopefully, by the time you read this notice all dues have been received by the dateline of March 31, 2005. Unfortunately, if you forgot to send your dues, you will be assessed a \$25 late fee.

Included with this newsletter is a form to fill out and include with your dues payment. It will be very helpful if you include the lot number in this form.



POOL TIME IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!

Join the Fairfax Swimming Pool (home of the Fairfax Frogs Swim and Dive Teams)! This is our community pool and it's only a block or so away on Roberts Road. Memberships are available now for families and individuals. An open house will be held Memorial Day weekend. Watch for signs at the pool for details. For more information, contact Mike Maloney at 703-578-8844.

COMMUNITY YARD SALE!!!

Hickory Farms Community Association will have a coordinated yard sale on

Saturday, May 21

8 AM to 12 Noon

HFCA will arrange advertising, and will provide maps showing participating yards.

You will search your basements, attics, garages, and sheds for stuff you want to get rid of, and be ready to start selling at 8:00 AM on Saturday September 21st!

*The fee to participate will be about \$10
(depending on how many participate; it's been \$10 the last five times)
The fee will be collected the morning of the yard sale.*

The way we work it is that each family displays their wares at their own house. The more people in a block, cul-de-sac, or section of street participate, the more likely you are to get hordes of customers. We looked at doing the yard sale in a common area, but it would be way too hard for you, and way too hard for me.

We try to pick up leftovers and take them to the dump or to Goodwill (depending on their condition). However, volunteers are doing the pickup, and they won't pickup your weekly garbage, they won't pick up really heavy stuff, and they stop when their trucks are full.

HFCA needs **young men and women** to hand out flyers *for a nominal wage* and to help with picking up leftovers and taking them to Goodwill or the dump.

We also need **volunteers with pickup trucks and a licensed driver** to volunteer to drive the rental truck that will pick up your leftovers and take them to Goodwill or the dump.

Contact Pete Scala at (703) 764-0730 or pscala@cox.net to sign up.

Some keys to yard sale success

- 1. Select worthwhile items to sell.** You may have some true junk to sell; but your chances of selling it, or anything else; go up if you get people to look at your stuff by having good things out there.
- 2. Prepare your merchandise ahead of time.** Wash and press clothes, dust and polish furniture, paint and oil old bikes, etc. This can make your items more sellable.
- 3. Buy some change from the bank ahead of time.** You'll need bills and coins; how much depends on how many things you have for sale, and what prices you pick (if your stuff is all 5.99, 11.59, etc., you better have a lot of pennies).

4. **Put prices on your sale items the night before; use large tags.** People will try to bargain you down, so take that into account when you pick your asking price.
5. **Put out your sale items in an attractive display early on Saturday morning.** Aggressive yard sale shoppers start as early as 6:30 a.m., going from yard sale to yard sale. If you're out there, you can get their business.

Have a chair to sit on and a partner to work with. The day will get long. You might have to take a break. You might want to make up some lemonade the day before, as well.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Hello Neighbors,

I will be assuming the duties of neighborhood watch coordinator from Marc Fogleman. Thanks Marc for your service to our community! If anyone is interested in joining the watch or if you have any questions or problems to report, feel free to contact me at (703) 503-0561 or ddhokies@cox.net.

Below is the watch list for April and May:

Fri	Apr 1	John Kitzmiller	Brand Niemann
Sat	Apr 2	Jeff Lindsay	Larry Rogers
Fri	Apr 8	Angel Meza	Jason Meza
Sat	Apr 9	Kirk Randall	Jerry Tumelty
Fri	Apr 15	Bob Montgomery	George Rosenkranz
Sat	Apr 16	Eric Maribojoc	Clarisa Dacanay
Fri	Apr 22	Pete Scala	Rose Scala
Sat	Apr 23	Rich Pernicano	Steve Mathews
Fri	Apr 29	Pam Barrett	Tom Barrett
Sat	Apr 30	Stan Lee	Jim Marshall
Fri	May 6	Stefan Schwarz	Christine Schwarz
Sat	May 7	Robert Cooke	Lorna Cooke
Fri	May 13	Rob Mikula	Sharon Mikula
Sat	May 14	John Verheul	John Cotner
Fri	May 20	Bob Bentley	Nancy Bentley
Sat	May 21	Ron Cruz	Louise Cruz
Fri	May 27	Larry Russe	Chris Russe
Sat	May 28	Jaime Gutierrez	Ed Wagner

Springtime in Hickory Farms

Spring is here, and that means that Hickory Farms is already sporting its visible signs: early flowers, budding trees and birds. We are very lucky to have the natural setting that attracts songbirds to our neighborhood: fields, trees, and the stream habitat all invite different birds. Over the years, 92 species have been seen in, or flying over, Hickory Farms. As many of you know, but new arrivals may not, we have had a bluebird trail for thirteen years now, and have enjoyed several successful nestings—no small feat for a suburban setting. The boxes are up again (four in the lower common ground and two in the upper). This year, we will put some garden stakes about 4 feet high in the vicinity of the boxes. This is a strategy to attract bluebirds, which need convenient perches from which to watch their nest and look for insects. A few years ago, when we had put out seedling trees to grow, bluebirds used the stakes, so we know this method works. We ask you to remind your children to look at, but don't disturb, either the nest boxes or the stakes. They will be rewarded by seeing these beautiful birds. Nesting usually begins

in late April or early May, but the birds scout the locations even earlier.

If you have a scout troop that would like to do a project, or get credit towards a merit badge, perhaps a bird project would be a good idea, even to donating a nest box or two to augment our current number (we could probably support two or three more boxes). Often, Tree Swallows will take these boxes (we've had one such instance), as will House Wrens, Chickadees, Tufted Titmouse and, unfortunately, the ubiquitous English (or "House") Sparrow. If you're interested, please call Bob Cosgriff (703-764-0720) to discuss proper placement, etc.

We'll keep you posted on any nesting or new sightings. Last year, we added a warbler, the Yellow-breasted Chat, to our Hickory Farms "life list." And on 16 March, two large skeins (as they are called) of Tundra Swans were observed from the lower common grounds heading north over the cemetery.

So get out there and enjoy the coming of spring in Hickory Farms!

Bob Cosgriff

Graduations, births, other special announcements to share? Newsletter items are due the 25th of the month. Send in Word format only to jmaloney@gmu.edu.

HOME IMPROVEMENT INFORMATION

Air Conditioners and Gas Furnaces from \$1,500

Heat Pumps from \$1,800

Water Heaters from \$650

Hickory Farms homeowners get a 20-23% discount from A-1's regular prices. When you call A-1 at 703-451-1100, identify yourself as being with the Hickory Farms group purchase. Offer expires imminently.

Free Stove Replacement Parts

Do you still have an original Hotpoint dual oven stove? Before I trashed mine, I salvaged a number of replacement parts – coils, oven elements, knobs, etc. Free for the asking. Kirk Randall, 703-425-0210

Did You Miss Last Summer's Siding – Window – Roof Group Buy ?

March is the slow time of the year for many contractors, and they want to keep their crews busy. So, Sunshine Contracting is offering the same special deals to those few folks who didn't replace their siding, windows, or roof last summer. Premium vinyl double pane replacement windows are \$400 (up only \$10), gutters/downspouts \$4.21/foot, roofs as little as \$2,300 (up a bit because of material price increases), and siding as little as \$4,900. There is siding, window, and guttering "how to buy" information on the Hickory Farms web page at www.hickoryfarms.org. Select Home Maintenance and Appearance – Purchasing Siding, Gutters and Roofs. The Sunshine contact person is John Enos at 703-499-8654. Kirk Randall has left over product literature and color samples from last summer. You're welcome to pick some up.

Architectural Control Committee is required for siding replacement BEFORE construction begins. Any other change to the exterior appearance of the house also requires ACC approval. Most approvals are received in 1-2 weeks. So, if you're seriously interested, submit your ACC request ASAP. An ACC application appears in most newsletters and is available at www.hickoryfarms.org

Call "Miss Utility" Before You Dig

Miss Utility is a one-call notification center that alerts subscribing underground utility owners of your proposed excavation plans (from private home owners to major developers). This is a free service provided by various local and regional utility companies for the purpose of identifying the location of their underground transmission lines or pipe systems.

For Miss Utility purposes, excavation is anything that disturbs existing grading (any digging, drilling, tilling, fencing, etc.). **Any excavation activity requires a call to MISS UTILITY – this is the law.** By calling MISS UTILITY, you will be able to excavate safely without endangering yourself or others and at the same time avoid disrupting service to yourself, your neighbors and the community as a whole. To submit a location request, call 1-800-552-7001 between the hours of 7 AM and 5 PM, Monday through Friday or visit http://www.missutility.net/northern_virginia.asp. After submitting your request, there is a waiting period of two business days until you can begin any excavation. By that time, all the affected utilities will have marked the ground surface with paint and/or flags indicating their utilities underground position.

The color codes are as follows:

White – Proposed excavation Red – Electric Blue – Water

Orange – Telephone or cable TV Yellow – Gas Green – Sewer

(From www.hickoryfarms.org)

Group Purchase of Tree Removal / Trimming Services – Nearly Over

Over 30 homeowners are participating. JL Tree Service is offering rock bottom prices. Call Michelle or Steve Edwards at 703-753-5001 for a quote, and identify yourself as with Hickory Farms. These prices are good only until the cold weather ends and JL's normal priced business picks up. Mike Martin (Hickory Farms Board Member and Tree Trimming Project Coordinator) – xaviar13@yahoo.com (preferred) or 703-323-3995

Free Plant Clinics

Do you want to now why your plant's leaves are discolored? How to get rid of pests? Why your oak is losing its leaves? Bring your plant and insect samples to a free Neighborhood Plant Clinic. You'll find a

complete list of locations and clinic schedules at www.fairfaxmastergardeners.com/ or you can call the Master Gardener help line at 703-324-8556, TTY 703-222-9693. You can also e-mail <mailto:mgfairfax@vt.edu>. Plant clinics are offered by Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, which is a division of the Fairfax County Department of Community and Recreation Services and Virginia Tech. (Fairfax County)

Water Pipe Insurance Program

The phone number for the Dominion Products water line insurance program given in last month's newsletter was incorrect. The correct number is 1-866-645-9810 or visit http://retail.dom.com/products/warranty/va_waterline.jsp.

Flooring, Tile, & Carpet Contractor Chosen – Act Now!

A group buy is now available to Hickory Farms homeowners and residents for hardwood and tile flooring, carpeting, countertops, and banisters. The company is Chase Floors and Tile in Fairfax. 703-385-8112. www.chasefloorsandtile.com Chase has been in Fairfax for nearly ten years. Their showroom is at 11114 Lee Highway, very close to the Borders bookstore. The installers are employees of Chase and are bonded and insured. A BBB search shows no pending issues, and 1 resolved incident over the past 3 years. They said they have had only 1 incident over 8 years, but I haven't independently confirmed this.

Workmanship – Lifetime warranty on the installation

Discounts – \$1.00 off per square foot of hardwood material – 15% off complete carpet purchase – 15% off tile (material only)

Price Match Offer – Chase will match prices of competitors if it is an apples-to-apples comparison. That is, if the product is installed with a lifetime warranty.

Availability of Service – Immediate. Ask for Sami or Mike and say you're with Hickory Farms. Work can be scheduled quickly. At this time there is no deadline to act, but Chase may cut the deal at any time.

Additional Services – Countertops, banisters, and other flooring materials available. They have a special offer of Brazilian cherry for \$5.99 per square foot, installed. That's less than what the wood usually costs alone.

Contacts – Contracts will be done individually. Experiences, both positive and negative, are encouraged to be shared. Please contact me at rmikula2000@yahoo.com or 703-323-0917.

If you are seriously interested in hardwood flooring, Kirk Randall (703-425-0210) has extra copies of consumer information on the subject. For those who may wish to use an alternative vendor, I've heard recommendations for Claws Carpet in the Twinbrook Shopping Center. I did contact them, but did not hear a follow-up in a timely manner. Robert Mikula (project coordinator) PS - Kirk had Mirage hardwood floors installed by Chase in February and is very pleased.

Join the Hickory Farms e-mail List

If you were registered with the Hickory Farms e-mail group, you would have already received an electronic copy of this newsletter and received other information about our community! Visit www.hickoryfarms.org and click E-mail Service.

Hickory Farms Community Association 2005 Assessment Notice

Please pay by March 31, 2005

The 2005 Hickory Farms Community Association (HFCA) annual assessment is \$100. The assessment is used for maintenance of the common grounds; insurance for the association and Board members; semi-annual neighborhood picnics; the Neighborhood Watch program; and, the costs of managing and operating your Association.

You can help conserve your Association's financial resources—and your own—by submitting your payment in a timely manner. Payments postmarked after the due date will be considered late and will be charged an additional \$25 late fee. In the event an owner's check is returned, the owner will reimburse HFCA for any expenses incurred for the returned check.

This year's assessment of \$100 is due March 31, 2005

The HFCA is committed to maintaining and improving the equality of life in Hickory Farms, to maintaining our property values and to resolving issues of concern to our neighbors. Assessments (and late fees) are collected in accordance with your By-laws to cover Association expenses, which are outlined and approved by the homeowners at each Annual Meeting.

If you are not a property owner and are not responsible for paying the assessment, please forward this notice to the property owner promptly.

Please complete the coupon below, detach and mail it with your check to the address on the coupon.

HFCA 2005 ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

The Assessment of **\$100** is payable by **March 31, 2005**.

Please make your check payable to **HFCA** and mail to:

HFCA
P.O. Box 2239
Fairfax, VA 22031-2239

Your name: _____

Lot Number: _____

Address: _____