

Volume 14 – No. 3

April 2014

The Hickory Farms

Newsletter

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Newsletter & Web Site

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Get Email addresses at

www.hickoryfarms.org

All telephone area
codes are 703-

Hickory Farms Community Association

P.O. Box 2239, Fairfax VA 22031

www.hickoryfarms.org

**Read about how to cut down the
number of robocalls you receive.**

**Termites are swarming this
season. Learn about what to look
for.**

**Fairfax County Police are
monitoring our streets after
receiving many complaints about
speeding and reckless driving.**

**The warm spring weather brings
out the door-to-door solicitors.
Be wary. Read the helpful tips
about how to deal with them.**

Join the Hickory Farms email Group

- Get up-to-the-minute news on neighborhood happenings
- Ask your neighbors to recommend a contractor/repairman
- Locate a lost and found item
- Get an advance copy of this newsletter in PDF format.

Visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HickoryFarms/> -- Click "Join this Group"



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Got a Problem with Noisy or Speeding Trash Trucks??

Some residents have been complaining to the Board of Directors about noisy or speeding trash trucks in the community. Unfortunately, the HFCA has no jurisdiction over noisy or unsafe use of the roads, which are maintained by Virginia Department of Transportation and policed by Fairfax County. However, Fairfax County does have a law that trash may not be picked up before 6 AM. American Disposal seems to be aware of that requirement since their truck usually enters the community from Roberts Road at precisely 6 AM. If you have a problem with early service or trucks that are being operated in a noisy fashion or speeding, please call the trash company itself. The biggest service providers in Hickory Farms are American (703-368-0500) and AAA / Republic (703-818-8222). If you still can't get satisfaction, call Supervisor John Cook's office at 703-425-9300. If the issue is speeding or reckless driving, please call the police at 9-1-1 if the problem continues.

It appears that in our community, these two trash companies have not moved over to the new generation of one-man trash trucks, which have a mechanical arm that is operated remotely by the driver. The arm picks up the plastic trash can, empties it into the truck, and then returns the trash can to the ground. The particular truck that serves my dad's house in McLean is apparently driven by someone in a great hurry who tends to ignore bags of trash debris set next to the trash can. I have resorted at times to stacking the trash bags on top of the trash can itself. AAA customers in Hickory Farms should be grateful that they still have the old fashioned service where an actual human being is in the street, taking ALL of your trash.

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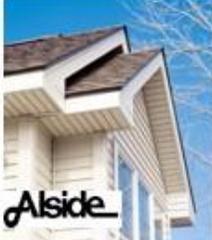
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SENIOR, MILITARY, GOVERNMENT, POLICE & FIREFIGHTER DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE

Architectural Control Committee Approvals

- 4314 Farm House - Roof Replacement
- 10008 Cotton Farm - Shed
- 4317 Farm House - Replacement Windows
- 4357 Farm House – Front Door

Sidewalk Maintenance

The Virginia Department of Transportation owns the streets, sidewalks, curbs, and the grassy “parkway” or “utility strip” areas in between. VDOT relies on us to keep the sidewalks free of mud, snow, bushes, and low-hanging tree branches, and to maintain the grassy area between the street and sidewalk.

- If a neighbor has shrubbery or branches that obstruct the sidewalk for more than a reasonable period of time and the homeowner doesn’t respond to a polite request, call VDOT.
- If you see a broken sidewalk or curb, contact VDOT at 800-367-ROAD (7623) or www.virginiadot.org/travel/citizen.asp. VDOT will add the item to its database and, if there are enough problems in our community that have been reported and VDOT has the money, they may inspect the problem and fix it at some time in the future. Please don’t hold your breath, as this kind of maintenance can sometimes take years to happen.
- You must have a VDOT permit to plant a tree on the grassy area between the sidewalk and the curb.

(4)

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Do You Have Old Photos of Hickory Farms?

A number of residents have asked what Hickory Farms looked like “in the old days.” Do you have photos of the early days of the Hickory Farms area and neighborhood evens (1970s or early 1980s), or even before the community existed and this land was a farm? Maybe a photo of the children playing in front of the house during those early years? If so, Kirk would like to borrow them for a few hours to copy for publication or posting on the web page. Please contact: kirk_randall@hotmail.com or 703-425-0210

(4)

Peddlers and Door-to-Door Solicitors – Be Suspicious

With the warm weather approaching, door-to-door solicitors start to make their rounds through the neighborhood.

Fairfax County requires that peddlers and solicitors receive a photo ID license **before** they solicit door-to-door. This includes firewood sellers, tree workers, home remodeling outfits, magazine subscriptions, etc. They may solicit only between 9 AM and 8 PM, and may not solicit at a residence which posts a “No Peddlers or Solicitors” sign. A peddler or solicitor must show his or her license upon request and must leave immediately you ask them. “My boss has it” or “It’s in the car” are not valid excuses for not having a license. Peddler and Solicitor Licenses are issued by the Fairfax County Department of Cable and Consumer Services. Persons distributing advertising flyers – but not approaching residents – are not required to have a license.

ADC Property Services

P.O. Box 2722
Fairfax, VA 22031-2722



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Bus: 703-764-0199
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| √ Periodic Inspections | |
| √ Property Maintenance | |

ADC Property Services

Exceeding expectations for quality service—and by the way, we also help with buying and selling homes.

If you encounter an unlicensed peddler or solicitor, you may report them to the Police non-emergency number at 703-691-2131.

Solicitors, especially magazine sellers, frequently employ out-of-town school-age children to solicit door-to-door. Don't confuse them with your local high school student who is collecting a few bucks for a band fund raiser, for example.

Be especially careful of persons driving vehicles with out-of-state license tags, including "summer transient travelers" (or the non-PC obsolete term, "gypsies") – frequently from Florida and South Carolina, who may try to scam you on repair work or brazenly walk into your house while you're doing yard work, and taking whatever they can get their hands on. So, keep your doors locked while working in the back yard.

If you feel threatened by or suspicious of any peddler, solicitor, or flyer distribution person, or it just doesn't feel right, call 911 and try to get a vehicle license number to report. (4)

How Many Unrelated People May Live in a House?

If more than four unrelated individuals live in a house, it is considered a boarding house. It is illegal to operate a boarding/rooming house in Fairfax County, except under very limited circumstances which require a special permit. To report a suspected illegal boarding house, you can call 703-324-1300 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/code/property/overcrowding.htm . Click *Submit Complaint* -> *Submit Complaint to Department of Code Compliance*. The form is confidential if you choose "Yes." (4)

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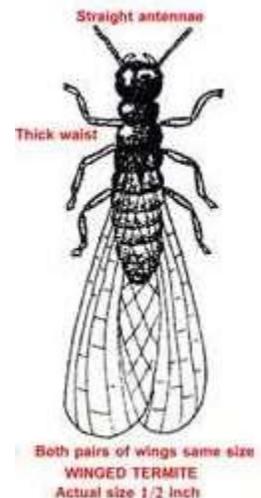
Forget the Do Not Call registry; telemarketers ignore it. But, help is here. The US Federal Trade Commission had a contest to develop a system whereby telephone customers could block or reduce these annoying robocalls. The winner now offers a FREE service, which is described at www.nomorobo.com. NoMoRobo was profiled in the current issue of Consumer Reports magazine. Since registering with NoMoRobo, our robocalls have dropped from about 10-15 a day to 2-3, and those are usually cut off after only one ring. This service is not available for all phone systems; you will have to visit the web site to see if your phone works with NoMoRobo. It does work on our FIOS landline and a friend with Uma says it works for him. [Click this link](#) to read more about the contest in a Washington Post article.

Have You Seen Me Recently?

During April and May, you may see vast quantities of ½ inch termites swarming around your house, particularly near outside doors. The termite protection that may have been done during construction over

30 years ago is long gone and the termites are now ready to invade your home again. It would be unusual for homes our age to not have been invaded by termites. Evidence of termite treatment for our homes should be considered a positive factor. Consult Washington Consumers Checkbook magazine – available at the library – to get the names of top rated pest control firms. (The Editor has used Ward - 703-248-3631 – and was very satisfied with their service).

(4)



Rules and Regulations/By Laws Changes Contemplated

Laws affecting homeowner associations such as Hickory Farms were enacted during the recent sessions in the House of Delegates and Senate. The Board of Directors would like to review our Rules and Regulations and By Laws to determine whether changes may need to be made. If you would like to participate in the review team, or would like to suggest changes to either of these documents, please contact Bruce Bernhardt at 703-426-9446.



Got Critters in the House?

We thought that mice were making a home in our attic. We must have purchased every kind of mouse and rat trap sold by Ace, Home Depot, and Lowes.



The critters were very talented at eating the peanut butter bait without triggering the trap. We finally called the Ward Pest Control folks and Ricardo said we probably had flying squirrels, whose droppings closely resemble those of mice. He then set out Victor "Professional" mouse and rat traps. The difference between the plain old Victor and professional snap style traps is the trigger; the cheapies are metal and the Professionals are yellow plastic which can be adjusted to a Fast (F) or Slow (S) setting. So, before you give up and call in the pest control people for small critters such as mice and squirrels (flying or otherwise), give the Victor Professional traps a try. It was a larger rat trap that finally caught our flying squirrels. If you can't find professional traps at a local store, try ebay. Ward will also do a roof check for \$100 to see where the squirrels are getting into the attic. We'll have this done before we replace the roof when and if the snow goes away.

The Birds of Hickory Farms—Spring 2014

Bob Cosgriff (Cotton Farm Road)

Now that it is officially Spring, it's a good time to look back on our cold and snowy winter to see how the birds of Hickory Farms fared. From observations in my backyard, the birds had no trouble with the wintry conditions, whereas we humans closed schools, missed work, and were generally inconvenienced!

Starting on New Year's Day, 1 January, I began to record each species seen in our yard. The count reached 30 by the end of February and currently stands at 33 (last bird was a Chipping Sparrow on March 19th). This is ample proof that Hickory Farms, with its 17 acres of common ground, provides an excellent habitat for birds year-round. Species noted included such beautiful birds as Eastern Bluebird, Northern Mockingbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Goldfinch, White-throated Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, and of course, our state bird, Northern Cardinal. Larger birds included Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-shafted Flicker, American Crow, Cooper's Hawk, and Red-shouldered Hawk. Canada Goose, Red-tailed Hawk, and Turkey Vulture were observed flying over our yard.

Join Your Hickory Farms Neighbors for Summer Fun at Fairfax Swimming Pool!



- Pool features dedicated lap lane, shallow end and deep end with diving boards.
- Enclosed wading pool with beach entry and water features for the little ones.
- Kids can join NVSL Fairfax Frogs Swim and Dive teams or Tadpoles. Swim lessons also available.
- Social events for all ages throughout the season (*coming this year: Food Truck Fridays!*).
- Membership options for families, couples, singles and students.

Everyone is Welcome at Our Open House! Sat., May 24 and Sun., May 25, 1-4 p.m.

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A solitary Red-winged Blackbird that showed up on a feeder on January 25th. A check of the Hickory Farms master list showed that this, quite surprisingly, was the first record for this relatively common bird of Virginia's wetlands. This sighting raised our neighborhood species total to 111 birds. A larger flock of Red-winged Blackbirds (both sexes), along with Brown-headed Cowbirds, showed up two more times in March.

During the period 1 January through 23 March (when this article was written), there were 66 observation days of (out of a possible total of 82 days). The average daily number of species seen was: January—14, February—16, March—18. The lowest daily total was 8 birds (January 20th) and the highest total was 24 (February 25th). The most persistent bird, seen every day, was Carolina Wren. Other birds seen on all but a very few days, were Slate-Colored Junco, Song Sparrow, Tufted Titmouse, Downy Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Mourning Dove, and Northern Cardinal. There were a total of 11 days with 20 or more species seen, and on three days we had five of the six possible woodpeckers visit the feeding stations, further indication of the excellent diversity of over-wintering birds here.

Springtime brings the annual northbound migration of songbirds that have wintered over in the more southern U.S. states, the Bahamas, Caribbean, Mexico, Central America and even South America. By the end of May last year, our yard had hosted 50 species and Hickory Farm had even more; we can probably expect results similar to that this year. The ornaments of the spring migration are the warblers, 19 species of which have been sighted in Hickory Farms over time. Tree swallows are already back; a small flock of five birds was seen swooping about the upper common grounds on March 22. Some other early arrivals, will begin showing up in the next weeks, but the peak period is the first two weeks of May.

Eastern Bluebirds have been in evidence in our neighborhood over the winter and before long they will be setting up housekeeping in the boxes provided by Girl Scout Troop 2046 in 2012. By St. Patrick's Day, eight of our 10 boxes had some nesting material in them. Actual bluebird nesting usually begins in April. Last year the first bluebird egg was laid on 16 April and the first hatching was on 5 May. In 2013, we had 22 bluebirds and 16 tree swallows fledged from our boxes. Hopefully, we can beat that record in 2014

So now that the weather is more comfortable, it is a good time to get out into the common grounds and watch as nature keeps time with leafing trees, blooming flowers, and of course, birds. With just a little effort and not too much expense, you could even turn your backyard into a bird (and butterfly) habitat. Only three things are needed: food, water, and cover. With these simple ingredients, you might be amazed with what you might see right out your own window! Until the next updates in upcoming newsletters, enjoy the springtime weather and the many birds of Hickory Farms.

Neighborhood Watch Schedule

Kathy Gillette

Please volunteer for this important activity!! It only takes one three hour shift every three months on a Friday or Saturday evening. Neighborhood Watch has been proven to cut crime! It's also a great way to meet your neighbors! Call Kathy Gillette at 703-503-3158

Fri	Apr 4	John Verheul	Tami Verheul
Sat	Apr 5	Zhong Cheng Wang	Tong Wang
Fri	Apr 11	Dave Maurer	Sanjeev Munjal
Sat	Apr 12		
Fri	Apr 18	Jaime Gutierrez	
Sat	Apr 19	Dave Dempster	Dawn Dempster
Fri	Apr 25	Susan Mulliner	Brenton Mulliner
Sat	Apr 26	Ron Arnold	Charles Walters
Fri	May 2	Harry Herchert	Ginny Herchert
Sat	May 3	Chris Woody	Angela Woody
Fri	May 9	Greg Gillette	Kathy Gillette
Sat	May 10	Rick Loranger	Judy Loranger
Fri	May 16	Jeff Lindsay	Larry Rogers
Sat	May 17	Angel Meza	Jason Meza
Fri	May 23	Eric Maribojoc	Clarisa Dacanay
Sat	May 24	Bob Montgomery	George Rosenkranz

The HF Newsletter is published January, March-May, July, and September-December. E-mail submissions to the Editor by the 25th of the prior month. For past issues and information for advertisers, see www.hickoryfarms.org --> Newsletters. The Editor, subject to review by the Board of Directors, may reject or edit any submission. Advertising in this newsletter does not constitute endorsement. The editor is Kirk Randall 703-425-0210 – kirk_randall@hotmail.com