

Volume 7 – No. 2

February 2007

The Hickory Farms Newsletter

Your HF Board of Directors

President – John Kitzmiller
703-503-3443

Vice President – Vacant

Treasurer – Jaime Gutierrez
703-425-7919

Secretary – Dave Dempster
703-503-0561

Community Grounds, Paths &
Woods

Rich Dudley 703-503-2060

Neighborhood Watch – Dave
Dempster 703-503-0561

Building Approvals (ACC
Chairmen)

Rebekah & Wesley Moore
703-286-7179

Board Members

Dante Gilmer 703-978-0621

Ellie Coddling 703-426-4606

Other HF Volunteers

Welcome New Residents – Claire

Coleman 703-425-6059 & Nancy

Bentley 703-978-0373

Newsletter & Web Site –

Kirk Randall 703-425-0210

Community Yard Sale –

Pete Scala 703-764-0730

e-mail coordinator –

Rebekah Moore 703-286-7179

Social Committee – Patty Dudley

703-503-2060 & Dawn

Dempster 703-503-0561 &

Lynn Welch 703-978-4113

ACC Members – Donna Garfield

Marc Fogleman

Kirk Randall

Claire Coleman

Bob Ambrogio

Maryle Mondschein

Hickory Farms Community Association

P.O. Box 2239, Fairfax VA 22031

www.hickoryfarms.org

Spring - The Time to Save Money

Spring is when many of us start thinking about home renovation projects – especially if we're lucky enough to have an income tax refund coming our way!

Several contractors are offering special deals to Hickory Farms homeowners. Some of these contractors have worked in our neighborhood for many years and, therefore, have a good track record with us. For example, John Enos of Scenic Remodeling (who grew up on Still Meadow) has been personally involved in remodeling homes in our community since 2004. Scenic is offering us special deals on **decks, vinyl siding, vinyl replacement windows, gutters, and roof replacements**. Mel Yudkin of MY Construction replaced nearly 20 **concrete driveways, patios, and sidewalks** in Hickory Farms four years ago. If your concrete is crumbling, it's not too late to get in on the significant discounts Mel is offering us. Dan Clarke of A-1 Heating and Air Conditioning, who has installed many systems in our community in prior group deals, is offering homeowners 20% discounts on **air conditioners, heat pumps, furnaces, humidifiers, and hot water heaters**. (Continued on Page 2)

Join the Hickory Farms e-mail List

- 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

Visit www.hickoryfarms.org and click e-mail service.

(Continued)

Cotton Farm homeowner Sean Coleman is coordinating a group purchase of ***lawn services***, such as summer lawn mowing. If you currently use a lawn service, or plan to in the near future, please contact Sean. Kirk Randall is coordinating a group purchase of ***tree services***, such as removing trees and grinding the stumps. Please contact him if you're interested.

All of these group purchases are described more fully below. However, if you need services not listed above, and think that your neighbors may also be interested, please volunteer to coordinate a group deal. The savings for you and your neighbors can be considerable. All group purchases are done by individual homeowners working together to negotiate discount prices; the HFCA and Board are not involved.

Finally, if you do decide to go it alone with a contractor, please see the article at the end of this newsletter about checking out the contractor *before* you sign the contract. And, if your improvement project involves changing the exterior appearance of your home, please submit an application for approval to Rebekah or Wesley Moore of the ACC. An application can be found at the end of this newsletter. The Editor

A Note From the President

After a very mild holiday season, the cold weather is finally upon us. When the temperature has dropped, the snow is falling, and the wind is blowing, there's nothing better than sitting down in front of a roaring fire. However, after you've enjoyed the warmth and glow of your fireplaces, remember to dispose of the ashes in covered metal containers – not paper or plastic bags – and take them outside your house/garage. Remember, too, that if snow is covering the sidewalk in front of your house, it is your obligation to clear it off, to protect your neighbors. Finally, remember that your homeowner's dues are due now! I hope everyone has a happy Valentine's Day with someone special. John Kitzmiller

Are You Renting? Please Let Us Know Who You Are

If you are renting your home, please let Board Member Jamie Gutierrez know where to find you. You can find Jamie at jagutierrez1@cox.net or 703-425-7919.

Neighborhood Watch Schedule – Neighborhood Security

Dave Dempster

Contact Dave Dempster at 703-503-0561 (ddhokies@cox.net) with any questions, or to volunteer for this important neighborhood activity. You can file a police report for minor (non emergency) neighborhood crimes at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police.

Fri	February 2	Pete Scala	Rose Scala
Sat	February 3	Stan Lee	Jim Marshall
Fri	February 9	Pam Barrett	Tom Barrett
Sat	February 10	John Verheul	John Cotner
Fri	February 16	Dave Dempster	Dawn Dempster
Sat	February 17	Stefan Schwarz	Christine Schwarz
Fri	February 23	Bob Bentley	Nancy Bentley
Sat	February 24	Ron Cruz	Louise Cruz
Fri	March 2	Jaime Gutierrez	Ed Wagner
Sat	March 3	Harry Herchert	Ginny Herchert
Fri	March 9	Pingjun Li	Wang Chan Cheng
Sat	March 10	Greg Gillette	Kathy Gillette
Fri	March 16	Dave Maurer	Sanjeev Munjal
Sat	March 17	Bob Sottile	Lee Sottile
Fri	March 23	John Kitzmiller	Brand Niemann
Sat	March 24	David Froberg	Beverly Froberg
Fri	March 30	Ron Arnold	Charles Walters
Sat	March 31	Kirk Randall	Mike Martin

Concrete Group Purchase Going on Now

We are moving forward with a group purchase of concrete driveways/sidewalks/-patios/etc. with MY Construction. The prices MY is quoting are about 25-30% higher than four years ago, which is pretty good considering that the cost of concrete alone has increased 55% and dump fees (to dispose of your old concrete) have increased 300%. Considering the good track record Hickory Farms has had with Mel Yudkin of MY Construction, you might seriously consider joining in the current group purchase. If you have a small job, such as a small sidewalk or patio, this may be the only way you can even get a contractor to bid on your work, because many contractors insist upon a minimum project size just to show up for work. MY, however, will be in the neighborhood for nearly two weeks and will be available to handle even small jobs. MY will schedule each job and sign contracts with each homeowner.

To get a rough feel for how much a concrete job would cost, *single* driveway replacements are running \$2,700-3,700, depending upon the square footage of the driveway. Most jobs are priced on a square foot basis.

If you want to get a non-binding price quote, call Mel Yudkin at 703-207-9820 – as soon as possible, please. Identify yourself as a Hickory Farm homeowner. Mel estimates that all of the work submitted so far can be finished in ten working days, weather and unforeseen conditions permitting. If we get nice weather like we had last month, MY might be able to move quickly. However, we must recognize that we need to be flexible in order to get a good group rate.

Finally, you might need to contact Rebekah or Wesley Moore of the ACC at 703-286-7179 if you are planning on changes to the exterior appearance of your house. Redoing an existing driveway is fine and no approval should be required. However, if you are planning on expanding your driveway or carport, for example, you should probably contact the ACC. Kirk Randall

Comedy Sportz Show

Comedy Sportz, a hilarious fast-paced improvisational comedy show, will be appearing at the W. T. Woodson Auditorium! Audience members shout out suggestions that the troupe performers convert instantaneously into skits and songs. Then YOU vote on which performances are the funniest! The Washington Post said, "Comedy Sportz offers a rare night out that the whole family can enjoy." Proceeds benefit the band program and the 2007 W. T. Woodson senior graduation party.

Sunday, March 4th at 7:30 pm
W. T. Woodson Auditorium
Main Street, Fairfax, Va

Tickets cost \$20.00 for adults and \$15.00 for students if ordered before the show. To order tickets, contact Susan Luxenberg (3712 Prado Place, Fairfax VA 22031). Checks

should be made payable to WTW Band Patrons and should be included with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Group Purchase of Decks, Siding, Roofs, Gutters, and Windows

Scenic Remodeling President John Enos, Jr. (son of long time Still Meadow homeowners John, Sr. & Juliette) is offering Hickory Farms homeowners special pricing on decks, vinyl siding, replacement roofs, gutters, and replacement vinyl windows. If you missed the 2004 HF siding/windows group deal, here's your chance.

Under this group purchase, replacement roofs for most Hickory Farms homes would run about \$4-5,000. This price assumes you have a two car garage/carport; if you have a single or none, the cost would be lower. If you see a lot of granules running out of your gutters, your roof may need replacing!

John – an architect who can assist in the design of your new deck – is also offering attractive pricing for decks. For example, a 12'x15' pressure treated wood deck, including five stairs, would cost only \$5,665 (add \$1,500 for premium composite Trex-type decking and top rails).

Scenic is also offering premium Alside "Excalibur" model double hung windows at only \$420, which is a modest \$20 increase from what dozens of homeowners paid three years ago for the identical window.

Replacement siding for your home is also offered by Scenic at not much more than your neighbors paid three years ago. Premium siding would cost \$9,085 for the split level model, \$6,450 for the split foyer, \$10,650 for the four BR colonial, and \$10,750 for the five BR colonial. Replacement gutters are available for as low as \$950, and trim (soffit and fascia) runs \$1,750-2,750, depending on the model of your house.

As with all HF group purchases, each homeowner would sign a contract with the service provider, in this case Scenic Remodeling. When you call them at 703-392-8391, be sure to say that you are with Hickory Farms, so they charge you the preferred prices.

Finally, I wrote an article about purchasing siding, windows, guttering, and replacement roofs three years ago, when so many of us had work done on our homes. You might find it helpful if you decide to move forward with a purchase. Visit www.hickoryfarms.org, and then select "Home Maintenance and Appearance" and then "Purchasing Siding, Gutters, Roofs, and Windows." Kirk Randall

From the Treasurer

Jaime Gutierrez

As of January 31, we have received the dues from 79 homeowners – 40% of the total homes. Again, keep in mind that dues were due January 1st – a month ago. March 31 is the beginning of the late period. Enclosed with this newsletter is the THIRD reminder

to pay your dues. Don't wait to the last day. Dues received or postmarked after March 31 will be subject to the \$25 late fee.

If you are planning to sell your home, keep in mind that you will need to obtain a VPOAA package from the HFCA. **The package is required by law.** While your realtor may request the VPOAA package from me, YOU must ask him or her to do so. The following are the steps for obtaining a VPOAA package:

1. Contact the Treasurer. Let him know when the package is needed and where it should be sent.
2. Draft a check for \$50, payable to the HFCA. The check can be mailed to HFCA, P.O. Box 2239, Fairfax, VA 22031-2239; or make other arrangements with the Treasurer as necessary.
3. Please allow 7-10 days from receipt of the check by the Treasurer to the date the VPOAA package can be released, as we must allow time for the check to clear. Should time be critical, cash payments can be accepted and a written receipt will be provided.

Finally, if you plan to rent your home, you must inform the Board and give us your mailing address in order that we can contact you if needed. If you do not provide us with a way to contact you, and in turn we are not able to inform you of any Board matter relevant to you, it does not absolve you of any consequences that may affect you or your property.

Are You Interested in Discounted Lawn Services (Mowing, etc) ?

Many families in the neighborhood have a lawn service. There is a possibility of getting a group rate for lawn service if enough families are interested. I am willing to explore options and send requests for proposals out to various companies.

What the lawn services will be interested in is how many families would be interested in a group rate. They will make money by better grouping of jobs so their crews are doing more yards per day vice running over Northern Virginia tackling one job here and the next two or three miles away. If you are interested, please email me at colemaninn@msn.com or call 703-425-6059. Give me your name, address and the contact information for the lawn service you currently use, the level of service, (just lawn cutting or do you get additional add on services like fertilizer, aeration, ...) and whether you like their service. If you do not like them, tell me why and if enough people are dissatisfied with a specific company we will not ask them to bid. **I need your response by February 7.** You are under no obligation to participate, of course. I'm just seeing how much interest there is in getting discounted lawn services.

This project will be similar to other group projects undertaken by families in the community. I will contact the lawn services and get their bids and then we will select the most competitive bid. Since lawn services offer tiered pricing, we will evaluate bids based on the various tiers of service. I will get bids for each level. Each family would

sign a separate contract with the lawn service at the discounted price. Sean Coleman

Our Common Grounds

Rich Dudley

Our common areas are in reasonably good condition. However, I've received a few comments recently that I'd like to share with the rest of the community.

Please clean up after your pets. There are far too many instances of people not cleaning up after their dogs. Dog poop is accumulating more and more in the common areas, and I've increasingly noticed that it is being left in people's front yards by people walking their dogs. We also have neighbors who are throwing bags of dog poop into the storm drains or into common area woods. Fairfax County code Section 41.1-2-6 states that "the owner or custodian of any dog shall be responsible for the removal of excreta deposited by such dog on the property of another, including public places." Cleaning up after your dog is not only the law but is a common courtesy that should be expected within our community. The problem is getting bad enough now that some parents have expressed concern about letting their children play in the common areas. Please do the right thing and clean up after your pet and dispose of it properly in your trash can.

Please help us clean up the common areas. The onset of winter and death of some of the underbrush has exposed trash (especially bottles and cans) that has built up over the past few years. Now is an excellent time of year to clean out some of the debris. I'm soliciting volunteers to help clean up some of the mess. I know a number of middle school children are required to perform several hours of community service projects as part of their civics assignment. If you have a student who is in need of a community service projects, please put them in touch with me. This is a "win-win" for your child and for our community! You can contact me at 703-503-2060 or at dudley_richard@bah.com (that's an underscore between dudley and richard).

Tree Work Group Purchase – Please Respond Now!

I have volunteered to coordinate a tree work group purchase for the community. If you want a price quote from a low priced selected contractor, send the following information to kirk_randall@hotmail.com or call 703-425-0210 by February 10. Send your name, address, phone, e-mail address, and very specific information on what tree work you want done. Give the exact location of the trees. Better yet, tie a ribbon around the tree trunk to identify the tree. That way, the bidders can check out the work to be done and prepare a bid without disturbing you. Please provide the information needed ASAP. Let's hope for no more big snowstorms like the one last year that derailed our effort!
Kirk Randall

Heating and Air Conditioning Group Buy

Our prior group purchases of heating and air conditioning services from A-1 Heating

and Air Conditioning have been very successful, and residents have been very pleased with their service. You can get good deals on heat pumps, air conditioners, gas furnaces, water heaters, humidifiers, and air cleaners during this special offer.

Hickory Farms homeowners get a 20% discount from A-1's regular prices. They also get an additional 3% discount for paying by check.

A-1 offers American Standard (makers of Trane equipment) and Carrier furnaces, heat pumps, and air conditioners, Maytag and other quality water heaters, and Aprilaire humidifiers.

The spring months are the traditionally slow for heating contractors; that's why A-1 is willing to cut Hickory Farms homeowners a deal. This offer expires March 31, 2007 and may not be combined with other discounts or coupons. Hickory Farms homeowners are eligible for zero down payment (full payment due upon completion). A-1 guarantees your complete satisfaction.

American Standard products are rated highest for reliability by Consumer Reports. A-1 is rated very high by Consumer Checkbook Magazine for both quality and pricing. A-1 has also been rated well by the Better Business Bureau and the Fairfax County Office of Consumer Affairs.

The average life of an air conditioner is about 15 years (heat pumps are even less) and about ten years for a water heater. If you have an original air conditioner or heat pump, it's living on borrowed time. If you still have your original heat pump, consider yourself blessed; some of your neighbors are on their third! The newer heat pumps are much more efficient and supply air that is considerably warmer than the older ones.

To participate in this group purchase, call A-1 at 703-451-1100 and say you are with the Hickory Farms group deal.

Tips for Choosing a Contractor

(Note – If you read this article at www.hickoryfarms.org, you can click the links to the organizations that are referenced)

- Ask for a copy of the contractor's current insurance certificates.
- Check the contractor's Virginia contractor's license and disciplinary actions with the [Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation](#)
- Check out the contractor's license with the [Fairfax County Division of Public Works and Environmental Services](#).
- Consider joining Angie's List, a contractor referral service that rates local contractors based upon customer experience. There is a fee to join, but it might be a worthwhile

investment. Visit www.angieslist.com and choose Washington DC.

- Check the contractor's complaint record with the [Fairfax County Department of Cable Communications and Consumer Protection](#).
- Contact the local [Better Business Bureau](#) for a further check of the contractor's past performance. The BBB tracks many businesses, not just BBB members. However, you should look for BBB membership. Not being a member is not necessarily bad, but being a BBB member is better because the business has promised to abide by the BBB Code of Ethics and resolve disputes using BBB sanctioned arbitration procedures.
- See if the [Washington Consumers Checkbook](#) has an article about the project you are planning. This quarterly magazine is a DC version of Consumer Reports Magazine. It rates local businesses in a variety of areas, including quality of service and price. Highly recommended! If you can't subscribe (but please do, as it supports a great organization), you can read it at the local library. www.checkbook.org has some useful information and you can purchase individual articles on line.
- Ask for customer references, particularly from those who have had projects similar to yours, and are neighbors. If possible, inspect the work performed by the contractor. Ask the reference if they are a friend of or affiliated with the contractor in any way. Ask the reference if they remember the name of the employee who worked on their home; if they were satisfied, ask the contractor that that individual worker be specified in your contact.
- Get written estimates from several contractors. Be sure to specify the work you want done and the materials to be used so that the estimates will be comparable.
- Insist on a written contract, as required by the Fairfax County Home Improvement Code and Virginia state regulations, and make sure that it includes all agreements regarding the work to be done and materials to be used.
- Be sure the contract specifies that you will be furnished with a signed mechanic's lien waiver or release from suppliers of materials or subcontractors. In the event that a contractor does not pay a subcontractor or supplier, state law provides that those working on the improvement project may obtain a lien against the property. Without a lien waiver, if your contractor fails to pay a subcontractor or supplier, you could be liable for the debt.

The Hickory Farms Newsletter is published monthly, except June, July, and August. E-mail submissions to The Editor by the 25th of the previous month – Microsoft Word format, please. Past issues of this newsletter and information for advertisers may be found at www.hickoryfarms.org – click Newsletters.

The Editor is responsible for most of the contents of this newsletter; the major exceptions are advertisements, community service type announcements, articles with a byline, and articles which have been obviously contributed by others.

Third Notice
Hickory Farms Community Association
2007 Assessment Notice

The 2007 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 no later than March 31, 2007

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 2007 ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

The Assessment of **\$100** is due starting January 1, 2007.
Payment received after **March 31, 2007** will be subject to a \$25.00 late fee.

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

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

Your name: _____

Lot Number: _____

Address: _____

HFCA Action
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved
Date: _____

HFCA
Date Received: _____
By: _____

**Hickory Farms Community Association
P. O. Box 2239
Fairfax, VA 22031**

Application for Architectural Review

Name: _____ Lot # _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

Proposed Start Date: _____ Expected Completion Date: _____
(Must be at least 30 days past the date received by HFCA)

Project Proposal:

I understand that the HFCA has thirty (30) days to deny or request additional information on this application or, in accordance with the HFCA covenants, the application will be considered approved. I further understand that the thirty (30) day period will commence upon HFCA's receipt of this application or upon receipt of all additional information requested by the HFCA and that I may not start construction until approval is received.

(Signature of Property Owner)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Ensure project complies with all Fairfax County residential building codes and Hickory Farms Community Association (HFCA) covenants. The HFCA Board of Directors cannot waive those requirements.
2. Prepare a specific description and/or sketch of the proposed improvement in sufficient detail (color, dimensions, materials, etc.). If a county permit is required, provide evidence of compliance.
3. Provide a site plan and indicate where the improvement is to be located on the property.
4. Deliver to Committee Chairperson.

Application for Architectural Review

The following provides maintenance required to your property that does NOT require review by the Architectural Control Committee.

Any repairs or upkeep that does not alter the outward appearance of structures on your property including:

- Repainting your home the same color and shade. Includes doors, storm doors, windows, storm windows, trim, gutters, and shutters.
- Replacing your roof with the same type, style, color and shade of shingles.
- Replacing your gutters with the same type, style, and color.
- Replacing your driveway or sidewalk in the same size and material type.
- Replacing your windows with the same color and shade and appearance and style. (i.e. six pane over six pane divided lites)
- Replacing a door with the same type style, color and shade. (Includes a garage door)
- Planting of flowers, shrubs, trees, or creating planting areas.
- Replacing your fence with the same style, height, and color and shade.
- Replacing a storage shed with the same type including size, materials, and color and shade.
- Installing a television antenna or satellite dish on your roof.

The following provides some examples of improvements to your property that DOES require review by the Architectural Control committee.

Any alterations or repairs that alters the outward appearance of structures on your property including:

- Repainting your home a different color or shade. Includes doors, storm doors, windows, storm windows, trim, gutters, and shutters.
- Replacing your roof with other than the same style, type, and color or shade of shingles.
- Replacing your gutters with other than the same type, style, or color.
- Replacing your driveway or sidewalk with materials different than the original.
- Enlarging your driveway or sidewalk.
- Replacing your windows with other than the same color or shade or appearance and style. (i.e. installing a bay window)
- Replacing an entrance or garage door with other than the same size, type, color or shade. (i.e. steel with wood)
- Installing or replacing a fence with other than the same style, height, or color or shade. Includes painting a previously approved fence that was left natural.
- Constructing a storage shed, changing the color or shade of a previously approved shed, or painting a shed that was previously approved to be left natural.
- Replacing the siding on your home.
- Any additions to your home including room, garage, porch, or deck.
- Completely or partially enclosing a carport.
- Installing a permanent basketball hoop or any type of batting cage.
- Installing a "pole" light fixture.
- Installing storm windows or door.
- Installing any type of swimming pool or water garden.
- Installing a television antenna or satellite dish anywhere on your property other than on your roof.

If you are unsure if your alteration should be reviewed, please feel free to contact any member of the Architectural Control Committee

