

Volume 8 – No. 3

March 2008

The Hickory Farms Newsletter

Board of Directors

President – John Kitzmiller
703-503-3443

Vice President – Rich Dudley
703-503-2060

Treasurer – Jaime Gutierrez
703-425-7919

Secretary – Bilal Sayyed
703-764-8716

Community Grounds, Paths
& Woods – Rich Dudley
703-503-2060

Neighborhood Watch
Dave Dempster 703-503-0561

Building Approvals (ACC)
Rebekah & Wesley
Moore 703-286-7179

Members at Large
Dante Gilmer – 703-978-0621
Barin Chakrabarti
703-426-1430

Neighborhood Volunteers

Welcome New Neighbors –
Nancy Bentley 703-978-0373

Newsletter & Web Site –
Kirk Randall 703-425-0210

Fall Community Yard Sale –
Pete Scala 703-764-0730

email Coordinators –
Heather Webb 703-425-1347
Ellie Codding 703-426-4606

Social Committee –
Patty Dudley 703-503-2060
Dawn Dempster 703-503-0561
Lynn Welch 703-978-4113

ACC Members – Bob Ambrogi,
Claire Coleman, Marc Fogleman,
Donna Garfield, Maryle
Mondschein & Kirk Randall

Hickory Farms Community Association
P.O. Box 2239, Fairfax VA 22031
www.hickoryfarms.org

Please note that the deadline for the payment of your Annual Dues is March 31.

Our neighborhood birds are more active now that spring is approaching. After reading Bob Cosgriff's article on area birds, I'm sure you'll have a better appreciation of the bountiful nature that surrounds us. Next month, Bob will reprise his excellent series of articles on the history of our region, including the Civil War years.

After conducting a brief unscientific survey, it appears that the assessed values of our homes dropped between one and seven percent from last year. Unless the Board of Supervisors votes to increase our tax rate, this will translate to slightly lower property taxes. However, while the total value of our homes changed very little, the value of our land increased by \$100,000 while the value of the structure dropped by about the same \$100,000. Coincidence? Thinking of appealing? It is usually difficult in a neighborhood such as ours where there are so many comparable homes. If you do successfully appeal, though, please let me know!

The Editor

Join the Hickory Farms email 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

To subscribe, send a blank e-mail to
HickoryFarms-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Neighborhood Watch Schedule – Neighborhood Security

Dave Dempster

*Thank you, **Mansoor Nasim**, for joining Neighborhood Watch !*

Please volunteer for this important neighborhood activity – all it takes is one three hour Friday or Saturday evening every four months, or so. Neighborhood Watch is proven to cut crime in neighborhoods that have this program. It's also a great way to meet your neighbors. Dave Dempster 703-503-0561 (ddhokies@cox.net)

Sat	March 1	Susan Mulliner	Brenton Mulliner
Fri	March 7	Ron Arnold	Charles Walters
Sat	March 8	Kirk Randall	Mansoor Nasim
Fri	March 14	Bob Cosgriff	Don Klingemann
Sat	March 15	Jeff Lindsay	Larry Rogers
Fri	March 21	Dave Dempster	Dawn Dempster
Sat	March 22	David Froberg	Beverly Froberg
Fri	March 28	Angel Meza	Jason Meza
Sat	March 29	Eric Maribojoc	Clarisa Dacanay
Fri	April 4	Bob Montgomery	George Rosenkranz
Sat	April 5	Mike Martin	Scott Buchanan
Fri	April 11	Pete Scala	Rose Scala
Sat	April 12	Stan Lee	Jim Marshall

Scenic Remodeling Ad Here

Are You New to Hickory Farms ?

(3-7-11)

Please call me to welcome you to our neighborhood.
Nancy Bentley 703-978-0373
(I'm your neighbor – not a salesperson!)

Gypsy Moth Spraying Coming This Spring

Fairfax County is scheduling Gypsy Moth spraying using Bt during April and May. A few homes on Still Meadow, Wheatfield, and Country Squire that are next to the black path, and Country Squire next to the woods are to be sprayed, and have been alerted by Fairfax County. Some nearby homes were also notified that they are adjacent to spray areas, and could get overspray. To see our spray area, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/sprayblock.htm and click area #15. Fairfax County will mail a spray schedule in April. For more information, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/gypsyffx.htm or call 703-324-5304.

Messy Dogs

Please use a plastic bag to clean up your dog droppings, whether they are in a neighbor's yard or our common grounds. Then, please dispose of your bag with your trash, not in a storm drain, someone's yard, or the common area. Not only is this the neighborly thing to do, but it is Fairfax County law. (3-9)

From the Treasurer

Jaime Gutierrez

As of February 24, we have received the dues from 135 homeowners, 68% of the total homes; there 64 homeowners that still have to send in their payment. You have until March 31st to send your payment. Just so that it is clear, your payment must be postmarked on or before March 31st to be on time, just because you date the check before March 31 but mail it afterward, that does not make it on time. Enclosed with this newsletter is the FOURTH and FINAL reminder to pay your dues. Don't wait to the last day. Dues received or postmarked after March 31 will be subject to an additional \$25 late fee.

If you are planning to sell your home in the upcoming year, keep in mind that you will need to obtain a VPOAA package from the HFCA. **The package is required by law,** and is usually obtained by you. Your realtor may also request the VPOAA package directly if you wish, but you must request this of him or her.

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.

"Beatles" Coming to Woodson HS

Get ready! The event of the year is coming to Fairfax on Sunday, March 2. **"1964" The Tribute**, the "Number One Beatles tribute show on earth" according to Rolling Stone magazine, will be performing at the W.T. Woodson auditorium as the featured fundraiser for Cavalier Cruise 2008 and the Woodson band program. This high-energy group has sold out the Birchmere in Arlington as well as Carnegie Hall in New York City. By recreating an early '60's Beatles-type experience (down to the hairstyles, dress, and period instruments), **"1964"** brings such favorites as "Hard Days Night", "Twist and Shout", and "Yesterday" with an unparalleled atmosphere of excitement. Tickets will sell fast, so buy as soon as possible to make sure you don't miss out! Tickets at the door are \$35/adult, \$30/student.

This Month's Home Maintenance Checklist

The complete list may be found on the [HF web site](#) under "Home Maintenance and Appearance" – "Home Maintenance Checklist." Send suggestions to kirk_Randall@Hotmail.com (All)

Dryer Vent Cleaning – Clean lint from the exhaust pipe. Never use a plastic pipe – it could melt. Lint can cause a fire.

Furnace Humidifier Shutdown – Drain and clean the humidifier water pan. Turn off the water supply valve. Work the float arm back and forth to dislodge crud. Scrape off mineral buildup.

Chimney & Fireplace Cleaning – Have a chimney sweep check and clean the chimney – if you used the chimney during the winter.

Noisy Neighbors

The Fairfax County noise ordinance prohibits loud noise that is clearly audible across property lines. Chapter 108 of the County Code addresses noise violations, including:

- Operating loud speakers or amplifiers (exterior of building) 11 PM – 7 AM
- Operating construction equipment, operating power model vehicles, or repairing vehicles and equipment (all outdoors) 9 PM – 7 AM
- Operating construction equipment on Sundays and federal holidays (outdoors) 9 PM – 9 AM
- Truck loading and unloading, including trash trucks (outdoors) 9 PM – 6 AM

Televisions, radios, musical instruments, and animals that howl, bark, meow, or squawk frequently and habitually are a noise disturbance *anytime* when plainly audible across property lines.

If your neighbor doesn't respond to a polite request, you may report the violation to Zoning Enforcement at 703-324-1300 between 8 AM – 4:30 PM. After hours, call the Police *non-emergency* number at 703-691-2131.

Fairfax County Butterfly-Friendly Bush Sale

Butterflies need more than nectar. Before they transform into the beautiful insects that frequent our flowers, butterfly larvae feed on the leaves of many of our native trees and shrubs. Did you know that each butterfly species has a special host plant or plants where they lay their eggs? This year's seedling sale selections include nectar plants as well as several of these special butterfly hosts: they are certain to turn your yard into a butterfly buffet! Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/seedlingsale.htm or call 703-324-1460.

No More Connection Newspapers

Wondering where your mailed copy of the Fairfax Connection has gone? They have discontinued mail delivery.

Broken Streetlight ?

Please report streetlights that 1) are dark at night or 2) are on during the daylight hours. Call 1-888-667-3000. You'll need the address of the home nearest the streetlight. It is also helpful to copy the number off the streetlight pole – something like C-415 W096.

(3-7-11)

Yard Debris Pick Ups Resume in March

Wednesday AAA yard debris pickup resumes in March. You may no longer place your yard debris with your regular trash.

- Brush and tree branches should be no longer than 4', no thicker than 6", bundled with twine, and should not exceed 50 pounds.
- Grass clippings, leaves, and twigs should be placed in your trash tote, (yard debris only in the trash tote on Wednesday) paper bags, or *clear* plastic bags. Use dark plastic bags for trash only.
- Please don't block the mailman's access to your mailbox with trash or yard debris. (3)

Sidewalks

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT – 703-383-8368) owns the streets, sidewalks, the curbs, and the grassy 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, call VDOT. VDOT will inspect the problem and fix it, if necessary, at some time in the *distant* future.
- You need a VDOT permit to plant a tree on the grassy area between the sidewalk and the curb. (3)

The Birds of Hickory Farms

Bob Cosgriff

One of the benefits of living in Hickory Farms is our central location within Fairfax County, which puts us within easy reach of the many excellent parks providing outdoors-oriented activities such as hiking and birding. Fairfax is blessed with a magnificent system of County parks, as well as regional, state and Federal parks.

Thus, the title of this article is a bit of misnomer, because I'm going to write about the best nearby places to see even more birds than you can see right here in the neighborhood. All these places boast a variety of habitat, good trails, and a place to "get away from it all" within 30 minutes of home. So let's go with the list, which will be by category:

Fairfax County Park Authority: South Run District Park (off the Fairfax County Parkway) just east of Lee Chapel Road. Drive past the aquatic center and park near the indoor lacrosse facility. The trail starts there. (Note: the only restroom facilities are in the main recreation center)

This park is a wonderful place any time of year, but at its best in the spring migration, where you can see a variety of beautiful neo-tropical birds such as warblers, tanagers, orioles and vireos. If you take the trail to the east, you will reach Mercer Lake, where ducks, geese and shorebirds are sure to be seen, often in great numbers. (Part of this trail is natural surface and packed gravel; the remainder is paved). The trail around the lake and over the dam will eventually return you to your starting point (4.1 miles of relatively easy walking with only a few ups and downs on the southern side of the lake). Another productive area is in the power line easement west of the entrance road. Start by the off-leash dog park and walk south, checking out the tree lines on both sides and the shrubby areas in the middle. If you pick up the paved trail and walk west, you will emerge at the dam at Burke Lake Park. There is a loop trail back that takes you below the dam and spillway through some nice woods before hitting the paved trail again.

There is a third area between the indoor lacrosse building and the Parkway that contains some very productive mixed habitat. No matter where you go in South Run, you will have a fine walk and will see some great birds, if that is your interest. But be warned, it will probably take a couple of repeat visits to see everything.

Commonwealth of Virginia State Park: Mason Neck State Park (take Gunston Road off Route 1, go five miles to the park entrance (past Pohick Bay Regional Park and the entrance to Gunston Hall), then another two miles to the park itself. There is a fee (\$2 weekdays, \$3 weekend). This is a great place to see Bald Eagles, ducks, water birds and many other species. There is a good network of trails and restrooms that are open even if the visitor center is closed. The park is 1800 acres and abuts the 2,000 acre Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge.

Federal Facility: Accotink Bay Wildlife Refuge. While the Mason Neck NWR mentioned above is a good place to hike and see birds, the absolute best U.S. government park in Fairfax County is the Accotink Bay Wildlife Refuge on Fort Belvoir. It is open to the public and you can park outside the sentry post, so you don't need a government decal to enter. You need to get on the Fairfax County Parkway in Newington and go to Route 1. Turn left and then take the next right at the Tully Gate. There is one parking area for a handicapped accessible trail) about ½ mile on the right, and just beyond that a bigger parking area with restroom facilities. The trail system here is all natural surface. You can hike for miles within this refuge, which is perhaps the very best place in the County to see Bald Eagles, usually several (I have seen as many as 23 on a visit). Waterbirds abound, as do numerous songbirds. This place is productive even in the dead of winter and is one of the two local places where you can reliably see the beautiful Prothonotary Warbler in the spring.

There are other places nearby where you can hike and bird simultaneously:

Smokewood Park. Located just off Whitacre Road at the bottom of Laurel Street, Smokewood is located just behind Fairfax Memorial Park. You can hike the natural trail through mature woodlands along a tributary of Long Branch) to a footbridge at Pickett Road. From there you can go straight ahead until you reach private property and return, cross the footbridge and walk north toward Frost Middle School, or walk south, to take the first righthand street, which will eventually bring you to George Mason Park on Braddock, whence you can turn west and return via the Fairfax Memorial Park.

Accotink Stream Valley Park: enter either at Thaiss Park off Pickett Road or on Route 50 near the Sunrise Assisted Living at Nutley Street. This paved trail will eventually take you all the way to Wakefield Park, but you can choose which segments you want to walk. It is 2.5 miles from Route 50 to where the trail crosses King Arthur Boulevard. The best birding is actually beyond this point. (I generally park on King Arthur and start there.)

Long Branch Stream Valley Park: you can park at Little Run Elementary off Olley Lane and walk downhill to the trail head or else at Rutherford Park off Guinea Road. From either location, you can walk east all the way to Wakefield Park (itself an excellent hiking/birding location).

This list could be much longer, but this should serve to demonstrate just what a great location you are in by living in Hickory Farms. So go on, get on the walking shoes, grab a pair of binoculars and explore what Fairfax County has to offer beyond our 17 acres of common ground!

Bob, who lives on Cotton Farm Road, is a past President of our community.

The Hickory Farms Newsletter is published monthly, except for June and August. You may e-mail submissions to The Editor by the 25th of the prior month. Submissions and advertisements **must** be in Microsoft Word format. Advertisements must be prepaid. Past issues 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 exceptions are advertisements, submitted community service type announcements, articles with a byline, and other articles which have been obviously contributed by others. The Editor reserves the right to edit submissions for space or writing style. The Editor, subject to review by the Board of Directors, may reject any submission.

**Hickory Farms Community Association
Annual Dues Notice**

The \$110 annual dues assessment is due starting January 1, 2008.

Payments received after March 31, 2008 will be assessed a \$25.00 late fee.

Dues are used to maintain the common grounds, insure the association and Board members, hold neighborhood picnics, support Neighborhood Watch, and fund all other expenses 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 a \$25 late fee. If a check is returned for insufficient funds, the homeowner must reimburse any expenses incurred by the HFCA.

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 the Association's By-laws to cover HFCA, which are outlined and approved by the homeowners at each Annual Meeting.

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

Please return the completed coupon below with your check.

HFCA ANNUAL DUES

Make your check payable to **HFCA** and send it to:

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

Name: _____

Lot Number: _____

Street Address: _____

(1-2-3-12)