

Volume 12 – No. 4

May 2012

The Hickory Farms Newsletter

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Community Yard Sale (Fall)

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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

We are preparing a new Neighborhood Directory. Please send your contact information to Dante Gilmer at dantegilmer@hotmail.com or 703-978-0621

We had an attempted break-in during April and a theft from a carport during March. Be extra sure to keep your doors locked, your garage door closed, and don't use your carport for storage of valuable items.

You may have missed the recent sidewalk repair work. If you have damaged sidewalk or curbing, report it to VDOT at 800-367-7623 or visit

www.virginiadot.org/travel/citizen.asp

Mark your calendar for the June 15 Hickory Farms community picnic. Details page 6.

There will be no June Newsletter

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



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Your Exterior Remodeling Project Might Need Approval

If you are changing the exterior appearance of your home, you might need the Architectural Control Committee approval. Please don't run the risk of holding up the start of your project by awaiting ACC approval; submit your proposal to the ACC as early as possible. You must have ACC approval before you begin the project. If you are in doubt as to whether approval is required for your particular project (and some do not require approval), please read the Application for Architectural Review. If you are still doubtful, call the chairperson of the ACC (see page 1 of this newsletter for contact information). You may also log onto our community web page – www.hickoryfarms.org – to read the following helpful documents: *Approval of Your Exterior Renovation Project – How to Get It & Tips for Choosing a Contractor*. (1-5-9)

Architectural Control Committee Approvals

4372 Harvester Farm - Basement doors
4318 Farm House – Shed & deck roof/sunscreen
4320 Farm House - Pergola on deck

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Let's Do Our Part to Protect the Potomac Watershed!

Kathy Gillette

Our neighborhood is in the Pohick Creek watershed, which is part of the much larger Potomac River watershed, ultimately running into the Chesapeake Bay. Rabbit Run originates to the north near Barbara Ann Court, off of Burke Station Road. (If you go over to Mosby and walk up the little path through Ted Grieve Park, you can see where it starts.) Rabbit Run then winds through our common areas and crosses under the road on Cotton Farm Road near where Farm House crosses it. It flows south through the Toole property on Glenmere, then into George Mason Forest. It crosses Braddock slightly east of Tapestry Drive and continues south. At the southern boundary of the Northern Virginia Training Center, it intersects a stream that originates on the GMU campus, and gets larger. It flows into Royal Lake and then proceeds under Guinea Road, running through Burke Center. It picks up other streams before entering Middle Run, which runs into South Run, which runs into Pohick Creek on what used to be the Lorton Prison grounds, and then into Pohick Bay.

There are many ways we can protect our watershed. Water runs off impervious surfaces, like our roads, gutters and sidewalks. The water may carry pollutants, like automobile oil and fluids, fertilizer, pesticides, animal feces, etc. These can be carried into our waterways by storm drains and culverts. These pollutants poison our water supply. Below are two actions that damage on our watershed.

If you park a car that leaks oil on the street, the leaked oil gets washed out by rain into the gutter, then into the storm sewer, and directly into OUR watershed. The solution? Fix the leak! It will ultimately save you money in oil and protect our watershed. If you can't afford to fix the leak now, park your car in your carport or garage with a large cardboard box under it and change the cardboard as frequently as needed rather than letting the oil get washed into the watershed.

Hickory Farms has many beautiful lawns and gardens. Application of fertilizer and pesticides may sometimes be needed. Think about what you are putting in your yard and whether it will affect the watershed. Is it really needed? If you apply lawn care products, then mow your grass, and blow your grass into the curb, guess what happens? The grass, plus the fertilizer or pesticides you applied, is then washed into the storm drain and goes directly into OUR watershed.

Check the Virginia Extension article on watersheds at <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/426/426-041/426-041.html> for more on how we can keep our watershed environmentally sound. You may also want to check out www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/pohickcreek.htm. Thanks to Bob Cosgriff for help with this article.

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Do Our Rules and Regulations Need Updating?

The October Annual Meeting is when our community usually considers revisions to our Rules and Regulations. The revisions must be evaluated by the Board of Directors several months in advance, and they are then announced in the Newsletter and via email. If you are aching to amend our Rules and Regulations, please contact Kirk Randall at 703-425-0210 or kirk_randall@hotmail.com by July 30 with your proposals. You can view our current Rules and Regulations at www.hickoryfarms.org → Laws, Rules and Regulations. (5-7)

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- Toilet Repairs
- Bathroom Remodeling

May I Store My Boat or Trailer in My Driveway ?

If it sits forward of the house for more than seven consecutive days, no. The Restrictive Covenants (Our "Constitution") states: "No boats, trailers, tents or any other structure of a portable nature, or portable vehicles other than automobiles shall stay parked forward of any dwelling for a period exceeding seven days."

(5)

Fairfax Swimming Pool Opens Memorial Day Weekend

Join the Fairfax Swimming Pool (home of the Fairfax Frogs Swim and Dive Teams). Less than a block away on Roberts Rd, this is the closest community swimming pool to Hickory Farms. See the sign in front of the pool for membership information.

(5)

We Need Your Contact Information for the New Neighborhood Directory

The Board of Directors is working on an updated neighborhood directory (the last one was in 2008). Please send your name(s), address, phone number(s), and email address(es) to Dante Gilmer at dantegilmer@hotmail.com or 703-978-0621. Children's names are optional and their ages will not be included in the directory. The directory will be distributed only to Hickory Farms homeowners and residents.

♪♪ "Schools Out for Summer!!" ♪♪

Come join your Hickory Farm neighbors to Kick Off
Summer 2012



June 15, 2012

Upper Common Area (Big Field Side)

5:00 pm - Sundown

HFCA will provide paper goods & pizza.

To accommodate commuter traffic pizza will be served at:

5:30 pm

&

7:00 pm

Please bring something to share - see your street's assignment:

- Salads - Country Squire, Wheatfield & Tumbleweed
- Drinks - Farm House & Harvester Farm
- Desserts - Cotton Farm, Still Meadow, Round Top & Spinning Wheel

Don't forget your blankets and chairs!

Adults - BYOB

Please RSVP to DudleyTrade@verizon.net for food count!

Common Area Don'ts

Dumping of Yard Debris - The Common Areas are part of everyone's back yard. However, yard debris such as grass clippings and branches are being dumped in several spots. PLEASE do not dump debris in the Common Areas. For one thing, it is a violation of our Rules and Regulations. Besides being unsightly, these dumping areas attract rats and other wild animals. Your trash service will pick up yard debris separately for recycling from spring through fall, and it will pick up yard debris as part of your trash service during the winter. If you have been putting debris in the Common Areas, please move it out to the street on debris day or haul it to the Fairfax County dump on West Ox Road. The woods can't decompose more debris than it generates itself, meaning the clippings and branches you dump in the Common Areas overloads the area's ability to decompose the material.

Vehicles - The Common Areas (woods, fields, and walking paths) are for the enjoyment of all Hickory Farms residents their guests. This invitation does not include the use of motorized vehicles such as mopeds and motor scooters (our insurance doesn't cover them and they tear up the grass). *Our rules prohibit driving on common areas.* (5)

Group Purchase – GMU Fitness Center Only \$200/year Jennifer Maloney

Hickory Farms residents may purchase a membership to the George Mason University recreational athletic facilities for \$200 per person. The cost covers use of pools and gym equipment at the Aquatic and Fitness Center, the RAC Building, and the Skyline Facility. You can also participate in aerobics classes (there is an extra \$8 fee for martial arts, yoga, and pilates). Memberships are for individuals. Each member over three years of age requires their own membership. The fee is the same for children as adults. You will receive a parking pass with each membership. Children under 16 may not use the weight room equipment, even with adult supervision. For more information on the facilities, such as classes, hours of operation, and the equipment available, please visit <http://recsports.gmu.edu>. If you are interested in purchasing a membership, please contact Jennifer Maloney at jmaloney57@gmail.com. She will be coordinating a round of memberships that begin in June. The initial membership fee will be \$175/person, and the memberships will last until March 1, 2013. You will need to deliver a check payable to HFCA, full name, address, and email address to Jennifer by May 20. Her address is 4335 Farm House. A GMU parking pass is included in the membership.

This Month's Home Maintenance Checklist

Deck Cleaning – Clean and seal your wooden deck, if needed
Termite Inspection – Houses the age of Hickory Farms will have been attacked by termites by now. If your home has never been treated, get it inspected ASAP! Many pest control companies will inspect for free; termite inspections are recommended every 3 years.
Dehumidifier Setup – Now is the time to set up your dehumidifier for the summer (if you use one)!
Gutter Cleaning – Clean out your gutters! Overflowing gutters lead to ground erosion and wet basements.

Neighborhood Watch

John Kitzmiller

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! Contact: John Kitzmiller 703-503-3443

Fri	May 4	Mike Martin	John Kitzmiller
Sat	May 5	Pete Scala	Rose Scala
Fri	May 11	Stan Lee	Jim Marshall
Sat	May 12	Pam Barrett	Tom Barrett
Fri	May 18	John Verheul	Tammy Verheul
Sat	May 19	Harry Herchert	Ginny Herchert
Fri	May 25	Dave Maurer	Sanjeev Munjal
Sat	May 26	David Froberg	Beverly Froberg
Fri	June 1	Jaime Gutierrez	Ed Wagner
Sat	June 2	Dave Dempster	Dawn Dempster
Fri	June 8	Susan Mulliner	Brenton Mulliner
Sat	June 9	Ron Arnold	Charles Walters
Fri	June 15		
Sat	June 16	Greg Gillette	Kathy Gillette
Fri	June 22		
Sat	June 23	Kirk Randall	Chris Woody
Fri	June 29	Jeff Lindsay	Larry Rogers
Sat	June 30	Angel Meza	Jason Meza
Fri	July 6	Eric Maribojoc	Clarisa Dacanay
Sat	July 7	Bob Montgomery	George Rosenkranz
Fri	July 13	Mike Martin	John Kitzmiller
Sat	July 14	Pete Scala	Rose Scala
Fri	July 20	Stan Lee	Jim Marshall
Sat	July 21	Pam Barrett	Tom Barrett
Fri	July 27	John Verheul	Tammy Verheul
Sat	July 28	Harry Herchert	Ginny Herchert

The Birds of Hickory Farms

Bob Cosgriff

It's springtime in Hickory Farms, which always brings a variety of colorful songbirds, including bluebirds, to our neighborhood. This year, thanks to Junior Girl Scout Troop 2046, the existing Hickory Farms bluebird trail has been augmented by eight new bluebird boxes. Troop 2046, which meets at Oak View Elementary School and includes three girls from Hickory Farms, adopted the name "The Bluebird Troop" and undertook a project of building the boxes according to specifications of the Virginia Bluebird Society (VBS). The girls even had the chance to meet with the president of VBS to learn about these beautiful and beneficial birds. The troop leaders were put in touch with Bob Cosgriff, HFCA trail monitor. Bob and the VBS president jointly walked the grounds to pick the best sites for the new boxes. Finally, on March 24, the girls completed the project and installed the boxes, each brightly painted and

numbered. Counting the older HFCA boxes, we now have 16 boxes spread out in the lower and upper Common Areas. This will give us the chance to do some scientific experimentation. For example, some boxes have predator guards on their poles, while others don't. This should give us data about the effectiveness of such devices. Also, the number of boxes and distance between boxes differ from VBS recommendations. Nesting bluebirds need a certain amount of territory and are somewhat intolerant of each other. We will be able to test just how close bluebirds will nest to each other and how box placement affects this. It is known that bluebirds and tree swallows are tolerant of each other. The swallows are also aggressive enough to drive off English Sparrows, a non-native bird, which often take over bluebird boxes. So we have paired a few boxes to see if we can attract both bluebirds and tree swallows and reduce the number of English Sparrow nestings.

As of the time of publication, there is one Eastern Bluebird nest with eggs, one Tufted Titmouse nest with eggs, and several boxes with some nesting material in them. We have had two failed Carolina Chickadee nests due to predation. Hopefully, more bluebirds will move in, along with tree swallows and house wrens. It is still relatively early in the breeding season and in a good year, birds often have two or even three broods. The HFCA trail monitoring records will be provided to the VBS to add to its database, which is part of a nationwide database that covers bluebirds and other cavity-nesting species.

Residents are encouraged to walk through the grounds to observe the boxes. However, to minimize disturbance, we ask that you not approach too closely or open the boxes. Rather, listen and look to locate the parent birds as they enter and leave their nestbox.

Of course, other birds besides bluebirds call Hickory Farms home. Among the most interesting, and certainly the most vocal, are three species of the family *Mimidae*, the so-called "mimic thrushes," although they are not thrushes at all! These three birds are the Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottus*) (whose scientific name means "many-throated mimic"), Gray Catbird (*Dumatella carolinensis*), and Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*). The mockingbird is light gray, with white outer tail feathers and vivid white wing patches. The catbird is all gray, with a black cap. The thrasher, as its species name '*rufum*' suggests, is brown, actually more of a warm cinnamon color, with a white breast filled with dark streaks, and a noticeably long tail. All birds are fairly comfortable in suburban settings like Hickory Farms, and all three nest in our neighborhood. It is not uncommon to find a mockingbird or catbird nest in a shrub or briar bushes in a backyard. Thrashers nest in the wooded areas in the Common Areas, particularly the lower field. All three birds are vociferous, with the mockingbird starting early and going late with its ceaseless singing. As the family name suggests, these birds do mimic the songs of other birds. The catbird usually gives itself away by a distinctive, cat-like 'meowing' sound. So if you hear what appears to sound like a non-stop cacophony of sounds coming from somewhere in a bush, most likely you've got one of the mimics nearby.

In addition to providing visual delight and free concerts, all our bird neighbors benefit us by eating large quantities of insects (including mosquitoes), harmful caterpillars, and grubs. Now through the end of May is the best time to get out and see the songbirds, such as warblers, as they pass through, or in some cases, settle down to nest here in Hickory Farms. With our 17 acres of common ground, comprising a variety of habitat, it's easy to see why birds love Hickory Farms.

Invasive Plant Garlic Mustard Is Flowering Now!

Kathy Gillette



Garlic mustard is out there now! It is named for its leaves that smell like garlic when crushed. Garlic mustard is an invasive plant that produces thousands of seeds per plant, and these seeds can be viable for up to five years. The seeds are projected several feet away from the plant. Garlic mustard typically grows alongside other woodland plants such as wild ginger and trillium. The garlic mustard crowds out other native plants and monopolizes resources such as sun, water, soil, and minerals. Garlic mustard can be controlled by simply pulling the entire plant and root system. It's easy to pull them when the ground is damp. Bag and dispose of these plants. Get them now while they are flowering so you can prevent them from going to seed. See

www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/alpe1.htm for more information.

The 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. Advertisers in this newsletter are not endorsed by the HFCA. The editor is Kirk Randall 703-425-0210 – kirk_randall@hotmail.com