

Volume 7 – No. 9

November 2007

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 – Dave Dempster
703-503-0561
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
Ellie Codding 703-426-4606

Neighborhood Volunteers

Welcome New Neighbors –
Claire Coleman 703-425-6059 &
Nancy Bentley 703-978-0373
Newsletter & Web Site –
Kirk Randall 703-425-0210
Annual 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 – 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

Thanks to everyone who attended the October 29 Annual Meeting. I'm delighted that we had the largest turnout I have seen in years. The reason was, of course, the proposal to build a playground in the common area. Keith Ferguson, the chairman of the Playground Committee, gave a presentation on the proposal. After a Q&A session, homeowners expressed their views before the vote was taken. The result of the vote was that the proposal was defeated. There appeared to be no hard feelings on either side, as both sides had the opportunity to present their cases, and the majority prevailed. I'm proud of the manner in which the discussion and vote were carried out, as everyone kept their emotions in check.

I am pleased to welcome Barin Chakrabarti and Bilal Sayyed to the Board. Continuing on the Board for another year will be Rich Dudley, Dante Gilmer, Jaime Gutierrez, and me. I want to thank Ellie Codding and Dave Dempster for serving on the Board this past year.

Treasurer Jaime Gutierrez presented a proposed budget which called for a \$10 per year increase in dues. The new dues level was approved. Annual dues are now \$110 per year, with 2008 dues being due January 1, 2008.

I look forward to serving you as a member of the Board next year. I hope you had a Happy Halloween, and have a Happy Thanksgiving.

John Kitzmiller

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

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

Neighborhood Watch Schedule – Neighborhood Security

Dave Dempster

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 at 703-503-0561 (ddhokies@cox.net).

Fri	November 2	Bob Bentley	Nancy Bentley
Sat	November 3	Ron Cruz	Louise Cruz
Fri	November 9	Jaime Gutierrez	Ed Wagner
Sat	November 10	Harry Herchert	Ginny Herchert
Fri	November 16	Pingjun Li	Wang Chan Cheng
Sat	November 17	Greg Gillette	Kathy Gillette
Fri	November 23	Dave Maurer	Sanjeev Munjal
Sat	November 24	Bob Sottile	Lee Sottile
Fri	November 30	John Kitzmiller	Brand Niemann
Sat	December 1	Susan Mulliner	Brenton Mulliner
Fri	December 7	Dave Dempster	Dawn Dempster
Sat	December 8	David Froberg	Beverly Froberg
Fri	December 14	Ron Arnold	Charles Walters
Sat	December 15	Kirk Randall	
Fri	December 21	Bob Cosgriff	Don Klingemann
Sat	December 22	Jeff Lindsay	Larry Rogers
Fri	December 28	Angel Meza	Jason Meza
Sat	December 29	Eric Maribojoc	Clarisa Dacanay

Scenic Remodeling Advertisement Here

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)

Furnace & Heat Pump Filter Change – Replace paper/fiberglass filters. Vacuum or wash electronic filter elements. A dirty filter makes your fan work harder, using more electricity.

Outside Water Faucet Shutdown – Turn off outside water faucets using the inside shutoff valves. Open the faucets to drain remaining water. Drain water hoses before storage.

Bathroom Check – Check faucets and showers for leaks. Test toilets for leakage by placing a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Wait a few hours. If you see coloring in the bowl, you need to have your tank flapper replaced. Check caulking around bathtubs and showers for areas where water may leak and cause damage. Check for leaks under toilet and sink. Locate the Ground Fault Interrupter (usually in the electrical outlet in one of the bathrooms); press the test button.

Lawn Mower Shutdown – After cutting the lawn for the last time this season: Let the mower run out of gas (this keeps the gas from gumming up over the winter). Remove and clean the spark plug – don't replace it just yet. Change the oil. Replace the air filter. Remove and sharpen the blade. Scrape off grass clippings under the deck. Apply a light coating of oil to the underside of the deck. Squirt a spoonful of oil in the cylinder and pull the starter rope a few times to coat the cylinder wall. Replace the spark plug.

Are you a new resident – homeowner or renter ?

Please call one of our Welcome Wagon representatives.
They have been known to bring snacks when they visit ! (3-7-11)
Claire Coleman 703-425-6059
Nancy Bentley 703-978-0373

Disposing of Your Leaves and Yard Debris

Please Don't Rake Your Leaves Into the Street !

Fall is leaf raking time. If we lived just a few blocks north in Fairfax City, we could just rake our leaves into the street and city workers would vacuum them up. But, alas, we live in Fairfax County, so ***please don't rake your leaves into the street !*** Here's the skinny on disposing of your leaves (and other yard debris) in our community.

- Under Fairfax County ordinance, the trash collector is supposed to remove up to six bags of leaves on a yard debris pickup day. If you put out more than six, the extras may or may not be taken. To its credit, however, AAA almost always picks up everything you leave out.
- If the trash collector doesn't take all of your leaves on your yard debris pickup day, please don't just leave them in the street or the parkway (that strip of grass between the street

and sidewalk) for the next week's pickup. The bags kill the grass if left on the parkway, or block the mailman if left near the mailbox.

- Please don't put your trash, recycling, or yard debris out several days before pickup; it detracts from the nice appearance of our neighborhood. Under our [Rules and Regulations](#), refuse should be put out on the collection day or the prior evening.
- Speaking of pickups, trash collections may not occur before 6 AM. If you're awakened by the sound of trash trucks before 6 AM, please first call the trash company to report the problem. If they don't comply with your request, you may report them to the Fairfax County Zoning Enforcement office at 703-324-1300 between 8 AM and 4:30 PM.
- Under Fairfax County Ordinance, ***you should not use black plastic bags for yard debris such as leaves***. You are supposed to use clear plastic bags. The trash collector may refuse to take black bags because its workers can't tell whether you put garbage or yard debris such as leaves in the bags.
- Place twigs and branches in a trash can or cut them to approximately four feet in length and bundle them using twine. The trash collectors may refuse to take them if they are not bundled.
- Please do not dump leaves, tree branches, and grass clippings in nearby common areas or woods. Not only is it against our [Rules and Regulations](#), but it creates a tremendous burden on the ecosystem. Wooded areas are ecologically balanced; they can decompose just about as much organic matter as the trees themselves produce. When you add your leaves, branches, or grass clippings, it overloads the ecosystem and they don't decompose. The result is a wooded area that looks and smells like a dump. Help keep our common grounds and woods beautiful by not dumping leaves, tree branches, and grass clippings there. (11)

Recent Consumer Checkbook Articles

This month's Consumer Checkbook (now on newsstands or at the library) features Consumer Reports-style ratings of roofers and pest control firms. Recent issues include ratings on heating and AC contractors, homeowners insurance, tree care services, replacement windows, locksmiths, and fence builders.

AAA Trash Holiday Schedule

AAA does not pick up trash, recycling, or yard debris Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years Day. Call 703-818-8222 or visit www.aaatrash.com to learn if there will be an alternate pickup day. (11-12)

Parking on the Street

Fairfax County parking regulations prohibit blocking driveway entrances. Do not park closer than 10 feet to either side of driveway entrances. Do not park closer than 15 feet to a stop sign or fire hydrant. Call the Fairfax County Police non-emergency number at 703-691-2131 to report parking violations. (11)

Vinyl Siding Cleaning Tips

Nearly half of our homes have had our vinyl siding replaced in the last four years. If your siding is getting dirty, you may consider cleaning it. Wash vinyl siding with a soft cloth or ordinary long-handled, soft bristle brush. For textured surfaces, use only a soft bristle brush to keep the grooves in the texture stain-free. For best results, start at the bottom of the house and work up and rinse the cleaning solution completely before it dries. If your house has brick facing, cover the brick so that it is not affected by the runoff. If you use a pressure washer, hold the power washer straight at eye level to keep the water on top of the siding where it can clean most effectively. Do not aim the power washer upward as water may collect behind the siding. You can visit the www.vinylsiding.org website which has Vinyl Siding Cleaning tips. Click "About Vinyl Siding" and then "Caring for Vinyl Siding" for cleaning tips.

Parking on the Yard

A vehicle can be parked on the front yard for **no more than** 48 hours to allow residents to unload, work on the vehicle, and/or clean it. If you would like to report a violation, please contact Fairfax County Zoning at 703-324-1300 (11)

And the Survey Says

I want to thank the 25 residents who responded to the recent newsletter reader survey. The respondents are pleased with the newsletter, giving it a "Very Satisfied" rating. They are also satisfied with its length, the publishing of rules and regulations, the inclusion of advertising, and the inclusion of school group fundraising notices and Fairfax County originated articles. When I asked for suggestions for kinds of articles to include, several folks commented that they particularly liked Bob Cosgriff's articles on the wildlife in our common grounds as well as the series of local history articles that ran a few years ago. So, please keep them coming, Bob! If anyone else is a budding author, please contact me with your proposed articles and we can schedule a publishing date. Who knows, perhaps we have a future Pulitzer Prize winner in the community! The Editor

Be Considerate of Your Mailman

The mailman can deliver our mail more quickly if he/she doesn't have to leave the truck to walk around trash cans. Help the mailman by placing your trash cans at least 12 feet away from your mailbox. (5-11)

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Claire Coleman 703-425-6059
Nancy Bentley 703-978-0373

Subscribe to the West Springfield Police District Newsletter

The West Springfield Police District Station, which serves our community, offers an on-line newsletter. It includes useful tips for all citizens as well as information about crimes committed in our area. To subscribe, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/newsletter

Editorial

The Annual Meeting – Our Exercise in Democracy

The time at our Annual Meeting was largely spent discussing and voting on the playground proposal. The good news is that 77 homeowners participated in the Annual Meeting (either in person or by designating a trusted neighbor to vote on their behalf). This is more than double the number of households that participated in last year's meeting; this is very good news. Moreover, I'm willing to bet someone a quarter that this is the largest turnout of HF homeowners in many, many years. The sad news is that 117 homeowners chose not to participate in the Annual Meeting. It is unfortunate that 60% of our homeowners sat on the sidelines because it is through this Annual Meeting that we have an opportunity to meet and greet our neighbors, bring important issues to the attention of the Board, discuss proposals such as the playground project, and elect new Board members who will act as guardians for our community.

The playground discussion benefitted from the several weeks-long interchange of facts and opinions through the HF email group, in which about 100 residents participate. Even if you can't come to Annual Meetings or other activities such as community cleanups, picnics, or Neighborhood Watch, I hope that you'll join the email group to receive an occasional message from your HF neighbors and learn about security concerns, children's activities, lost pets, wildlife alerts, requests for referrals to tradesmen, etc. (emails usually run no more than one a week, although the recent exchanges about the playground proposal ran about one a day). This discussion forum has been ably moderated by Rebekah Moore, who is soon to be passing the reins on to other HF volunteers (Let's all give her a big "thank you!"). All you need to do to participate is send an email to HickoryFarms-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and look for a response from Rebekah. Please sign up today.

The Editor

2008 Annual Dues are Due January 1

Please mail your check for \$110 to Hickory Farms Community Association, P.O. Box 2239, Fairfax VA 22031 The 2008 approved budget, which reflects the new \$110 dues, may be found below.

HICKORY FARMS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
2007 & 2008 Budgets

	2007 BUDGET FINAL	2008 BUDGET APPROVED
INCOME		
Annual dues	\$19,800.00	\$21,780.00
Interest - Checking	\$4.43	\$5.00
VPOAA Packages	\$400.00	\$200.00
Prior Year Dues	\$0.00	\$0.00
Late Fees	\$425.00	\$0.00
Legal Costs/Fees	\$312.34	\$0.00
Advertising	\$284.00	\$140.00
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Income	\$21,225.77	\$22,125.00
 EXPENSES		
Tax Preparation/Audit	\$260.00	\$265.00
Bank Charges	\$0.00	\$0.00
Director's Insurance	\$1,350.00	\$1,350.00
Liability Insurance	\$289.00	\$300.00
Surety Insurance	\$862.00	\$900.00
Legal Fees	\$680.51	\$500.00
Landscape/Maintenance	\$15,370.00	\$16,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$125.00	\$150.00
Social	\$494.97	\$500.00
Neighborhood Watch	\$0.00	\$0.00
Newsletter Printing	\$1,618.88	\$1,650.00
Taxes/Fees	\$187.70	\$190.00
VPOAA Packages	\$9.98	\$70.00
Postage	\$193.85	\$200.00
Total Expenses	\$21,441.89	\$22,075.00
 Budget - Surplus / (Deficit)	 (\$216.12)	 \$50.00

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

(Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department)

New technology has made it possible to produce a low-cost, reliable carbon monoxide (CO) alarm for the home. But why do we need a CO alarm? Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless and tasteless gas. It causes about 300 accidental fatalities in homes each year; thousands more are treated in hospitals for CO poisoning. Carbon monoxide combines with hemoglobin in our blood and robs the blood of the oxygen our body needs. Early symptoms of exposure include headache, fatigue, nausea and confused thinking (so victims cannot think clearly enough to get assistance). Without treatment, the victim will lose consciousness, and if no help is given will lose their life.

Carbon monoxide is produced by combustion.

- Common causes are:
- Defective gas or oil furnaces and water heaters.
- Cracked chimney flues.
- Indoor use of charcoal grills.
- Use of a gas oven or range to warm a room.
- Running a car in an enclosed area.
- Closing the fireplace damper before the fire is completely out.

Carbon monoxide accidents are preventable. Actions you should take to protect your family are:

- Every fall you should have a qualified technician inspect your gas furnace and appliances.
- Never allow your car to run in an enclosed area, especially if it is attached to your house.
- Make sure your fireplace is in good repair and do not close the damper before the fire is out.
- Install CO alarms to give your family a warning if CO is building up in your house.

Another very important point to remember is that you still need a working smoke alarm on every level of your home. The CO alarm does not sense smoke or fire. Smoke alarms are needed to give your family early warning if there is a fire or smoke in your home.

If you are concerned about whether your furnace and/or appliances are working properly, contact your contractor to have an inspection. If you have questions about your gas furnaces or appliance, contact your gas company. If your CO alarm activates, leave the residence and call 911 from a neighbor's house.

For more information about home safety, call the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department's Public Information and Life Safety Education Section at 703-246-3801, TTY 711.

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.