

Volume 11 – No. 7

October 2011

The Hickory Farms

Newsletter

Board of Directors

President

John Kitzmiller 503-3443

Vice President

Keith Ferguson 323-1067

Treasurer

Dante Gilmer 978-0621

Secretary

Jaime Gutierrez 425-7919

Community Grounds, Paths
& Woods - Keith Ferguson
323-1067

Architectural Control Comm.

Kirk Randall 425-0210

Other Volunteers

Neighborhood Watch

John Kitzmiller 503-3443

Welcome New Neighbors

Joyce Kitzmiller 503-3443

Newsletter & Web Site

Kirk Randall 425-0210

Sarah Maurer – Assoc.

Editor

Community Yard Sale (Fall)

Pete Scala 764-0730

Email (Listserv)

Heather Webb 425-1347

Ellie Codding 426-4606

Social Committee

Patty Dudley 503-2060

Dawn Dempster 503-0561

Lynn Welch 978-4113

Architectural Control

Committee

Keith Ferguson

Donna Garfield

Greg Gillette

Kirk Randall (Chairman)

Carole Rogers

Larry Rogers

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

**Changes about your
annual dues are coming
soon. The deadline for
your 2012 payment of
\$150 is now January 7.**

**Annual Meeting at Green
Acres School/Center
October 11 at 8 PM. If you
can't attend, please
complete the enclosed
proxy form.**


**Two Board members
are retiring. Please step
up and volunteer.**

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" -- Be sure to click the "Individual Emails" option.

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- Water Main Repair
- Gas Leaks
- Gas Repairs
- Toilet Repairs
- Bathroom Remodeling

**Group Purchases - Pest Control Services - Tree Work
 Pressure Washing (Siding & Decks) – Home Energy Audits**

Got tree damage from hurricane Irene? Kirk Randall is organizing his biennial tree work group purchase for this December or January (when prices are significantly lower). If interested, please email your name and address to kirk_randall@hotmail.com (that's an underscore between names) or call 703-425-0210. He will contact you in December for details on the work you want done.

Stefan Schwarz recently had a number of snakes invade his home. He contacted Adcock Trapping Service, who specializes in tracking down and eliminating snakes, rodents, raccoons, squirrels, and all other kinds of critters. However, they do not treat termite and bug infestations. He had an inspection where they discovered a 1-2" gap between the siding and the foundation. They also found that the front stoop was not attached to the home. He hired Adcock to do the work, which he felt was fairly priced. They guarantee their work for five years. Stefan has seen no evidence of snakes since the work was completed about a month ago. Adcock is rated "A" by Angie's List. Stefan spoke with Adcock about a group purchase for our HF neighbors. He was told a discount would be available for as few as five customers. If you are interested in having a home inspection completed by Adcock, please send your contact information to sschwarz13@gmail.com or 703-503-6996. He'll then contact you with the details of the deal.

Our arrangement for pressure washing discounts is still on. The cost for washing the siding for the smaller homes is \$175 and \$200 for larger homes. Call Rob Banks - Northern Virginia Pressure Washing Service - at 703-536-8449 and mention you are with Hickory Farms. He is also offering reduced pricing to our homeowners for deck cleaning services.

Finally, it's not too late to contact Home Energy Savings Solutions for a home energy analysis/audit for \$300. "Mo" can also tell you whether there is still \$250 Virginia rebate money available for you that would bring your net cost down to only \$50. Home Energy Saving Solutions
703-260-1933
info@VirginiaEnergyAudit.net,
www.VirginiaEnergyAudit.net

Architectural Control Committee Approvals

4340 Still Meadow – Paint front and side doors
10118 Spinning Wheel – Fence
4358 Farm House – Rear addition
4354 Farm House – Fence
4359 Farm House – Fence

Annual Dues/Assessments Must Be Paid By January 7, 2012

In recent years, the number of homeowners who have paid their annual assessments (dues) late, or not at all, has increased. While there may be many reasons for this, the fact remains that our annual assessments are a small price to pay to live in a magnificent community such as ours, comprising homes that are valued at a half million dollars or more, and sharing the enjoyment of our 17 acres of common areas.

When homeowners don't pay their annual dues, the rest of us have to make up the difference. In order to protect the interests of the community at large, the Board has decided to tighten up the collection of annual assessments, so that compliant homeowners aren't left holding the bag for their non-paying neighbors.

Starting in 2012, assessments/dues checks will be due no later than January 7.

Checks that are not postmarked or in the physical possession of the Treasurer by January 7 will be considered late and will require a \$50 late fee.

On February 1, delinquent accounts will be turned over to the HFCA's attorneys for collection. At this point, the amount owed by a delinquent homeowner will be the \$150 dues, the \$50 late charge, and attorney fees.



Learn Tai Chi

Classes are taught by Hickory Farms resident Dante Gilmer.

Tai Chi is great for relieving stress and improving balance, coordination, flexibility and focus.

10am Sundays & 11:10/12:10 Wednesdays
Our studio is just minutes from Hickory Farms at 11226 Waples Mill Road
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703.862.2192.

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To Report a Burned Out Streetlight

... or one that's on during daylight hours, too. 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. (10)

Annual Dues Will Increase to \$150 in 2012

After reviewing the HFCA's finances, the Board of Directors determined that an increase in the annual assessment increase was needed. They voted in October to increase the amount by 20% to \$150 beginning with calendar year 2012. The last increase was three years ago, when dues were raised 14% from \$110 to \$125. Payments must be postmarked or in the physical possession of the Treasurer by January 7, 2012. Mail your checks to:

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

How Many Dogs Can I Have at My Home?

Under [Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance Section 2-512](#), most homes in Hickory Farms may have no more than two dogs. If your lot size is more than about a quarter of an acre, you may have more. Please check the ordinance before you bring home that third dog. The Fairfax County Zoning Department (703-324-1300) – NOT our community association – enforces this ordinance (10)

Bicycling and Dog Walking Do Not Mix – This Person Deserves a \$250 Fine!

The folks on Harvester Farm Lane have been greeted many mornings with sidewalks, driveways, yards, and even the school children's bus stop that are covered with dog feces. Reports are that the culprit is a young man who "walks" his dog by dragging it behind him while he rides his bicycle. Since the bicyclist doesn't even stop to let the dog relieve himself (and clean up!), the dog poops while being dragged behind the bicycle. So, not only is this person "littering" our sidewalks (which is illegal in Fairfax County), but this sounds like it could be animal cruelty. If this continues, you might call the Fairfax County Humane Society at 703-385-7387 www.hsfc.org or the police non-emergency number at 703-691-2131. By the way, the Fairfax County fine for not picking up after your dog is \$250.

Two Board of Directors Superstars are Retiring Please Consider Joining the Board

After many years of service to our community, Jaime Gutierrez and Keith Ferguson – both Harvester Farm residents – are retiring from the Board. Keith has served for more than three years as Common Grounds Coordinator. Jaime has served more than eight years as respectively President, Treasurer, Secretary and Member At-Large. We hope you will give these volunteers a handshake and well-deserved pat on the back for their contributions to the community.

While Jaime and Keith are going to be tough acts to follow, the remaining Board members – John Kitzmiller, Dante Gilmer, and Kirk Randall – hope that you will consider joining them on the Board of Directors. They can't do it all; they need your help.

Most Board business these days is done via email discussions and the members meet in person only every two months or so. So, your contribution to the Board shouldn't be a burden on your other responsibilities.

The community will be holding Board elections at the Annual Meeting on October 11 at 8 PM at the Green Acres School/Center on Sideburn Road. Please come and nominate yourself to become a Board member. If you can't attend, then please contact John, Dante, or Kirk to express your interest. Their contact information is on page 1.

Cluttered Carport?

We sometimes accumulate just too much stuff. That stuff frequently finds its way into our carports, overburdening them with clutter and creating an unsightly appearance in the community. Our Rules and Regulations clearly state that "carports shall not be used for storage in a manner that creates an unsightly appearance." A handful of homeowners have already received letters asking them to tidy up their carports. So please clean out your clutter before more letters get sent out. If your stuff is nonessential, sell it off at the upcoming community yard sale! Or, if it is really needed, please consider moving it to a back yard shed or your basement. Thank you for your cooperation and consideration for your neighbors.

For Three-Story Split-Level Homes Only

Quite a few of us participated in the recent \$50 home energy analysis (audit) group purchase from Home Energy Saving Solutions (HESS). I recently spoke with the owner of the company, who has so far evaluated four three-story split-level homes that have crawlspaces. He told me that all of these homes suffer from the same design defect. While the crawl space was built to be ventilated to the outdoors, the builder added an entry from the crawl space into the heated/air conditioned living space - probably so the crawl space could be used for storage. The exterior walls of the crawl space itself were not insulated, the floor was not sealed against moisture (concrete is not impervious to moisture), pipes were not insulated, as were ducts in some homes. These deficiencies can lead to freezing pipes and moisture, humidity and mildew problems in the living area, not to mention greater heating and cooling costs. You might want to have a Virginia certified energy auditor check your crawlspace. You could call HESS (703-260-1933), who participated in the HF group purchase, or choose one from the Virginia Department of Energy's list of certified auditors at www.dmme.virginia.gov/DE/ARRA-Public/EnergyAuditInfo.shtml . Even if you don't want to have repair work done right now, it would be useful to know exactly what is going on in your crawlspace, should a problem arise in the future. My rough estimate is that a total fix should cost no more than \$1,800, and most homes should cost considerably less. There is a 10% federal income tax credit in 2011 for this kind of work, as well as a 20% [Virginia Department of Energy rebate](#) (which may expire soon when the state's funds are used up).

Drivers, Skateboarders & Bicyclists – Please Be Careful!

There have been a number of near misses between children bicycling or skateboarding on the streets of Hickory Farms and cars, particularly at the corner of Cotton Farm and Farm House.

- **Parents** – Please caution your children about playing in streets; it would be tragic if they met up with a much larger and heavier vehicle such as an automobile.
- **Drivers** – Please be extra careful about obeying the 25 MPH speed limit, stopping at all STOP signs (even if the intersection is empty), and looking all around you for playing children.
- **Children** – Shouting curse words and “flipping the bird” at passing motorists are not only extremely rude, but are frequently considered as “fighting words,” which could lead to a dangerous confrontation with a driver.

Parking Your Boat or Trailer in Your Driveway – For *Short Term ONLY*

Article VII, Number 11 of the Hickory Farms Covenants (our “constitution”) states: No boats, trailers, tents or any structure of a portable nature, or portable vehicle other than automobiles shall stay parked forward of any dwelling for a period exceeding seven days. (10)

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

Sat	October 1	Bob Montgomery	George Rosenkranz
Fri	October 7	Mike Martin	
Sat	October 8	Pete Scala	Rose Scala
Fri	October 14	Stan Lee	Jim Marshall
Sat	October 15	Pam Barrett	Tom Barrett
Fri	October 21	John Verheul	Tammy Verheul
Sat	October 22	Harry Herchert	Ginny Herchert
Fri	October 28	Dave Maurer	Sanjeev Munjal
Sat	October 29	David Froberg	Beverly Froberg
Fri	November 4	Jaime Gutierrez	Ed Wagner
Sat	November 5	Dave Dempster	Dawn Dempster
Fri	November 11	Susan Mulliner	Brenton Mulliner
Sat	November 12	Ron Arnold	Charles Walters
Fri	November 18	Bob Cosgriff	Don Klingemann
Sat	November 19	Kirk Randall	Chris Woody
Fri	November 25	Jeff Lindsay	Larry Rogers
Sat	November 26	Angel Meza	Jason Meza

This Month's Home Maintenance Checklist

<p>Dehumidifier Shutdown – Clean out the dehumidifier bucket and vacuum the coils when you shut it down for the season.</p>
<p>Smoke Alarms & Carbon Monoxide Detectors Check – Replace smoke detector batteries (don't wait for them to die). Press test buttons on carbon monoxide detectors. Open each unit and vacuum dust that could interfere with operation. Carbon monoxide detector batteries are usually not replaceable by the user; replace the unit when indicated on the unit's instructions.</p>
<p>Water Heater Flushing – Drain the hot water heater to remove sediment that makes the heater run inefficiently. Turn the gas valve to the “pilot” setting. Shut off the cold water supply valve. Connect a hose from the water heater drain valve to the nearby floor drain or outdoors. Open a nearby hot water faucet to prevent a vacuum. Open the water heater drain valve. When the water starts running cold, close the heater drain valve and remove the hose. Open the cold water supply valve. When water flows freely from the open sink faucet, turn off the faucet. Turn the gas control to the “On” setting.</p>
<p>Furnace & Heat Pump Fall Checkup – Schedule a fall service checkup or do it yourself.</p>

Are Your Ceilings About to Collapse?

About a year ago, there was an online discussion about homeowners who had experienced collapsing ceilings, specifically carport, garage, and top story ceilings collapsing from their own weight. The problem is that while the drywall was installed with nails, which was common practice at the time, our builder sometimes did not also apply construction adhesive. The underside of the carport, garage, and top story trusses are exposed to extremes of temperature and humidity which, over the years, pushes the nails out of the wood, thereby causing the drywall to sag. Every one of the Editor's top floor bedrooms has had sagging ceilings. In fact, some of the nails had completely broken free from the wood, and it was just a matter of time before the whole ceiling would have collapsed. Note that, while the cause is pretty much the same as for "nail pops" that will show up on your walls, sagging ceilings frequently don't exhibit nail pops because the nail head itself is pulled downwards with the drywall. To see if you have this problem, take a straight edge such as a yardstick and place it all around the ceiling. You can readily see if there are sags. If you do have sagging ceilings, you should consider having a contractor screw the ceiling back up with drywall screws, before it falls and ruins your whole day!

Boarding Houses Are Illegal in Fairfax County

You know it when you see it — too many people living in a house, or people living in a garage, basement or shed. It is illegal to operate a boarding house without the proper permits. Fairfax County's zoning, building and safety codes set out what's legal. These codes define how many people may live in a house, how much space they need, and what is considered safe.

How many people may live in a house?

- No more than one family, plus two renters, may live in one house.
- No more than four unrelated people may live in one house.

If you have a concern, you may [file a complaint online](#) or call the Fairfax County Zoning Enforcement Branch office at (703)-324-1300.

To learn more, see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/code/property/overcrowding.htm> (10)

**Get a \$250 Rebate for a New Water Heater
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Call Washington Gas or visit www.washingtongasliving.com/RebateProgram.xml

**Got a Business?
Residents May Advertise in this Newsletter at a 15% Discount**

Visit www.Hickoryfarms.org -> Newsletter

Parking on the Yard – Short Term Only

A vehicle may 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. Report violations to Fairfax County Zoning at 703-324-1300.

(10)

Recent Real Estate Activity

Address	Model	Bed rooms	Baths	Listing Price	Sold Price	Seller Subsidy	Days on Market	Status / Date Sold
(1) 10031 Wheatfield	Colonial	4	2.5	\$545,000	\$525,000	\$5,875	64	Sold 6/30/11
(2) 4351 Harvester Farm	Split Foyer	4	3	\$499,888	\$463,000	0	97	Sold 9/30/11
(3) 4363 Farm House	Split Level	4	3	\$454,000			93	Expired
(4) 4331 Farm House	Colonial	4	2.5	\$2,200	\$2,200		17	Rented 9/20/11
(5) 4352 Harvester Farm	Colonial	5	2.5	\$479,998			132	Active
(6) 4296 Country Squire	Split Level	5	4	\$729,000			99	Active
(7) 4340 Still Meadow	Split Level	4	2	\$2,500			10	Active rental
(8) 4370 Harvester Farm	Split Level	4	2	\$489,900			9	Under contract – settlement 11/4/11

- (1) Tiled entry foyer, new HVAC system, 3-lvl deck newly painted, fully fenced level backyard, 2-car garage
- (2) Silestone counters, rear addition, expanded master bed w/sitting area, cul de sac home, designer paint and lighting.
- (3) New carpet and hardwood floors throughout. Vaulted ceilings.
- (4) Large deck, freshly painted, 3 finished levels, flat and private backyard.
- (5) Price reduced. 2-car garage, walk out basement, backs to woods and stream, deck, selling “as-is” but in good condition. Very large Colonial model.
- (6) Largest model in Hickory Farms. Corner lot, corian counters, hardwood floors, huge deck, storage galore, new roof, siding, heat controlled windows.
- (7) Many upgrades – kitchen w/new appliances, bathrooms, neutral paint and carpet.
- (8) Excellent condition with many upgrades. New kitchen w/granite & custom cabinetry, updated baths, hardwood floors, new driveway, carport and landscape.

This material is provided by Arlene Da Cruz, a full service Realtor and Hickory Farms homeowner. Arlene is associated with Weichert Realtors (www.arlenedacruz.com), She assists both home buyers and sellers and also manages rental properties. 571-436-6551 arlenemyrealtor@gmail.com

(1-4-7-10)

Limited DMV Services Available at Fairfax City Hall

Limited DMV services are available 8:30-4:30 weekdays at Fairfax City Hall on Armstrong Street. Services include license plates, handicapped permits, and title and registration transactions. This office does not issue drivers licenses or identification cards. You can often get your business done in under 20 minutes!

(4-10)

**Annual Meeting October 11 - 8 PM
Green Acres School/Center - 4401 Sideburn Road**

Important items will be discussion of and confirmation of next year's proposed budget, notification of the annual dues increase recently approved by the Board of Directors, and the election of the HFCA Board of Directors.

Two members of the Board of Directors recently retired. Please note that these volunteer jobs require just a few hours a month, depending upon position. Anyone who wishes to run for a position on the Board is invited to submit their name to the Board in advance, so that their candidacy can be announced to the community before the annual meeting. Nominees from the floor will be accepted at the Annual Meeting as well.

Even if you can't attend the meeting, your voice should be heard. Please sign the enclosed proxy form and make sure it is brought to the Annual Meeting. You can appoint a trusted neighbor to vote on your behalf or designate the HFCA Secretary to vote for you.

Anyone who has topics that they want added to the agenda are invited to submit them in advance to any Board member. (10)

Hickory Farms Annual Meeting Proxy Form

If you can't attend the Annual Meeting, please:

- Mail this proxy form to HFCA, P.O. Box 2239, Fairfax, VA 22031 at least one week in advance of the Annual Meeting; or
- Hand deliver it in a sealed envelope to a member of the Board of Directors in time for the Annual Meeting; or
- If you choose a neighbor to vote on your behalf, have them bring it to the Annual Meeting and present it to a member of the Board of Directors.

I, _____, member of the HFCA:

_____ appoint the HFCA Board of Directors, or

_____ appoint _____

to be my proxy with all of the powers I would have if I were present, and cast my vote on any matter which may arise during the HFCA Annual Meeting of the members to be held on October 11, 2011, or at any adjournment meeting thereof.

(Signature) _____

Street Address: _____ Lot # _____