

Volume 7 – No. 7

September 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 –
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Rebekah & Wesley Moore
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Ellie Codding 703-426-4606

Neighborhood 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 Ambrogi,
Maryle Mondschein

Hickory Farms Community Association
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www.hickoryfarms.org

This newsletter reflects the input of many folks; in addition to Board members and other volunteers (see ←), we also get contributions from many others. In this issue, Bob Cosgriff, former President and local history/nature fan, tells us about the birds that frequent our community. Mike Martin, also a past President, has an important article on the status of the dangerous intersection of Still Meadow and Roberts Roads. I want to thank Mike and Bob for their contributions, and encourage *you* to also contribute to this newsletter. Who knows; we might have a budding novelist in our midst who got his or her start with our newsletter! Mike will also be on hand to answer your questions on the roads issue at the October Annual Meeting, which will likely be held at the old Green Acres Elementary school sometime October 22-25 (the Board is confirming the date with the City). In addition to the Annual Meeting date, please mark your calendar for Woody's *free* end-of-season party on Oct. 6 and the community yard sale on Oct. 13. More details inside.

The Editor

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

October 22-25 (exact date uncertain) – Come to Our Annual Meeting !

There's been a lot happening in and around Hickory Farms, so please be sure to attend. We'll meet at the City of Fairfax Senior Center (formerly Green Acres Elementary School), 4401 Sideburn Road. Take Roberts Rd. to left on Forest to left on Sideburn. (9-10)

Neighborhood Watch Schedule – Neighborhood Security

Dave Dempster

Please volunteer for this important neighborhood activity – all it takes is one three hour 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).

Sat	September 1	Bob Sottile	Lee Sottile
Fri	September 7	John Kitzmiller	Brand Niemann
Sat	September 8	David Froberg	Beverly Froberg
Fri	September 14	Ron Arnold	Charles Walters
Sat	September 15	Kirk Randall	Vacant
Fri	September 21	Bob Cosgriff	Don Klingemann
Sat	September 22	Jeff Lindsay	Larry Rogers
Fri	September 28	Angel Meza	Jason Meza
Sat	September 29	Eric Maribojoc	Clarisa Dacanay
Fri	October 5	Bob Montgomery	George Rosenkranz
Sat	October 6	Mike Martin	Scott Buchanan
Fri	October 12	Pete Scala	Rose Scala
Sat	October 13	Stan Lee	Jim Marshall
Fri	October 19	Pam Barrett	Tom Barrett
Sat	October 20	John Verheul	Tammy Verheul
Fri	October 26	Dave Dempster	Dawn Dempster
Sat	October 27	Stefan Schwarz	Christine Schwarz

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

(Scenic Remodeling Ad Here)

Woody's End-of-Year Party October 6

Woody's Ice Cream, a Hickory Farms summertime favorite, is holding its annual end-of-year party October 6. Fairfax City closes off Stonewall Avenue and Woody brings in bands and gives everyone *free* food and ice cream. For more details, visit Woody's on Stonewall Avenue, right next to Carlos O'Kelly's (closed Sunday). (9-10)

Community Yard Sale Coming October 13

Mark your calendar and start pricing your "stuff." More details soon. Call Pete Scala at 703-764-0730 to add you to the list of participant. As they enter Hickory Farms, shoppers are given a neighborhood map with participating houses highlighted. (9)

Woodson Band's Annual Tag Day – September 8

The Woodson Marching Band and Color Guard will be visiting area homes from on Saturday, September 8. As part of their 21st annual Tag Day fundraiser, band and color guard members in full uniform will go door-to-door asking for donations. Proceeds from this event will be used to purchase uniforms, music, and instruments for the Woodson band programs. Funds will also enable the band and color guard to travel to festivals, performances, and competitions. Last year, the Marching Cavaliers were Grand Champions at the Spotsylvania Marching Invitational and the Hanover Hawk Marching Invitational. The Color Guard and Winter Guard received numerous 1st and 2nd place awards in competition, and the Symphonic, Concert, and Jazz bands all earned Superior ratings for their performances. The Woodson band program has earned the prestigious Honor Band designation for the state of Virginia for the past five years.

Please Clean Up After Your Pets

There are far too many instances of people not cleaning up after their dogs. Several folks are not cleaning up after their dogs poop in a neighbor's yard. 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. Please do the right thing and clean up after your pet and dispose of it properly with your trash. (3-9)

Smoke Alarms Should be Replaced *At Least* Every Ten Years

There was a recent conversation on the Hickory Farms e-mail list about fixing smoke detectors that were installed when the house was constructed – at least 26 years ago. If you

think you may have 25+ year old smoke detectors, they are long overdue for replacement. The US Fire Administration / Department of Homeland Security recommends replacing smoke detectors every 8-10 years, whether they appear broken or not. See http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/all_citizens/home_fire_prev/alarms/

Discount Cards for Local Merchants

A WT Woodson Cavalier Card will get you great deals from these local merchants while supporting the school's band program. Participating merchants include:

- Best of Thai;
- Caribou Coffee – Kings Park Shopping Center.
- Carlos O'Kelly's;
- Cinema Arts Theaters;
- Honeybaked Ham Company;
- Mama Lucia;
- Noodles & Co.;
- Optometrist Dr. Cheryl Bloom;
- Papa John's Pizza;
- Pickett Road Valet – dry cleaning;
- Ravenworth Shopping Center book store;
- Red Hot & Blue;
- Robek's (purveyor of naturally light smoothies)
- Squire Rockwell's;
- Subway – Fair City Mall;
- Sweet Life Café at the heart of Fairfax City
- Total Framing (formerly Total Crafts);
- Witham's Florist; and
- Yen Cheng Restaurant

These fine establishments support the WTW band program by offering you percentage discounts, free sodas, two for the price of one deals, etc. The card may be used unlimited times for through Sept 1, 2008. Cards are available for \$10 from WTW band students, or send \$10 (check made payable to "WT Woodson Band Patrons") and a self-addressed stamped envelope to Carol McDevitt, 3712 Millbank Ct, Fairfax, Va. 22031. All proceeds support the band program.

Trash Company Alternatives

A few HF residents have voiced frustration with AAA Disposal Services and asked me to research alternatives. AAA's competitors are family owned and operated, and all offer twice weekly pickups of trash, recycling, and yard debris. Only AAA and New Vision offer customers the large 96 gallon tote bins and recycling containers; the other companies require you to use your own trash cans or trash bags. (This may be a consideration if you have lots of trash; if you don't, a tote bin may not be a factor and you don't have to lug the bins and containers back from the street after trash is collected.) New Vision will pick up your trash/recycling from the street or from in front of your garage/carport – the postman might also like that if he doesn't have to dodge your trash can to deliver your mail! Information

regarding each company's complaint history with the Better Business Bureau may be found at www.dc.bbb.org . Fairfax County complaint information is available at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/consumer/IQext/CSd_acs.asp . As a caveat, note that it could be expected that AAA would have more complaints than the others, given its much larger size. You can see a complete list of licensed trash haulers at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/trash/disphaulers.htm

	Price per quarter	Contact Person	Phone (703-)	Special Notes	3 year BBB Complaint History	3 year Fairfax County Complaint History
AAA Disposal	\$86 - 100		818-8222	Gives customer 96 gallon trash can & recycling bins.	"Unsatisfactory" record with BBB – 109 complaints	147 complaints – All but 5 were resolved OK
Cunningham	75	Mrs. Cunningham	273-5226		No complaint information	No complaint information
Jeffrey	70	Mrs. Jeffrey	591-9548		"Satisfactory" record with BBB – 0 complaints	No complaint information
McLean	72	Mrs. Elsea	442-7387		No complaint information	No complaint information
New Vision	72	Mrs. Wright	830-7908	Gives customer 96 gallon trash can & recycling bins. Will pick up at street or at garage.	No complaint information	1 complaint – Resolved OK

The Birds of Hickory Farms Bob Cosgriff

This summer was the best one yet for Hickory Farms in terms of nesting bluebirds. We had a total of three nests in the lower common grounds, with two being successful, meaning the eggs hatched and the baby blue birds fledged. Additionally, a pair of bluebirds successfully brought off a brood in a box in the corner of the Dudley's backyard (on the upper common ground). The first nests (one in LCG and one at Dudleys) were underway by 8 April, with eggs appearing in early May. The entire process of incubating, rearing and fledging was over by early June.

The pair at the Dudleys attempted to nest again, but was not able to drive off the more aggressive House ("English") Sparrows. At the same time, a second nest was started in the successful box in the lower common grounds, but ultimately, the nest was hit by predators. That appeared to be it for the season, but the birds moved to another box, and between early July and 7 August, laid four eggs and fledged at least three young birds successfully. This was the second "three-brood" year, the other being 2002. Hickory Farms is lucky to have these beautiful birds select our suburban setting for their home.

We had an additional success: Tree Swallows took a box in the upper common ground and laid four eggs. Unfortunately, English Sparrows evicted them in early June, just as the eggs were ready to hatch. This is only the second Tree Swallow nest in Hickory Farms, the other being in 2001, when these beautiful and beneficial birds laid two eggs in a box in the lower common grounds. Unfortunately, they abandoned that nest for reasons unknown and the eggs never hatched. We will have to hope that next year, they will finally be successful.

Other colorful birds seen and heard in Hickory Farms in 2007 include Yellow Warbler, American Redstart (another warbler), Eastern Meadowlark (first-time sighting here), Purple Finch (first in many years), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Wood Thrush, Baltimore Oriole, White-eyed Vireo, Fox Sparrow, and Brown Thrasher. Hickory Farms boasts a good assortment of woodpeckers, with plenty of Downy, Hairy, Flicker, and Red-bellied, and an occasional Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Additionally, the impressive Pileated Woodpecker was observed on numerous occasions throughout Hickory Farms in 2007. As for larger birds, the Great Horned Owl returned to the upper common ground in the mid-winter period. Red-tail and Red-Shoulder Hawks perched in our trees and soared overhead. Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks made their appearance. Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture and Osprey were seen in the skies above Hickory Farms.

As the summer draws to an end and autumn approaches, many birds are preparing to migrate south. While the fall migration is not as dramatic as the spring migration, there will be plenty of chances to see birds stopping by from points north of here or flying over between now and November. However, we are fortunate in that many species maintain a year-round presence. All it takes to attract them to your yard any time of year is birdseed (black oil sunflower, peanuts and suet work best), water and cover. Of course, our beautiful common grounds provide all three of these essential elements, so take advantage of what we have here and "take a walk on the wild side" to see what you can see!

Your Remodeling Project May Require ACC Approval

If you are changing the exterior appearance of your home, you may need Architectural Control Committee approval. Please don't run the risk of holding up the start of your project 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 don't require approval), please read the *Application for Architectural Review*. If you're still doubtful, call the chairperson of the ACC (see page 1 of this newsletter for contact information). You might also log into our community web page – www.hickoryfarms.org – to read the following helpful documents: [How to Get ACC Approval for Your Renovation Project](#) and [Tips for Choosing a Contractor](#). The official *Application for Architectural Review* may also be [viewed on the web in PDF format](#).

Protect Your Underground Water Pipe

Every few years, we seem to have a rash of water pipe breakages. For some reason, our water pipes (the pipe that runs from the street to your home) seem to be prone to failure. When this pipe breaks, *you* pay to have it fixed, and it will likely cost a *minimum* of \$3,000. Protect yourself with a water line insurance policy *before* the pipe breaks. Dominion Products

(a cousin of the electricity folks) offers water line insurance for only \$3.25-\$5 per month (included with your electricity bills). Call 1-866-545-9810 or visit http://retail.dom.com/products/warranty/va_waterline.jsp
You should consider insurance if your water line is especially long. (9)

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." We welcome your proposed additions or revisions to the master checklist. Please e-mail your suggestions to Kirk_Randall@Hotmail.com (All)

Range Hood Cleaning – Clean the greasy kitchen range hood screen
Refrigerator & Freezer Cleaning – Use a vacuum cleaner or special refrigerator brush to clean the refrigerator coils, which are usually under the refrigerator. This is especially important if you have pets. Place a piece of paper between the door and rubber seal of the refrigerator/freezer. If it can be moved while the door is closed, there is a leak and the seal should be replaced, or the latch may need adjustment. Drain and clean the drip pan under the refrigerator. Defrost non-frost free refrigerators & freezers; they use less electricity when the frost buildup is removed.
Siding Cleaning – Pressure wash the vinyl/aluminum siding every 3-5 years. Frequent pressure washing can strip the paint off aluminum siding down to the bare metal, so don't do this too often.
Washing Machine Hose Check – Check water hoses for cracks and replace, if needed. Better yet, replace them with metal reinforced hoses.

Dangerous Roberts Road Intersection Mike Martin

Editor's Note: Please call or e-mail City of Fairfax's James Burney to thank him and the Transportation Department staff for responding so promptly to the dangerous Roberts Road crosswalk situation. You can email him at jburney@fairfaxva.gov or call him at 703-385-7987. Please also contact Supervisor Sharon Bulova (703-425-9300 <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/staff.htm>) and State Representative David Bulova (703-310-6752 e-mail deldbulova@house.state.va.us) to stress the need for increased safety measures along Roberts Road. Mike Martin has agreed to answer your questions on this topic at October's homeowners' meeting.

Mike became involved with this project while a Board member a few years ago. He continues to raise safety concerns on our behalf and reports back to the Board and community at large. Please give him a hearty "Thank You" for pressing VDOT and Fairfax County on our behalf.

On July 16, 2007, Mike attended a meeting hosted by County Supervisor Sharon Bulova and State Representative David Bulova regarding the traffic issues surrounding the Roberts Road entrance to the Hickory Farms and Aspen Grove communities. The

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Fairfax City, and Fairfax County also participated. This is his report.

Motor Vehicles

The major issue discussed was the continuing poor sight lines caused by the various dips and hills along Roberts Road. This is a problem for both residents of the communities, but especially their guests who may not be aware of the poor visibility.

Fairfax County has considered leveling the hills and re-grading the large dips on Roberts Road. However, this idea has several major disadvantages including cost and right of way issues and is NOT going to be implemented.

Some of the ideas discussed included stop signs on Roberts Road where it intersects with Still Meadow Road, and increased traffic signage alerting people to poor visibility. Roberts Road stop signs won't work because cars could slip downhill when the road is icy. VDOT also claims it has no approved signs that could warn oncoming traffic about the poor visibility danger.

Pedestrian Traffic

At the meeting, I explained that the pedestrian traffic on Roberts Road is VERY dangerous. There is no contiguous sidewalk or system of sidewalks from Fairfax City to Hickory Farms to Braddock Road/George Mason University, and there is no crosswalk from Hickory Farms to the swimming pool without having to walk in the street.

I was informed by VDOT's representatives and a member of Sharon Bulova's staff that the current placement of Roberts Road is outside the boundaries of the right of way from the Catholic Church down to that next street. So, in order to put in a sidewalk, the right of way would have to be bought from those houses along that stretch of roadway. GMU is aware of the problem as well, and has included a sidewalk on its side of the street sometime in the future.

I also noted that there is no crosswalk for HF residents who wish to cross the street to the swimming pool, a dangerous situation for the many families with children.

Outcome

1. George Mason University is installing a traffic signal at their entrance on Roberts Road by the Catholic Church. This is purported to address several problems including pedestrians crossing Roberts to go to the church. The traffic engineers were hoping this might also bunch traffic up and allow for safe gaps for residents of our communities to safely turn into or out of the side streets onto Roberts Rd.

2. The City and County are going to look into placing a crosswalk across Roberts Road from the Hickory Farms side to the Pool side on the flatter section of Roberts Road towards Fairfax City.

AUGUST UPDATE: On August 2nd, Fairfax City constructed a crosswalk across Roberts Rd.

that is almost directly in front of the swimming pool. I encourage everyone in the community to utilize the new crosswalk as it will allow for safer pedestrian access to the pool. Pedestrians should not cross in front of the Still Meadow entrance as you may not be able to see oncoming traffic. Please make sure your children are aware of the dangers of crossing from the Continuing Education Center parking lot directly onto Still Meadow and the presence of the new crosswalk.

3. David Bulova says he will sponsor legislation to transfer maintenance of Roberts Road up to the Aspen Grove community to Fairfax City. This is aimed at cutting the bureaucracy of building the proposed crosswalk, as well as, any future changes (Like the addition of stop signs!)

4. Stepped up Police enforcement of the speed limits along Roberts Road.

What we can do now

I urge you to contact Supervisor Sharon Bulova (703-425-9300 <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/staff.htm>), State Representative David Bulova (703-310-6752 e-mail deldbulova@house.state.va.us), and our other elected officials to stress the need for increased safety measures along Roberts Road. The construction of the crosswalk is a great first step to pedestrian safety. I urge you to speak to the elected representatives about the need for complete sidewalks along Roberts Rd. and for additional traffic safety measures at the Still Meadow entrance.

Supervisor Bulova stated that she would provide me an update which I will pass along to the community when I receive it. If anyone has any questions or concerns, I can be reached at xaviar13@yahoo.com or 703-323-3995.

Open Garages Invite Burglaries

By Virginia Law, the time of day dictates what crime can be charged in regards to the thefts from garages. During the day, if someone enters an open garage and steals items, it is a larceny (petit or grand larceny depending on the value of the items). However, during nighttime hours, if someone enters an open garage of another with the intent to commit a crime, it is a burglary, which is a felony. It is important to remember also, that by leaving your garage open, it gives easier access into your home. Please encourage neighbors and loved ones to keep garage doors closed at all times. It only takes a matter of seconds for someone to enter an open garage and steal items. (9)

Please Keep Your Carport/Parking Area Neat and Tidy

Some of our carports detract from the appearance of the neighborhood. A cluttered carport is as visible to your neighbors as not mowing your lawn. And, items left in your carport are vulnerable to being stolen or damaged by the weather. So, with winter approaching, now is a good time to clean out your carport. Only leave in your carport those things you think you'll actually need. As a general rule of thumb, if you can't park your car in your carport, then you have too much "stuff" there; please consider removing or relocating some of the items. – The

Our Common Grounds

Rich Dudley

Despite the summer drought, the commons areas look to have fared pretty well. Mother Nature's recent rain has "greened up" much of the grass and we look to be in good shape – at least at the moment. I plan to organize a Fall Clean-Up of the common areas in October. Fall is also a good time to spot trash that's been buried under the summer foliage. I'll need several volunteers pick up trash and cut back limbs and vines that have encroached on our pathways and open spaces. Clean-ups are an excellent opportunity for 7th and 8th graders to earn community service hours.

Homeowners are reminded to keep trees and bushes from overgrowing and encroaching on sidewalks. In my walks through the neighborhood, I've noticed a number of places where trees (particularly Crape Myrtles) and other bushes have obstructed passage on sidewalks so much that one has to walk in the street to get around them. Now is an especially important time to cut back trees and bushes that obstruct the sidewalks because our neighborhood kids are beginning school and need clear pathways to walk to bus stops.

Fall is also a good time to undo damage the summer's drought has done to our lawns. You will have much better luck planting new grass seed in early Fall than waiting until Spring. Lay grass seed in mid-September and you should have a good looking lawn (provided we get more rain) by November. And, grass planted during the Fall will have enough time to grow good roots in preparation for the next growing season. I've learned from experience that grass planted in the Spring frequently dies in the Summer heat.

Happy planting and pruning!

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

Article VII, Number 11 of the Hickory Farms Covenants 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.

What does this mean? The term "parked forward of" has the meaning of "forward of the front line of the house," whether in the street, on the lawn or in the driveway. The enumeration of examples is fairly clear, but is not necessarily all inclusive. "Seven days" has the implied meaning that it is a one-time maximum. If it meant such a vehicle, say a trailer or boat, could sit for six days, be moved for one day and then returned, it would defeat the purpose of the rule which is to avoid a storage lot appearance which detracts from the neighborhood and property values. Applying common sense, we must construe "automobile" to include small pickups and small panel trucks, etc. which are used for daily transportation to and from work. Excluded in the meaning would be large commercial vehicles, such as a stake body truck, school bus, recreation vehicle, etc. In addition to detracting from appearance, these also create a safety hazard due their size.

(9)

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 considerations – that's why he or she is called the "editor." The Editor, subject to review by the Hickory Farms Board of Directors, may choose not to print any submission.