

Volume 11 – No. 6

September 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](http://www.hickoryfarms.org)

All telephone area

codes are 703-

*Hickory Farms Community Association*

*P.O. Box 2239, Fairfax VA 22031*

*[www.hickoryfarms.org](http://www.hickoryfarms.org)*

**Changes about your annual  
dues are coming soon.  
The deadline for payment  
is now January 7.**

**Three group purchase  
opportunities are available.**

**Our Annual Meeting will  
be held October 11<sup>th</sup> - 8 PM at  
Green Acres School/Center.**

**Clean out your garage/carport  
for the September 24  
community yard sale!**

### **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.

## Learn Tai Chi As Taught by a Professional

While Tai Chi is renowned for its self-defense skills, it is more frequently practiced for its health benefits, including improved balance and coordination, joint mobility, muscle toning, and stress reduction.

Classes start with slow joint loosening and muscle stretching exercises. Then we move into the Tai Chi form practice, which consists of learning a series of flowing moves and refining the details of these moves with proper movement mechanics, breathing and self-defense strategies.

Classes are held on Sundays from 10-11:15 AM in nearby Fairfax City – \$10/class – Try one for FREE!

The instructor is Hickory Farms resident Dante Gilmer, a certified professional Tai Chi instructor with 18 years' experience.  
[dantegilmer@hotmail.com](mailto:dantegilmer@hotmail.com) 703-862-2192  
[www.stillwatertaichi.com](http://www.stillwatertaichi.com)

Watch [www.youtube.com/watch?V=A6PJF2OTWV8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?V=A6PJF2OTWV8)

## Protect Your Underground Water Pipe

Every few years, we have a rash of underground 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 as much as \$4,000 to have it repaired or replaced. 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 a few dollars per month (included with your electricity bill). Call 1-866-545-9810 or visit [http://retail.dom.com/products/warranty/va\\_waterline.jsp](http://retail.dom.com/products/warranty/va_waterline.jsp)

You should consider insurance if your water line is particularly long

(9)

## Architectural Control Committee Approvals

4372 Harvester Farm – Screened Porch  
4355 Farm House – Fence  
4333 Farm House – Shed

## Group Purchase - \$50 Home Energy Analysis

Folks who participate in the HF email "listserv" service (see p. 1) learned this summer about the recent group purchase of a home energy analysis ("audit"). This is the real deal – blower fan that pressurizes the house, thermal camera to detect energy leaks, and \$10,000 of equipment. The energy audit normally costs \$400, but Kirk Randall got a special price of \$300 for HF residents (pass it on – this is for your non-HF friends, too). If you act quickly, you could qualify for a \$250 audit rebate from the state of Virginia. You may also qualify for a \$250 rebate for weather stripping and insulation services (you can also get a 10% rebate on your 2011 federal income taxes). See [www.dmme.virginia.gov/DE/ARRA-Public/HomeEfficiency.shtml](http://www.dmme.virginia.gov/DE/ARRA-Public/HomeEfficiency.shtml). The entire program has only \$5 million to spend – first come, first served! To learn more, please contact Home Energy Saving Solutions at 703-260-1933. Be sure to mention that you are with the Hickory Farms group purchase.

# Pilates...

...For EVERY Body!  
Now at Twinbrooke!

Affordable Pilates mat classes & cardio classes now available at World Karate in the Twinbrooke Shopping Center (next to McDonald's). Weekday & Saturday mornings. All levels welcome!

**Free trials available-  
see our website for  
schedule!**



703-887-7459 ~ [yourcore@cox.net](mailto:yourcore@cox.net)  
[www.toneyourcore.com](http://www.toneyourcore.com)

## 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. (9)

## Group Purchases - Tree Work & Pressure Washing

Ron Colaprete has organized a group purchase for pressure washing your house's siding. The cost is \$175 for the smaller homes and \$200 for larger homes. Contact Rob Banks, Northern Virginia Pressure Washing Service, at 703-536-8449 if you want this work done. Be sure to mention that you are with the Hickory Farms group purchase.

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](mailto: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.

## Trash Cans in Front of Your House? Not Allowed

A number of folks have ignored the Board's letters asking them to stop storing trash cans in front of their houses. This is prohibited under our Rules and Regulations. Please comply ASAP. The next step is to assess daily fines until the problem is resolved.

## Lawn Mowing + Landscape Maintenance specialists

- Lawn Mowing
- Spring cleanups and Mulching
- Lawn Fertilizing + Weed control
- Lawn Aerating + Seeding
- Bed Weeding + Shrub Pruning
- Fall Leaf Cleanups

*Also available: Complete Landscape Installations, renovations and creations, Complete Tree Services including pruning, removals and planting. See our website for more information.*

**Professional Property Maintenance Inc.**

Since 1991    703-273-9626

[www.ppmlandscapes.com](http://www.ppmlandscapes.com)



Try our services for **FREE!**  
Sign up for Lawn mowing services  
and get 1 visit free.



### Discount Book Saves You Money

Show your WT Woodson Cavalier Card and get great deals from local merchants.

Participants get 2/1 offers, free deals, and other discounts at the following:

A.C. Moore		Choices by Shawn	Cinema Arts Theaters
Coyote Grill	F	Fairfax Ice Arena	Mamma Lucia
Noodles & Co.		Optometrist Dr. C Bloom	Woody's Ice Cream
Papa John's Pizza		Pickett Road Valet	Red Hot & Blue
Robek's		Subway (next to CVS)	Total Framing
Susan Fox Hirschmann- Art Pottery		Sweet Berry Italian Ice Cream	
University Flower Shoppe		Yen Cheng Restaurant	Best of Thai
Einstein Brothers Bagels			

The card may be used over and over.

Cards are available for \$10 each from Woodson Band students, or send a check made payable to "WT Woodson Band Patrons" to Chrissy Rabayda, 4532 Braeburn Drive, Fairfax, VA 22032. Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

100% of the proceeds go to the Woodson band program.

**Thank you HF neighbor Sarah Maurer for copy editing this month's Newsletter!**

**One Call For All Your Home Improvement Needs!**



**Handyman Central**  
Satisfaction...More than a guarantee



**10% Off ANY SERVICE**  
With coupon. Not valid with any other offer.  
Licensed • Bonded • Insured  
Class A Licensed  
VA 2705-105809A

**703-502-4910**  
**Residential & Commercial**  
[www.handymancentral-inc.com](http://www.handymancentral-inc.com)

- Bathroom Remodeling
- Toilet & Faucet Repair
- Electrical Work
- Carpentry & Dry Wall
- Ceramic Tile
- Kitchen Remodeling
- Painting
- Door Installation
- Plumbing
- General Repairs & Maintenance
- Power Washing & Much More!



**Plumbing Central**  
Affordable Quality Plumbing



**10% OFF ANY PLUMBING REPAIR**  
Not valid with any other offers or with prior contracts. With this coupon.  
**MORE SAVINGS...**  
You may qualify for a Federal Tax Credit on select energy efficient models.

**703-539-8306**  
**We're In Your Neighborhood...**

- Leaking Faucets & Sinks
- Pipe Repair & Replacement
- Sewer & Drain Cleaning
- Garbage Disposals
- Water Heaters (conventional & tankless)
- Sump Pumps
- Water Main Repair
- Gas Leaks
- Gas Repairs
- Toilet Repairs
- Bathroom Remodeling

**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	September 2	Jaime Gutierrez	Ed Wagner
Sat	September 3	Dave Dempster	Dawn Dempster
Fri	September 9	Susan Mulliner	Brenton Mulliner
Sat	September 10	Ron Arnold	Charles Walters
Fri	September 16	Bob Cosgriff	Don Klingemann
Sat	September 17	Kirk Randall	Chris Woody
Fri	September 23	Jeff Lindsay	Larry Rogers
Sat	September 24	Angel Meza	Jason Meza
Fri	September 30	Eric Maribojoc	Clarisa Dacanay
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

## **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 an annual assessment of \$125 is 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 \$125 dues, the \$50 late charge, and attorney fees.**

## **Please Clean Up After Your Dog**

Please be considerate of your neighbors by cleaning up after your dog. Use a plastic bag to clean up your dog poop, whether they are in a neighbor's yard or our common grounds. Then, please dispose of your bag with your own trash, not in a storm drain, someone else's yard, or our common areas. Not only is this the neighborly thing to do, but it is required by Fairfax County law.

(3-9)

## **Your *Exterior* Remodeling Project *May* Need Prior 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 delaying 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 (some projects do not require approval), please read the *Application for Architectural Review*, available at [www.hickoryfarms.org](http://www.hickoryfarms.org). If you do not have internet/email access, contact the ACC chairperson (see page 1 for contact info). Please read [How to Get ACC Approval for Your Renovation Project](#) available at the HF web page. [Tips for Choosing a Contractor](#) may also be helpful. Before investing money in any structures, major landscaping or recreational or other uses of your property, you should also consult [Article 10](#) of the Fairfax County Ordinance, *Accessory Uses, Accessory Service Uses and Home Occupations* at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov).

(1-5-9)

## **Do We Have Your Contact Information?**

Some homeowners have not provided the Board of Directors with their contact information. The Board needs this information **for all homeowners** to effectively manage the Association and to help you in case of an emergency. The information is not given to anyone outside the Board.

If you are an absentee homeowner, the Board needs to know your permanent address so we can mail newsletters and bills to you. In the past, we have had absentee homeowners miss deadlines for annual assessments, and incur late fees. (9)

## **Hickory Farms Community Yard Sale**

September 24 (8 AM – Noon) – Rain Date Sept. 25

HFCA will arrange advertising and will provide maps showing participating yards sales.

You will search your basements, attics, garages, and sheds for stuff you want to get rid of, and be ready to start selling at 8:00 AM!

*The fee (approx. \$10) will be collected on sale day*

We need youths to distribute community maps at the neighborhood entrances and to help taking leftovers to Goodwill or the dump. They will be paid.

Contact Pete Scala at 703-764-0730 or email scalapr@verizon.net to participate

## **Secrets to a Successful Yard Sale**

1. Select worthwhile items to sell. You may have some true junk to sell; but your chances of selling it - or anything else - go up if you get people to look at your stuff by having good things out there too!
2. Prepare your merchandise ahead of time. Wash and press clothes, dust and polish furniture, paint and oil old bikes, make sure electronics work and have demo CDs, tapes, etc.
3. Stock up on loose change. You'll need dollar bills (especially \$1s and \$5s) and coins; how much depends on how many things you have for sale, and what prices you pick (if your stuff is all 5.99, 11.59, etc., you'd better have a lot of pennies!).
4. Put prices on your sale items the night before. Use large tags. People will try to bargain you down, so take that into account when you pick your asking price.
5. Display your items in attractive manner. Run extension cords to power electrical appliances, so you can demonstrate how they work.
6. Be ready early on Saturday morning. Aggressive yard sale shoppers start as early as 6:30 a.m. If you're out there in the dark, you can get their business.
7. Have a chair to sit on and a partner to work with. The day will be long. You might have to (or want to!) take a break. (9)

## **Check Your Chimney after the Earthquake**

The editor was in his garage when the earthquake hit. I rushed onto the driveway because the whole garage was shaking like crazy. I could see that the chimney was swaying back and forth. The next day, I climbed up on the roof to inspect the chimney for cracking or dislodged bricks. I found only a small brick chip that had flaked off, but a friend's chimney almost broke in half. You might consider having someone inspect your chimney for damage. Although I'm not a chimney expert, it may be possible for the interior of your chimney to have been damaged. Keep this in mind if you notice anything unusual the next time you use your fireplace. By the way, chimney work tends to be VERY expensive.

## **Angie's List Offers Home Related "Groupon"-Type Savings**

Angie's List is a subscription based referral service that specialized in reviewing home maintenance companies such as plumbers, roofers, electricians, etc. I belong to Angie's List and frequently uses it when a HF neighbor asks for a referral for a tradesman. Angie's List is now offering Groupon-like offers for highly rated companies offering services such as roof inspection/maintenance, wallpaper removal, drywall repair, lawn aeration, plumbing service, attic insulation, bathtub refinishing, deck pressure washing, etc. The price savings are considerable. Anyone can participate, but members pay a discounted price. In fact, I saved so much on a recent deal that the member/non-member price differential paid for my Angie's List subscription. Although Angie's List members get these email offers, membership is not required to get the offers. You get about one email a day from Angie's List. To sign up for these offers, visit <http://my.angieslist.com/thebigdeal/washington-dc/> You can, of course, cancel your participation in these email ads at any time.

## **The Birds of Hickory Farms** Bob Cosgriff (Cotton Farm)

As previously featured articles have mentioned, Hickory Farms, with its trees, fields and creek habitat, hosts a large number of birds. The neighborhood list totals 103 species! Some birds pass through in the spring or fall migrations, and some have been seen only once, but many others stay to raise their broods year after year.

To attract native nesting birds, several years ago we created a bluebird trail, which now consists of five boxes in the lower common grounds and six in the upper. This year we had three successful nestings: two by bluebirds and one by a pair of tree swallows. As this article was written, a bluebird was building a nest in one of the boxes in the lower common grounds. While this is a bit late, we have had broods appear in August before, so perhaps history will repeat itself.

There were a couple of bluebird nests started, some with eggs, but no offspring. This is most likely due to predation by other birds. We did have English Sparrows appropriate some of the boxes. This seems more common in the upper common ground than in the lower. One solution would be to readjust the locations of some of the boxes next year to make them less desirable to the sparrows. Another solution is different boxes. This year, we set up three new, thinner boxes which the sparrows did not seem to like, leaving them to the bluebirds.

Two new bird species were recorded in Hickory Farms this year: a Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) in February and a Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora pinus*) in May. The Blue-winged Warbler brings the total number of warbler species seen in our neighborhood to 15!

Other birds nesting in Hickory Farms are Carolina Wren, House Wren, Brown Thrasher, Gray Catbird, Downy, Hairy, and Red-bellied Woodpecker, Blue Jay, and American Robin. It is likely that there are other species as well (such as American Crow, Flicker, Song Sparrow, etc.).

It is easy to make your yard “bird-friendly.” The three basic ingredients are food, water and cover. Local bird stores have information to get you started, or you can just go on the internet to find out what food is preferred by what birds, how to attract nesting birds, and so forth. Add a good field guide and pair of binoculars to the mix and you and your family can spend hours enjoying our feathered friends in both your own backyard and the “backyard” of our beautiful common grounds!

### **This Month’s Home Maintenance Checklist**

<b>Furnace &amp; Heat Pump Filter Change</b> – Replace paper/fiberglass filters. Vacuum or wash electronic filter elements. A dirty filter makes your fan work harder, using more electricity.
<b>Range Hood Cleaning</b> – Clean the greasy kitchen range hood screen
<b>Refrigerator &amp; Freezer Cleaning</b> – Use a vacuum cleaner or special refrigerator brush to clean the refrigerator coils, which are usually under or behind 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.
<b>Siding Cleaning</b> – 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.
<b>Washing Machine Hose Check</b> – Check hot and cold water hoses for cracks and replace, if needed. Better yet, replace them with metal reinforced hoses

### **Fairfax County Is Updating Its Property Records**

Fairfax County is updating its property tax records. The Department of Tax Administration is personally visiting every house in the County. At some time – it could be days, weeks, or months – you will be visited by an official who will review your property so that it is accurately reflected in the County’s property tax records.

The Hickory Farms Newsletter is published January, March-May, July, and September-December. E-mail submissions to The Editor by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the prior month. For past issues and information for advertisers, see [www.hickoryfarms.org](http://www.hickoryfarms.org) --> 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 that 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. Advertisers are not endorsed by the HFCA.