

# HICKORY FARMS COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

May 2020 Edition



HICKORYFARMS.ORG

P.O. BOX 2239, FAIRFAX VA 22031

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## DOOR-TO-DOOR & CORONAVIRUS SCAMS

By: Virginia Sheriffs' Institute Spring 2020 Issue

With the arrival of the novel coronavirus to Virginia, scammers may offer sell you fake cures and unproven treatments. Virginia public safety officials have joined with prosecutors and the FBI to create the Virginia Coronavirus Task Force. Here are a few tips offered by Virginia's Attorney General's official website that you can use to protect yourself from becoming a victim of a door-to-door scam:

- Don't let anyone into your house, unless you have a pre-scheduled appointment
- Don't show your bill to anyone claiming to be a utility worker or service provider
- Confirm any necessary work, upgrades, or offers with your service provider directly
- Never sign any agreement if you feel pressured to sign it
- Do not sign anything you have not read
- Pay with a credit card, since you may be protected if there's a problem. Never pay in cash
- Only deal with reputable contractors
- Get a written contract that specifies price, work to be done, and time frame for completion.

Keep in mind the Virginia Home Solicitation Sales Act provides a buyer with the right to cancel a home solicitation sale until midnight of the third business day after the day on which the buyer signs an agreement or offer to purchase.

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### JOIN OUR LISTSERV

There's no better way to stay in touch than through our Hickory Farms email listserv. Visit [hickoryfarms.org](http://hickoryfarms.org) and click "Hickory Farms Listserv" on left and follow the instructions.

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### **MEAL DELIVERY RESOURCE FOR RESIDENTS 60 YEARS AND OLDER**

The Meals on Wheels service was expanded to assist seniors needing assistance during the COVID crisis. Fairfax County Agencies Department of Family Services and Neighborhood and Community Services are utilizing the meals on wheels number. If you would like to request the service please leave a message with your name and number and they will get a callback to register for the service.

Fairfax County Agencies Department of Family Services and Neighborhood and Community Services currently provides a meal delivery service for residents 60 years and older. Weekly, participants receive 11 flash frozen meals delivered to their home.

To register for meal delivery, the resident should call **703 324-5409**. The Nutrition Unit with the Area Agency on Aging is overseeing this program. There are no eligibility criteria or cost linked to this meal service, other than being a Fairfax City (or County) resident and being over 60.

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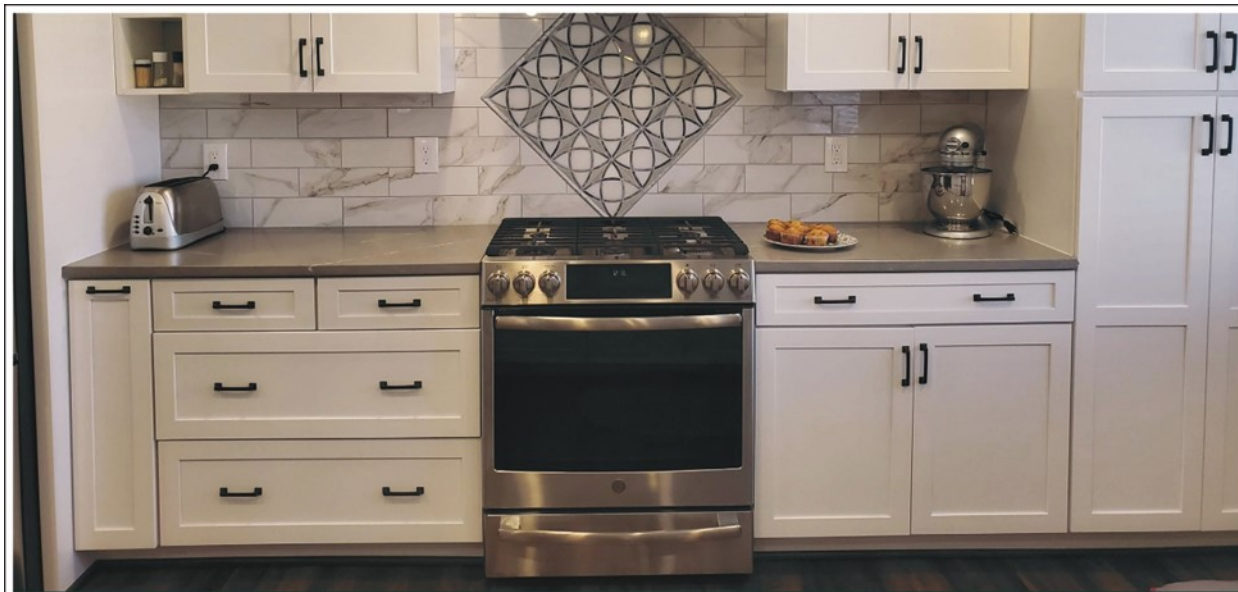
### **INTERSTED IN JOINING A BOARD MEETING?**

Due to the pandemic and social distancing, HFCA Board meetings are on Zoom. Please contact a HFCA Board member for more information.

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### **1860 – BEFORE THERE WAS A HICKORY FARMS COMMUNITY**

In 1860, the properties that came to be consolidated into our community 115 years later were owned by George W. Roberts and George W. Hunter. The dirt road that came to be known as Roberts Road was presumably named for Mr. Roberts. The maps for the entire county may be found at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/history-commission/1860-fairfax-county-maps](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/history-commission/1860-fairfax-county-maps).



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### **KEEP THE WIPES OUT OF THE PIPES!**

As parents of young children already know, baby wipes clog sewer pipes. Worst case, your pipes get backed up, leaving you with a basement full of sewage, costing many hundreds or thousands of dollars to fix. Bleach cleaning wipes and hand sanitizing wipes are made of cloth, which does not dissolve in sewer pipes. While all wipes may be advertised as being disposable, they are not flushable. When you are done with the wipes, put them in a zip lock baggie and place it in the trash.

### **LITTLE RIVER TURNPIKE (MAIN STREET / ROUTE 236)**

The earliest private turnpike charter in Virginia was granted by the General Assembly to the Company of the Fairfax and Loudon Turnpike Road in 1796. By 1806, the 34-mile-long road connected Alexandria with Aldie on the Little River in Loudoun County. The Company placed wooden tollhouses along the road at five-mile intervals, and one stood at what is now downtown Annandale until 1954. The Little River Turnpike became a free road in 1896. In Fairfax County, only the portion of the road in Annandale retains its original name.

Toll roads were not usually named after the thing alongside which it runs, but after the place to which it leads. The Little River Turnpike runs — or ran — to Little River.

As the name implies, Little River in Aldie (west on Route 50) is an exceptionally modest stretch of water. In fact, it isn't a river at all. The U.S. Geological Survey classifies it as a stream.

### **HFCA SECRETARY POSITION**

The HFCA Board welcomes a volunteer to join us as Secretary! The main functions are to record the official Minutes of the Monthly Board Meeting and to serve as a Member of the Board. To inquire or volunteer, please email [president@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:president@hickoryfarms.org).

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## HICKORY FARMS STRATEGIC PLAN

### Why a Strategic Plan?

A Strategic Plan establishes common goals and objectives that guide the board/leadership and unites the community. It helps drive direction, identify resources needed for up keep and improvements in the community.

- Strategic Planning provides clarity, direction and focus.
- Drives Alignment
- Creates an opportunity for discussion on the direction
- Promotes open and creative exchange of ideas, including resolving disputes and working out effective solutions
- Communicates our Message
- Serves as a communications vehicle for what must be done to create short and long term sustainability
- Makes the Board's actions more consistent
- Schedules projects in a proactive manner to take advantage of pricing opportunities and timing
- Place decisions required for implementation on an annual calendar to have adequate time to prepare
- Allocates resources strategically to meet members needs.

A Strategic Plan is never complete. It's a work-in-progress that keeps you on track to achieve your goals. It helps the board keep an eye on the future of the community.

Homeowners feedback is crucial. We will start to have regular committee meetings and all are welcome to attend.





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## **GROUP PURCHASE FOR PRESSURE WASHING HOUSE SIDING**

Given all the rain we have had since last summer, the vinyl siding of many of our homes has become covered with mold and algae stains. Hickory Farms residents have used Rob Banks at Northern Virginia Pressure Washing Service since 2011, and he is again offering special pricing this Spring.

Rob and his crew can pressure wash most homes in our community for less than half the going cost. And, while they are at it, they can clean your deck, driveway, or sidewalk, many of which have turned gray or black because of the recent proliferation of mold and algae.

Rob has developed three tier pricing based upon the amount of siding on your home: small = \$180, medium = \$195, and large = \$210.

Here are a few tips: Ask the crew to keep the high pressure water stream away from double pane windows and doors. The water pressure can break the seal between the glass panes and, after a few months, they may fog up. Take special care when cleaning concrete. Too much water pressure can tear up the surface of the concrete, leading to premature failure. It is generally OK to clean decks constructed of pressure treated wood. However, it is not recommended to pressure wash deck components made of Trex or similar composite materials. If in doubt, check with Rob.

Some folks still have the original aluminum siding, which has become oxidized and worn over the years. I know from personal experience that one too many pressure washings can wear the paint down to shiny bare metal. Our aluminum siding is 45 years old; consider replacing it with another material (vinyl or Hardie Board) or, after pressure washing, paint the metal, as was done at 10008 Cotton Farm and 4313 Farm House. NVA Pressure Washing generally does not do aluminum siding more than forty years old.

When you contact Rob, please tell him that you are with Hickory Farms and that "Kirk sent me." Call 202-330-9922 or email him [robmelisab@verizon.net](mailto:robmelisab@verizon.net).

## STUDENT YELLOW PAGES

If you offer services such as raking leaves, lawn mowing, babysitting, general home maintenance, dog walking, tutoring, etc., please email [kirk\\_randall@hotmail.com](mailto:kirk_randall@hotmail.com) to be included.

Bridgette Buchanan (16)	703-307-7323	Babysitting and dog sitting
Britney Mulliner (17)	571-474-7277	Babysitting and dog sitting
Cody Dempster (17)	703-776-0101	Yard work, snow shoveling, housework
Dominic Cannata (17)	703-568-9896	Lawn mowing, shovel snow, cleaning, mulching
Dylan Mehrman (17)	478-230-5066	Lawn mowing
Erika Maaseide (17)	703-659-5321	Babysitting; Special Needs experienced
Kent Coddling (18)	703-317-7319	Shovel snow, yard work, leaf raking
Paul Cannata (18)	786-445-5318	Lawn mowing, shovel snow, cleaning, mulching
Xavier Gilmer (15)	703-862-2192	Shovel snow; lawn mowing
Jaden Singh (17)	703-278-8800	Math tutoring, snow shoveling
George Coddling (14)	703-223-4101	Snow shovel, yard work, leaf raking

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## COMMON AREAS MID-SPRING UPDATE

With COVID 19 impacting our area, many of us have undergone changes in work, school, and social life to include more “free time” to get outside. It has been a joy to see a lot of neighbors utilizing our common areas for leisure, a variety of recreational uses and exploration.

There are also a handful of neighbors (both CAC advisors and other residents) who are using this “found” time to do “volunteer” work, whether it be donating native perennials for use in the common areas, weeding the native wildflower meadows, planting and weeding the entrance areas, tackling vines, or picking up fallen branches and trash. A big *thank you* for those neighbors that have reached out to volunteer their time to help improve our beautiful common areas. It truly does make a difference.

Our scheduled spring planting has been impacted by COVID 19. The Common Areas Committee (CAC) and board are looking into other alternatives, since it is unclear when social distancing will be lifted and what the future will look like. The following has been implemented thus far:

- Premium Lawn and Landscape will be planting summer flowers (red, white and pink begonias) and fall flowers (pansies in an ocean color scheme), refreshing mulch, and weeding the flower beds in front of our two entrance signs.
- Volunteers using social distancing have planted over 300 native perennials/sedges/shrubs, and over 60 donated native perennials/tree seedlings/shrubs.
- Premium Lawn and Landscape will provide tree watering care during the hot summer months or times of drought for all new trees/shrubs for their first two years. After two years, the native trees should be well-enough established to thrive on natural precipitation levels.

Hickory Farms is beautiful right now and all the hard work and dedication that our residents have put into the Common Areas, their yards, landscaping, and gardens are fully displayed. Enjoy!



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## **COMMON AREAS: MOWING SCHEDULE, TEMPORARY CLOSURES, MAINTENANCE & REMINDERS**

Our landscaping provider, Premium Lawn & Landscape, is currently mowing every Thursday. In some cases, due to rainy weather, they are pushing it out a day or two. Some areas may not be mowed due to that part of the Commons Area being heavily saturated with freestanding water or not draining properly. Mowing over wet areas damages grass roots, kills grass, and can leave unsightly tire marks. These areas will be targeted the following week, as soon as the ground is dry enough.

Since we are spending more time in our yards and the Common Areas, I wanted to make mention of some important items:

- When Premium Lawn & Landscape is mowing the common areas, please consider that part of the commons temporarily closed until they are finished. This is due to their mower blades being able to pick up debris, like a rock or stick, and can launch it up to 50 yards or more.
- Premium Lawn and Landscape will be string-trimming every two weeks, not weekly. There may be slightly higher grass next to cable boxes/bird houses and grass over walkways as a result.
- A reminder for residents who back up to a common area or entrance:  
In order to avoid the risk of damage to resident-owned fences, gates, trees, plants, hardscapes and built structures, the HFCA landscaping contractor will target trimming within one foot of resident lot lines. Residents are responsible for keeping their own lot and structures mowed and maintained neatly, including both sides of fences, gates, trees and any structures located on their property line adjoining the common area. By working together, our HFCA community landscaping contractor and individual lot owners can successfully keep all property within Hickory Farms attractively landscaped and maintained while minimizing any risks of damage to existing private landscaping or fences along the common areas perimeter and entrances.

To stay informed on what's happening in the common areas, please view the Common Area Committee schedule on our new Hickory Farms website's calendar: <https://hickoryfarms.org/calendar>. If you are interested in helping the committee, please contact Melissa at [commonareas@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:commonareas@hickoryfarms.org).

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### **COMMONS AREA COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED IN 2020**

Hickory Farms has 20 plus acres of common areas comprising of open fields, tree islands, native wildflower meadows, benches, a bluebird trail, and riparian habitat in a Resource Protection Area. This is a lot of territory for one individual to manage and troubleshoot. Therefore, the HFCA Board has created a Common Areas Committee (CAC) to help the Common Areas Coordinators (Melissa and Jarrett Stark) manage all these assets. The responsibilities of the committee members (Advisors) are as follows:

- Be an advocate for the commons area that they support.
- Monitor their areas monthly and provide feedback to the Common Areas Coordinator on things that need special attention, e.g., fallen trees or branches, vandalism, clogged drains, etc.
- Attend CAC meetings, participate in group discussions, and provide feedback on the planning of our common areas and community.
- Participate in at least (1) clean-up or planting activity for the year.

The Advisors are

- Upper Commons – Rich Dudley
- Lower Commons – Bryan Crabtree
- Northern Path – Bill Berg
- Rabbit Run – Bob and Judy Cosgriff
- Entrances – Claire Coleman

Need to communicate with us? Please email: [commonareas@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:commonareas@hickoryfarms.org).

## **BIRDS OF HICKORY FARMS**

—Bob Cosgriff (Cotton Farm Road)

Early April saw a continuation of our string of 20+ species per day. Our first new bird was a beautiful Brown Thrasher on 7 April. That day was a special day on which we saw 30 different species, which is second all-time, exceeded only by the 33 species seen on 2 May, 2019 during the peak week of the spring migration. Other birds seen on the banner day were Red-shouldered Hawk, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Northern Mockingbird, Eastern Bluebird, and Chipping Sparrow, along with the usual collection of winter residents. On 15 April, our Slate-colored Juncos were seen for the last time. They breed farther north and usually depart in April. The next new bird to be seen was an overflying Great Blue Heron (4/19). Gray Catbird arrived on 4/20, pretty much within the historical window of arrival dates. A series of days with northerly winds seemed to hold up the arrival of other expected species but finally, on 29 April, our first House Wren arrived, giving us four new species for April.

Our first bluebird egg of the year was laid on 11 April in our one new “slot box” model (box #7 near the lending library box on Farm House Lane). This is slightly later than last year (6 April) and a full two weeks later than our earliest ever (27 March, 2017) but earlier than in many other years. Here is a table showing nine years of data for comparison:

Year	Date of First Egg
2012	20 April
2013	26 April
2014	20 April
2015	16 April
2016	5 April
2017	27 March
2018	1 April
2019	6 April
2020	11 April

A total of four eggs were laid in this box. Unfortunately, on a subsequent visit on 4/19, all of them were gone but the nest was intact. This is indicative of a snake. However, our pole guard should have deterred any snake. The other possibility is human disturbance. We are putting a lock on this box as a precaution. On 4/25, we found a bluebird nest in box #5 in the lower common grounds, but no eggs had been laid by that date.

Last month we briefly discussed the timing of bird migration in relation to gradual global warming. There is another aspect to this question and that is how gradually warming temperatures influence breeding ranges. Research has indicated that some migratory birds, such as the Baltimore Oriole and Blue-winged Warbler, have spread their ranges northward over the past few decades. The annual Christmas Bird Count also indicates that many birds that do not migrate out of the U.S. are staying farther north than in the past. By the same token, some birds of the boreal forests of Canada are not coming south in the winter as far or as often as they did in past decades. These would include birds we used to see here in Hickory Farms, such as Pine Siskins, Common Redpolls, and Red-breasted Nuthatch. This suggests that food supplies are remaining at sufficient levels up north, perhaps due to longer growing seasons due to warming temperatures. Another way birds adjust to temperatures (which are related to food sources) is to move to higher altitudes at generally the same latitude—this is called ‘altitudinal migration’ or sometimes “horizontal’ migration.

One other aspect of seasonal migration is the timing of the appearance of food sources. There is some evidence to suggest that insect larvae and insects themselves are emerging earlier in the spring and may be present in reduced numbers by the time birds arrive “on schedule” to feast on them. This could dramatically affect songbird populations. Another salient example is the timing of horseshoe crab egg-laying on the beaches of Delaware. Many shore birds, and especially the endangered “*rufa*” subspecies of the Red Knot, depend on these eggs to fatten up before completing their long spring migration to their breeding grounds near or above the Arctic Circle. <https://abcbirds.org/bird/red-knot/> If the crabs lay their eggs earlier due to rising ocean temperatures/sea levels or if some beaches are lost to higher sea levels, then the Red Knots could conceivably miss the peak time for feeding or find reduced numbers of eggs.

[https://www.fws.gov/northeast/pdf/horseshoecrabs\\_redknotsFINAL.pdf](https://www.fws.gov/northeast/pdf/horseshoecrabs_redknotsFINAL.pdf)

Food availability in turn affects shorebird reproductive success once they do arrive on their breeding grounds. It will take more years of research to determine definitively what is happening with the timing of insect emergence and crab egg-laying and what effect it is having on the birds that depend on this food source to complete their migration and enjoy a successful breeding season.

This article went to the editor on 29 April, just ahead of the peak period of the spring migration which occurs during first two weeks of May. Next month, I will have a complete report on all the what we saw during this exciting and beautiful time of the year. I encourage you to get out of quarantine for a walk through our common grounds as flowers emerge and birds return.

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## **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**

At our last board of directors meeting on April 13, it was decided that we should put our neighborhood watch on a hiatus given the current state of our country. Thank you all for volunteering your time to keep our neighborhood safe! In the meantime, I would like to ask everyone to keep an extra eye out for their neighbors and call the police if you see anything suspicious. Once everything settles down, I will create another schedule and send it out. I would also like to take this moment to request once again for new members of the community to join our committee! Many older neighbors have stepped down to make room for new younger neighbors. Please know that it doesn't take any experience to be on neighborhood watch — just a desire to keep your family safe! It only takes a couple of hours once a quarter to help your community. You can do it with your spouse, by yourself or another neighbor. Think of it as a “date night!” Thanks in advance for your consideration. For more information please contact Debbi Buchanan at (703) 307-7323 or [simplydebbi1@gmail.com](mailto:simplydebbi1@gmail.com).

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## **WANT TO CONTACT THE BOARD?**

Board of Directors: [hfca@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:hfca@hickoryfarms.org)

Architectural Control Committee: [acc@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:acc@hickoryfarms.org)

President: [president@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:president@hickoryfarms.org)

Treasurer: [treasurer@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:treasurer@hickoryfarms.org)

Common Areas: [commonareas@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:commonareas@hickoryfarms.org)

Webmaster: [webmaster@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:webmaster@hickoryfarms.org)

Social Committee: [social@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:social@hickoryfarms.org)