

HICKORY FARMS COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

September 2020 Edition



HICKORYFARMS.ORG

P.O. BOX 2239, FAIRFAX VA 22031

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ATTENTION ALL HICKORY FARMS HOMEOWNERS - PLEASE READ THIS IMMEDIATELY

By Hickory Farms Board of Directors

For the first time in 40 years, Hickory Farms homeowners will not meet at the Green Acres Center for an annual meeting this October. Although our existing By-Laws specify that homeowners must meet in person during October, it is simply too dangerous during the current coronavirus pandemic for us to meet in person in an enclosed area. We have discussed with our attorney alternative ways to conduct Hickory Farms business, including electronic methods such as email and video conferencing. Before we can do that we must first amend our existing By-Laws to permit alternatives to in-person meetings.

The By-Laws, however, may only be amended by the homeowners at a meeting like we used to have at the Green Acres Center. Accordingly, at the September 1, 2020 meeting, the Board of Directors voted to cancel the in-person October 2020 Annual Meeting in consideration of the pandemic emergency. And, under Article III, Section 2 of our existing By-Laws, we are instead scheduling a "Special Meeting" on October 3, 2020, to conduct only one item of business, amending our By-Laws to permit alternative meeting and communication methods in the future. Once the By-Laws additions are approved by the homeowners, we can then conduct other business matters such as electing members to the Board of Directors without meeting in person. Meanwhile, as permitted by Article IV Section 3 of the existing By-Laws, the current Board members will continue to serve you until an election is held Spring 2021.

The Board of Directors is USPS mailing to every Hickory Farms homeowner an information packet which includes the proxy document that you will use to vote on amending the Hickory Farms By-Laws. This material is also being posted at www.hickoryfarms.org

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LAST CHANCE: GROUP PURCHASE FOR PRESSURE WASHING

By Kirk Randal

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. You can, of course, rent a pressure washer and do it yourself, assuming you can find one during this time of health emergency. But, speaking for myself, I'm not about to climb up a ladder with a pressure washer to reach the third floor siding.

Some outfits charge as much as \$400 to pressure wash homes our size. Rob Banks at Northern Virginia Pressure Washing Service and his crew can pressure wash most homes in our community for less than half that. And, while they are at it, they can clean your deck, driveway, patios, or sidewalk, many of which have turned gray or black because of the recent proliferation of mold and algae. Rob has been offering our communities group deals since 2011, and he is keeping the low prices unchanged this Spring. Pricing is based on 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 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. Rob's company 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.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

By Liam Ferguson

Hello neighbors, I am Liam Ferguson. I live in Hickory Farms, on Harvester Farm Lane. I am a Boy Scout in Troop 1865. I will be working on a project in the upper commons area of Hickory Farms in order to obtain my Eagle Scout, the highest rank in Scouting prior to the age of 18. "Eagle Rank" is an achievement that is recognized, respected, and stands out as a sign of character, problem-solving, can-do resolve, and leadership by millions of adults who themselves also did Scouting in their youth or whose own adolescents did Scouting. The Eagle Project is the culminating cornerstone for a Scout to achieve Eagle Scout Rank. The project consists of a number of phases to include; conceiving the project, organizing the project and leading a team in completion of the project. The Eagle project must focus on service or contribution to others and leadership of fellow Scouts in executing the Project. Often, the Eagle candidate encounters frustrations and unexpected obstacles along the way and must find ways to overcome them. The Eagle candidate is thus challenged even as an adolescent with real-world obstacles and learns to overcome them with determination, resourcefulness, resilience, and a positive attitude of leadership.

My project has four different parts. First, I am building 4 sturdy wooden benches which will replace 2 of the existing deteriorating benches and add two more in the common areas.

Second, I am building a fifth bench that resembles a diving board. This will commemorate the pool that used to be near the old farmhouse. Part of the pool structure is still visible today, and this "diving board bench" will be in the location of the old diving board.

Third, I am putting down a stepping stone path that will go through part of the upper common areas, near the diving board bench and passing by the old "koi pond". The area where the path will go through is currently barren, however it will serve as a focal point for new plantings that are already in the HFCA plan.

Fourth, I am clearing an area near a grove of boxwood trees of debris.

I will be raising all funds required to complete the project and they will be used to purchase the materials for the benches and the stone path. The materials include pressure-treated wood for the 5 benches, as well as hardware to assemble them, plus stain and polyurethane to coat the benches. 60-70 stepping stones need to be purchased for the stone path and be delivered to the neighborhood from a local stone dealer.

PROPERTY INSPECTION 2020: HOW IS YOUR PROPERTY INSPECTION GOING?

By: Bruce Bernhardt

With the COVID-19 virus risk this year, Hickory Farms is conducting the annual Property Inspection this year as a do-it-yourself activity. How is your individual property inspection coming? This is the perfect time of year to check out your property for small issues and get them corrected to avoid larger issues later. Many non-compliance issues can be resolved with just a few dollars and some elbow grease! Cleaning the algae off an exterior wall when it is just starting is much easier than waiting for it to cover the entire wall! Many of us are spending more time at home these days. Getting out of the house to work on a landscaping or gardening project is just the ticket to get some exercise and spend a few hours in the sunlight! Do you have bushes that have grown so large they are now starting to block the sidewalk? How about a shutter or two that have fallen off recently? All home improvement stores are open and investing a few dollars on your property will come back to you in increased property value! Now is also a great time to get to that landscape or garden project you have been thinking about but didn't have the time to get to. A new bush or set of plants can dramatically improve the curb appeal of your property!

Although VDOT has authority for the condition of public sidewalks and streets, it will not trim the grass edges of our sidewalks nor remove the weeds growing from our cement sidewalk curbs bordering our asphalt streets. Please help everyone keep up the appearance of our community by edging the grass along our curbs and eliminating the weeds growing along our curbs and into our streets.

The Hickory Farms Property Inspection Checklist is available on the Hickory Farms website: https://hickoryfarms.org/uploads/documents/HFCA_Property_Evaluation_Checklist_V2.0_042518.pdf

By using this checklist, you will be sure to cover all the common non-compliance issues and avoid getting a letter from the Architecture Control Committee in the future!

STUDENT YELLOW PAGES

If you offer services such as raking leaves, lawn mowing, babysitting, general home maintenance, dog walking, tutoring, etc., please email Bill at berg_bill@yahoo.com to be included.

Bridgette Buchanan (17)	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
Erika Maaseide (17)	703-659-5321	Babysitting; Special Needs experienced
Kiera Stark (11)	commonareas@hickoryfarms.org	Pet sitting, plant/tree watering, weed picking and leaf raking
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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INTERESTED 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.

JOIN OUR LISTSERV

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

CHANGES COMING TO THE HICKORY FARMS LISTSERV

By Hickory Farms Board of Directors

The Hickory Farms mailing list or "listserv" is an easy and free way for our community to communicate by email. Uses of the listserv include receiving emailed versions of the newsletter, lost pet notices, getting repair and tradesmen recommendations from your neighbors, and much more. While the service has been hosted by Yahoo for many years, recently, the features of the Yahoo service were scaled back, resulting in a limited set of features. Previously, our Listserv administrators have had the ability to moderate incoming emails to ensure they comply with the Listserv Rules and Standards of Etiquette (which may be found at <https://hickoryfarms.org/hickory-farms-listserv>); Yahoo removed that feature, among others. At its September 1st meeting, the Board of Directors decided that a change in providers would be necessary to ensure effective administration of the listserv. The Board of Directors anticipates that a new version of the Listserv will be announced within 30 days. There's nothing you need to do now and we'll keep you apprised of the rollout as it progresses.





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IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO RESPOND TO THE 2020 CENSUS

By Kirk Randall (Country Squire)

Every ten years, the United States counts its population by conducting a census. It is a process enshrined in Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution: "The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years..."

The main purpose of the census is to determine how many seats each state will have in the House of Representatives for the next ten years. The more populous the state, the greater the number of representatives. However, census data serve many other important uses. Census counts are used to divvy up billions of dollars in federal funding for programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, and Head Start. Local communities use census data to determine where to build new schools, fire stations, and roads.

Completing the 2020 Census is vital to our community. We have already received letters and postcards asking us to go online to complete the 2020 Census. The easiest way to complete the census is online, where you can respond in one of 12 languages. If you prefer not to complete the census online, you can also do it over the telephone or wait for a paper form to be mailed to you a few weeks later. Furthermore, if you have not already completed your questionnaire, a census worker will come to your door to conduct an interview in person. Even if you complete your own form, a census worker may come to your door to ask about a neighbor whom they cannot contact, or about a house that may be vacant.

Responding to the census is safe. By law, your answers must be kept private and secure. The Census Bureau cannot release your personal information, even to other government agencies like the FBI. Your answers are only used to produce statistics at aggregated levels. Keep in mind that the 2020 Census counts everyone at your address, not just your own family. Anyone who is living or staying at your address should be included in your household count: children and adults, immediate family and distant relatives, roommates and temporary residents. All of these people should be included on your census form if they have no other place where they normally stay. I hope that you will help make sure that Hickory Farms is counted accurately by responding promptly to the 2020 Census this summer. For more information about how the census works, the questions that are asked, and the uses of the data, please visit www.2020census.gov

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MOPEDS AND GOLF CARTS NOT PERMITTED ON COMMON AREAS

By Hickory Farms Board of Directors

The Hickory Farms North Path runs from Roberts Road across from the swimming pool to the forested area that runs along Rabbit Run Creek. In early August, a homeowner encountered a couple driving a golf cart downhill on the North Path towards the woods. The homeowner approached the cart and reminded them that motorized vehicles are not permitted on our Common Areas, which includes the North Path. They made a U-turn and headed back up towards Roberts Road. Perhaps the adult drivers somehow missed the three large signs along the North Path that say that motorized vehicles are prohibited?

Less than a week later, two boys rode their mopeds down the North Path, into our wooded Common Area, and returned to the North Path to drive off.

The North Path is private property owned by Hickory Farms. We allow non-residents to use our path, provided they follow the rules on the three signs. Both the golf cart and mopeds violated our Rules and Regulations which clearly state: "No motorized vehicles are permitted on the Common Grounds at any time, with the exception of authorized maintenance vehicles such as lawnmowers and tractors maintaining the grounds." The same is stated on the three signs.

WANT TO CONTACT THE BOARD?

Board of Directors: hfca@hickoryfarms.org

Architectural Control Committee: acc@hickoryfarms.org

President: president@hickoryfarms.org

Treasurer: treasurer@hickoryfarms.org

Common Areas: commonareas@hickoryfarms.org

Webmaster: webmaster@hickoryfarms.org

Social Committee: social@hickoryfarms.org



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BIRDS OF HICKORY FARMS

By Bob Cosgriff

The 2020 breeding season started out in a disappointing fashion, with three bluebird nests that were lost to predation. We suspect House ("English") Sparrows, since all our boxes are equipped with predator guards which would deter squirrels, raccoons, and snakes. In one case, eggs were removed; in the other two instances, chicks were pecked to death. There is fierce competition for nesting sites, so such things are bound to happen. The only countermeasure is to reduce the number of invasive sparrows by constantly removing their nests and eggs from our boxes.

However, eventually we had two successful bluebird nestings that produced a total of 10 fledglings. Both boxes in the upper common grounds and one was the new "slot box" style, which is supposed to discourage sparrows from nesting. We did get one sparrow nesting attempt in it, but after clearing it, a bluebird took the box and successfully brought off a brood of five birds. We also had one late House Wren nest in a box in the area where the bamboo used to be, proof that removing this invasive species will prove to be a boon to native bird species. This box produced three fledglings around 13 August.

The 2020 totals are low for Hickory Farms. Normally, we would expect three to four successful bluebird boxes, and two for the wrens. In past years, the lower common grounds area has been more successful than the upper area. This year saw that trend reversed. Once again, Tree Swallows did not take our boxes, although some were seen flying over the upper common grounds in May.

As the breeding season ends, the fall migration season starts. In fact, the shorebird migration has already begun. To see these long-distance migrants, your best bet is to go to the beaches on the Delmarva Peninsula or the Outer Banks. A few species, such as Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, and Solitary Sandpiper, can also be seen at parks along the Potomac and Occoquan rivers.

As for songbirds, the fall migration is not as colorful or dramatic as the spring migration. Nonetheless, many species should pass through Hickory Farms, including various warblers, thrushes, and flycatchers. Now is a good time to put out hummingbird feeders, as these tiny birds will be fueling up for their trip south during September. In 2019, we saw our last hummer on 1 October. Do not buy commercial 'nectar' mixes or use red food dye. Merely mix $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sugar to each one cup of water and boil until sugar dissolves. Cool and fill the feeder. Save the left-over solution in the refrigerator for up to two weeks. Toward the middle of September, to provide even more energy, you can use $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of sugar per one cup of water. Clean the feeders weekly.

There are two other groups of migratory birds that you can see passing overhead: waterfowl and raptors. Canada Goose, Tundra Swan, Broad-winged Hawk, and Bald Eagle are the most likely. Osprey, although uncommon, is not out of the question here. If you can get to a lake or to parks along the Potomac River, you have a really good chance of seeing geese, swans, and many species of ducks during the fall and winter. Veterans Park in Woodbridge is particularly good for ducks. Other nearby sites include Lake Mercer, Royal Lake, Lake Accotink, and Huntley Meadows Park. Belle Haven Park in Alexandria and the adjacent Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, both managed by the National Park Service (no fee), are good for waterfowl and songbirds, as is the Accotink Bay Nature Refuge at Fort Belvoir (public access is before the Tulley Gate security post off Route 1).

Since birding involves being outdoors, it is a hobby you can do even with pandemic restrictions. It is generally easy to stay away from other people in large parks and refuges. It's a good idea to take a mask, just in case. Being outdoors is a good way to get exercise and avoid "cabin fever." In general, planning your outing for a weekday will generally mean fewer people, and going earlier in the day is always better. County parks are free; Virginia state parks such as nearby Leesylvania and Mason Neck do charge a parking fee (lower on weekdays). Occoquan NWR in Woodbridge is a non-fee area and excellent for shorebirds, raptors, and songbirds.

If you can't get out to one of the many excellent parks mentioned above, just take a walk in Smokewood Park and Long Branch Stream Valley Park behind the Fairfax Memorial Cemetery, or the athletic fields and woods at GMU, or just explore our very own common grounds to enjoy the birds (and flowers) of Hickory Farms!



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INTERVIEW OF JACK COTNER : LONGEST HICKORY FARMS RESIDENT

By Debbi Buchanan

Jack, when did you and your wife Kathy move into Hickory Farms?

"We moved in around December 17, 1976. We watched the property being built. We invited my parents down for Christmas that year. They lived in a row house their whole life. My dad said his son lived in a mansion! He was very proud."

Why did you decide to buy in Hickory Farms?"

"We chose it because it was within St. Leo the Great Catholic parish boundaries and we knew Father Hannan. Another reason was because the townhouse we lived in Lake Braddock was starting to have problems with unruly tenants. "

What was it like here then? Mostly woods? How many other homes had been built or were under construction?

"There were the 4 basic models; a fifth model was added later:

Wheatfield (Split Foyer) \$67,950

Surrey (Cape Cod) \$69,950

Harvester (Split Level) \$75,950

Country Squire (2 Story Colonial) [3 models A,B,C] \$77,845

The 5 model homes were located on Roundtop Court. About 10 other homes were completed when we moved in. The streets were paved but the yards were nothing but mud. Hydoseeding had taken place but still mud!"

Was the original farmhouse, pool, and its outer buildings still here then?

"The old farm house was used for construction material storage. The pool was there but drained. The farmhouse was torn down and the pool filled in around 1980."

How has the Fairfax Clty and GMU and our surrounding area changed since 1976?

"GMU has grown exponentially. Development of the Farrcroft Estate was kind of bittersweet. I remember when the cows were in pasture."

Any advice for newly arrived homeowners and their families?

"Get involved! "

GRAPHICS DESIGNER NEEDED!

The Hickory Farms Home-Owners Association is looking for a passionate Graphic Designer! As volunteer Design Lead, you will be in charge of creating a brand for our neighborhood which will consist of but not limited to templates, signage, logo and overall look for any communications in the community. This is a great opportunity to give back to your community, build your portfolio and get to know your fellow neighbors! If you are interested or know someone who would be, please reach out to Strategicplan@hickoryfarms.org by Tuesday, September 15th.



Hickory Farms Halloween



Halloween is on a Saturday this year and the social committee is working to support a safe and FUN holiday for all! Activities will include:

- **Haunted Holiday Decorating Contest.** Get out your over-sized pumpkins and witches on broomsticks -- we'll have prizes for the Most Festive, Spookiest, and Silliest homes.
- **Spooky Scavenger Hunt.** During the weeks leading up to the 31st, we'll release more details and clues.
- **"Mask-arade" Trick or Treat Event on October 31st from 5:30 - 7:30 pm!** We'll organize the kids and families to move safely around the neighborhood and will provide guidance for houses who want to hand out candy.



More details to come!

