



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

September 2022 Edition



HICKORYFARMS.ORG

P.O. BOX 2239, FAIRFAX VA 22031

HFCA BOARD & VOLUNTEERS

President: Jim Bever

Vice President: Telah Jackson

Secretary: Ben Noviello

ACC: Pam Barrett

Treasurer: Ken Sorg

Assistant Treasurer: Tad Weed

Common Areas: Melissa Stark

Webmaster: Bryan Crabtree

Neighborhood Watch: Christina Crockett

At Large: Carlie Mensen

Architectural Reviews: Pam Barrett, Keith Ferguson, Donna Garfield, Josef Gasimov, Ed Kiechlin

Common Areas Committee: Bob and Judy Cosgriff, Rich Dudley, Theresa Perry, Larry Rogers, Barrett and Tracy Schloerke, Melissa and Jarrett Stark.

Neighborhood Block Reps:
Jim Bever, Alyssa Eswood, Ellen Head, Jeannette Hough, Justin Mensen, Meredith Perkins, Lee Sottile, Jen Spencer

Newsletter Editor: Jennifer Maloney

Social Committee: Meredith Perkins, Sarah Tropicano

IN THIS EDITION

President's Column	3
HFCA Board Meeting Notice	3
2023 Budget and Annual Assessment Notice	4
Architectural Control Committee Update	5
Student Yellow Pages	6
Rabbit Run Restoration Update	7
HFCA Service Saturday September 10	8
The Birds of Hickory Farms	9
Newsletter Item Deadline and Distribution	10
Join the Listserv	10
Fairfax County Voting Information	10

SAVE THE DATE!

HFCA Annual Meeting—October 18, 2022

To be held via Zoom.

Details to homeowners coming soon.

HOW DO I CONTACT ...

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

Newsletter: newsletter@hickoryfarms.org



CALL FOR FREE ESTIMATE

- Mowing
- Landscaping
- Snow Removal
- Stone Work

(703) 899-5683

(703) 715-0285

Sunshine
CONTRACTING

ROOFING
ATTIC INSULATION
TRIM
SIDING
GUTTERS/
LEAF PROTECTION
WINDOWS
DOORS
DECKS/PORCHES

**TOP 200 RATED EXTERIOR REMODELER
IN THE NATION 6 YEARS IN A ROW!**
Celebrating 23 Years In Business!

Call Today
for Your
FREE Estimate!

(703)499-8654

www.SunshineContractingCorp.com



- Family Owned & Operated
- Lifetime Warranties
- In-House Crews
- 0% Financing Available

SENIOR, MILITARY, GOVERNMENT, POLICE &
FIREFIGHTER DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Jim Bever

As the summer of 2022 ends too soon it seems, we on your HFCA Board hope that you've enjoyed a safe and fun time with family and friends. School is back in session again. And some new families have moved in as new homeowners or as tenants—so, if you haven't already, if they are your new nearby neighbors, please take a few minutes to say hello and welcome them to Hickory Farms!

WATCH OUT FOR CHILDREN! Speaking of school starting up, please again be aware of early morning and mid-afternoon comings and goings of children to and from our handful of bus stops in Hickory Farms. You will notice some "SLOW DOWN!" signs posted, just to remind us all to obey our 25 mph speed limit and to please stop at all of our stop signs.

GOOD NEWS! Telah Jackson is our new Vice President. Telah was voted into this position by our Board to fill our VP vacancy. She has served our community for many years as Member-At-Large, during which time she initiated and then led our successful Strategic Plan endeavor, based largely upon feedback from homeowner surveys which she designed and executed. The Strategic Plan was approved last year by HFCA's Board. Telah will also represent Hickory Farms in the Braddock District Council of over 100 homeowner associations, so that we are again well networked with others in our District, able to learn from best practices, as well as raise our concerns and needs among peer organizations of citizens. Congratulations, Telah!

SAVE THE DATE! OCTOBER 18th, 7- 8:30pm. ANNUAL HOMEOWNERS' MEETING—via ZOOM again!

Details to be provided to you by September 18th. We will elect our new Board for 2023, vote on affirming our Board-approved 2023 Budget and 2023 Annual Assessment, review our progress on executing our Strategic Plan, and share updates on 2022's actions and upcoming planned activities.

JOIN OUR BOARD! LAST CALL FOR NOMINATIONS IN ADVANCE!

If as a homeowner, you would like to self-nominate or nominate another homeowner (with his/her consent confirmable by us via email, text or phone) to be a candidate to be elected to the Board, please let our Nominating Committee know at nc@hickoryfarms.org , with copy to president@hickoryfarms.org by 5pm on Tuesday, September 13th .

After the Annual Meeting, the newly elected Board meets by early in the new year to then select from among themselves who shall serve as president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, member(s)-at-large, ACC (Architectural Control Committee Chair), assistant treasurer and other positions to hold voting authority (based upon regular attendance at Monthly Board Meetings, of which no more than three may be missed). (Rules allow nominations during the Annual Meeting, but we prefer in advance.)

KEEP AN EYE OUT! By September 18th, for your October 18th Annual Meeting Zoom entry invitation, along with slate for electors of 2023 Board candidates, and Proxy form in case you cannot attend the Zoom meeting.

Thank you and enjoy September!

Jim (571 405-0708 mobile or president@hickoryfarms.org)

HFCA BOARD MEETING NOTICE

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, HFCA Board Meetings are now conducted using the Zoom audio/video conference application. That means that every Hickory Farms Community Association member can observe their Board in action without leaving home! Unless otherwise notified or due to an unforeseen change, HFCA Board Meetings will be held the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7 pm. To join the meeting, contact any HFCA Board Member or send a request to join to hfcab@hickoryfarms.org. You will be provided with the Zoom meeting URL, meeting number and passcode.

2023 BUDGET AND ANNUAL ASSESSMENT NOTICE

By Ken Sorg

Under the Hickory Farms Bylaws and the Virginia Property Owners Association Act (VPOAA), the Board of Directors must approve a budget and set an annual assessment for the forthcoming year. The Hickory Farms Board of Directors reviewed the 2023 budget and concluded a \$281 annual assessment was needed. This increase from \$261 to \$281 is needed to cover the rising costs of operations and contribute to the reserve fund (used for repairs and upgrades of HFCA assets).

The 2023 budget and the increase of the 2023 annual assessment to \$281 were approved by the HFCA Board of Directors at the monthly meeting on August 9, 2022. Also approved was the 2023 budget.

For Homeowners, below is the Board–approved 2023 Budget. By September 18th, homeowners will be sent a proxy and invitation to attend the Annual Meeting via Zoom on October 18th at 7pm, and affirm the budget.

HICKORY FARMS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION	
2023 Budget	
INCOME	
Assessments	55,638
Assessments - Late Fees	
Interest	
Advertising	550
Legal Fees Recovered	
VPOAA Disclosure Fees	875
TOTAL INCOME	\$57,063
EXPENSES	
Common Area Maintenance	27,015
Common Area Improvement	3,225
Common Area Remediation	5,913
Insurance - Director's Liability & Surety	2,795
Insurance - Commercial Crime Insurance	894
Insurance - General Liability	345
Legal Fees	2,303
Postage	269
Neighborhood Watch	198
Printing	1,677
Social Activities	2,000
Tax Preparation	374
Taxes & Government Charges/Fees	276
Capital Reserve Deposits	5,975
Administrative Fees	1,750
Strategic Projects	2,000
Bank Charges	54
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$57,063
INCOME LESS EXPENSES	\$0
Notes:	
1. Reserve fund \$52,531 as of 7/31/2022 (money market account).	

ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE UPDATE

By Pam Barrett

At first sight, Hickory Farms impresses visitors with well-kept homes surrounding 20 acres of lush, inviting common grounds - offering natural woodland, open lawn, and historic old growth areas. The Architectural Control Committee (ACC) functions to protect and maximize property values in the exceptional surroundings enjoyed in Hickory Farms by supporting the maintenance of homes for the mutual benefit of the owners.

Our governing documents – our Declarations, By-laws and Rules and Regulations - direct the Hickory Farms Community Association (HFCA) to form a committee of at least four homeowners, including the Chair. All HFCA owners must agree to adhere to the rules and community standards outlined in our Governing Documents by signing and accepting the HFCA disclosure of these documents received at the purchase settlement. The ACC monitors adherence to these property owner rules.

The ACC will enforce the HFCA Restrictive Covenants by requiring application and approval of all exterior changes and improvements, reviewing owner compliance through regular property inspections, generating violation notices, and evaluating all properties for violations prior to submitting the HFCA VPOAA disclosure documents for resale settlement.

The ACC strives to remind HFCA homeowners of their legal obligation to comply with the rules of home maintenance by periodically publishing and distributing the essential extractions of the **HFCA Restrictive Covenants as follows in [Declarations, Article VII, Restrictive Covenants, Section 4]:**

- a) **All lots and yards shall be maintained in a neat and attractive manner** so as not to detract from the appearance of the Hickory Farms Community;
- b) **All dwellings shall be kept in good repair (e.g., shutters, trim, fences, siding, roof, etc.)** and maintained in keeping with the standards of the neighborhood and development;
- c) **All curbs, driveways and sidewalks of lots shall be edged** as needed to maintain a neat appearance and so that grass does not grow over curbs and sidewalks;
- d) **Flower beds and landscaping shall be maintained** in an attractive manner so as not to detract from the appearance of the neighborhood or encroach on public and common areas.

The HFCA ACC Mission is to assure that homeowners understand the obligation of homeownership in this community -and ultimately understand that what benefits the entire community also rewards each individual owner with potential gains in property value and quality of life.

2022 ACC Property Actions

Applications

1. Solar panel - 4316 Still Meadow Road
2. New roof - 4377 Farm House Lane
3. New roof - 4331 Still Meadow Road
4. New roof - 4371 Harvester Farm Lane
5. New fence - 4331 Still Meadow Road
6. Deck extension - 4285 Country Squire Lane
7. New fence - 4377 Farm House Lane
8. New roof -10002 Tumbleweed Court
9. New fence -10007 Cotton Farm Road
10. New siding and bay window - 4306 Burke Station Road
11. Shutters - new color -10007 Cotton Farm Road
12. New fence – 4342 Farm House Lane
13. Front entry door replacement - 4345 Farm House Lane
14. New fence - 4325 Still Meadow Road
15. New fence - 4379 Farm House Lane
16. Driveway - 4347 Farm House Lane
17. New front entry door/storm door - 4306 Still Meadow Road
18. New mailbox – 4372 Harvester Farm Lane
19. New shed -10113 Spinning Wheel Court

ACC UPDATE (CONTINUED)

Virginia Property Owner Association Packages

4285 Country Squire Lane – serious violations corrected. Required 28 emails, 3 inspections and 4 weeks to close.

10007 Cotton Farm – violation negotiated with buyer

10000 Cotton Farm road – no violations

4295 Country Squire Lane – two violations being corrected

10118 Round Top Court

10110 Round Top Court

4361 Harvester Farm Lane

10012 Cotton Farm Road violations to be corrected

Violations

- Two new violations noted by drive-by inspections.
- Six homes identified with seriously ongoing violations. Two of the serious violations may be brought into compliance within the next month. Board action may be required. Addresses and names are currently withheld.

One frequently asked question: “Where do our Rules come from?”

How we derive our HFCA Rules

Our By-laws and Rules and Regulations subjectively interpret our Restrictive Covenants. Other community associations incorporated at approximately the same time as HFCA, have documents nearly identical to ours, but they may have very different -more often stricter -Rules relating to their Covenants. Sometimes this depends on the decision to be more restrictive or less restrictive culturally. Each neighborhood may take a different approach to deciding what is important i.e., the length of the grass, the style of the mail box, or the color of holiday lights. These differences are sometimes written broadly into By-laws, and then specified in Rules and Regulations, derived from and referring back to a section in the Restrictive Covenants. The culture of Hickory Farms has always been to be less restrictive than other associations with nearly the same documents.

STUDENT YELLOW PAGES



Shannon Turner (17)	Angmturn@hotmail.com	Babysitting, Pet sitting
Nathan Turner (12)	Angmturn@hotmail.com	Dog walking, yard work and watering, leaf removal
Kiera Stark (13)	commonareas@hickoryfarms.org	Pet sitting
Greysen Berg (15)	210-428-5535	Yard work, leaf raking
Cedar Baltz (17)	571-398-1467	Dog walking, Dog sitting

If you offer services such as raking leaves, lawn mowing, babysitting, pet sitting, dog walking, tutoring, etc., and wish to be included in future listings, please email the Newsletter Editor at newsletter@hickoryfarms.org.

RABBIT RUN RESTORATION UPDATE

By Bob Cosgriff

On Friday, 29 July, HOA president Jim Bever, along with Bob and Judy Cosgriff, toured the site of the Rabbit Branch Tributary (Shane's Creek) stream restoration project. This effort is just off Roberts Road south of Robinson Secondary School and will remediate over 4,800 linear feet of stream valley between Roberts Road and Royal Lake. The purpose of the visit was to meet with Charles Smith (Branch Chief, Watershed Projects Implementation Branch, Stormwater Planning Division) and Sarah Fellows (Ecological Restoration Specialist/Project Manager) to see an ongoing stream restoration project like that which is planned for Rabbit Run. (Further information about this project can be found at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/stormwater/plans-projects/rabbit-branch-tributary-restoration-project-collingham-drive>). In particular, we wanted to discuss various aspects of such projects, such as specific engineering techniques used, tree preservation, and timelines.

As was explained to us, each project is different based on the specific characteristics of the stream. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Techniques used included the creation of holding areas (e.g., where stormwater drains empty into the stream), water drops (to take energy out of the stream flow), diversion channels, meanders, raising the stream bed with base material, and fortifying the creek banks through placement of large stones (imbrication). We saw all of these techniques in use at various points along the stream. The goal is to allow the stream flow more slowly and naturally in high-water events so that the water will spread out across the flood plain. This eliminates bank scouring and sediment flow into lakes and ultimately into rivers and bays downstream. The mantra is "no rise (of the flood plain limits), no impact (on adjacent properties). This approach also restores and improves the ecology of the stream itself and the adjacent woodlands.

The County endeavors to protect as much streamside habitat as possible. To provide access for the equipment used, some existing trees and vegetation always need to be removed; however, every effort is made to minimize loss. Construction equipment moves along 'mats' which are large wooden beams (larger than railroad ties). Access points must provide 16' of clearance and generally will be at places where the least amount of habitat disruption would occur. The work site is cordoned off. While restoration work is in progress (even if workers are not present), the entire area is off-limits to the public for safety reasons.

At the end of the restoration work, the entire area is replanted with trees, shrubs, and suitable ground cover (grass or other vegetation). We also toured a project off King David Boulevard in Long Branch Falls Park that was completed about five years ago. There was no trace of work impact and the creek area was in a totally natural and healthy state.

As for the planned project for Rabbit Run, here is what we learned:

- Funding for the project design will be available next year on 1 July, 2023 (FY24 budget).
- Prior to that, in February/March 2023, an aerial survey will be made of Rabbit Run from the City of Fairfax line to south of Cotton Farm Road. An on-ground site survey will take place later next year in the spring.
- Design can take from 12 to 24 months. The community is part of the design team and will have a say in how the remediation design is developed.
- The Rabbit Run RPA will be surveyed by the County three to six months after funding is available, so approximately September to December, 2023.
- The County will do its own outreach to the community and specifically to adjacent homeowners both in Hickory Farms and along Burke Station Road.
- The County will obtain any construction easements necessary from adjacent property owners (including HFCA) and will obtain all necessary state and Federal permits for work in the Resource Protection Area (RPA), a legal definition for land surrounding streams.

RABBIT RUN RESTORATION UPDATE (CONTINUED)

- Once design is completed and cost estimates are developed, funding for construction will be requested in future budgets. Using the longer 24-month timeframe for design, the earliest construction could start would be the **summer of 2025**; that assumes that construction funding would be approved in the FY26 County budget. After funding is approved, there is still the issue of negotiating and signing a contract with one of the approved County contractors. So it is likely that actual construction would not begin until calendar year **2026 or even beyond that**. The first priority in each budget cycle is to fund projects that are already underway and nearing completion. Realistically, we are probably looking at summer of 2026 before work begins.
- It is difficult to say how long the project would take. Rabbit Run is only about 1,600 linear feet, so is much smaller in scope than the project we viewed. That said, actual work might take six to twelve months. We will know more when the design is complete.
- The survey and other work product documentation will be provided to HFCA upon completion of the project.
- The work is warranted for one year by the contractor and two additional years by the County.
- Mr. Smith did note that Rabbit Run is relatively “stable” at the northern and southern ends. The worst “urban stream syndrome” bank erosion is in the middle section and the tributaries coming in from the direction of Burke Station Road. Similarly, much of the riparian habitat east of the stream (Harvester Farm Road side) is in a very healthy, natural state and the goal would be not to disturb that at all.

As mentioned in previous updates, projects like this take a long time. The HOA board began looking into the issues in Rabbit Run almost three years ago. We first met with Mr. Smith in December, 2019, at his office and then again in June 2020 for an informal onsite survey. Our most recent meeting was to do “due diligence” before our project kicks off—which at minimum would be two years from now and more realistically three to four years—and to maintain positive communications with Mr. Smith and his office.



THE BIRDS OF HICKORY FARMS

By Bob Cosgriff

The hot summer of 2022 is drawing to a close. The months of July and August are typically quiet in terms of bird activity. The birds are focused on raising their young. They tend to be rather quiet and covert as they do not want to give away the location of their nests. They will come to feeders and birdbaths and it is always fun to see the juvenile birds flying around after their parents, learning essential skills.

There were, however, two highlights during the dog days of summer. Last month, we reported on hearing the beautiful song of the **Wood Thrush** after an absence of some years. I'm happy to report that this singing continued to be heard through July, signifying the continued presence of this increasingly threatened woodland bird. Then, on 23 July, while checking the bluebird boxes in the upper commons, we were very surprised to see a **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** fly into the Northern Catalpa tree near the wildflower meadow. This is the first cuckoo we've seen in Hickory Farms in years, in fact, probably in decades. I heard one in the woods by the creek in August, 2018. Two days later (7/25/22), I heard the bird calling repeatedly in the woods by the creek south of Cotton Farm Road. **In honor of this sighting, Yellow-billed Cuckoo is the Bird of the Month.**

The order Cuculiformes includes the Yellow-billed, Black-billed, and Mangrove Cuckoo (rare and found only in Florida), two species of Ani (FL, Rio Grande Valley) and the Greater Roadrunner (Texas and the Southwest to California). Cuckoos are furtive and generally hard to spot. The Yellow-billed Cuckoo's ringing "kwop, kwop, kwop" call given on humid summer days gives it the colloquial name of "rain crow" and hearing it is often the only way to know a cuckoo is nearby. The two species that can be seen here in Virginia love to feast on caterpillars, especially tent caterpillars. We suspect the cuckoo we saw was after the large, protein-rich Catalpa Sphinx Moth caterpillars that were eating the leaves on the catalpa tree. We got an extended look at this beautiful bird until an Eastern Phoebe flew at it and drove it away from the tree! You can learn more about this beautiful, beneficial, but hard-to-spot bird at https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Yellow-billed_Cuckoo/overview. The Black-billed Cuckoo (even less likely to be seen) is at: https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Yellow-billed_Cuckoo/species-compare/66038761.

Bluebird Trail Update: this was a tough year for bluebirds due to constant harassment by invasive House ("English") Sparrows. We had three cases of predation, in one case where four young bluebirds on the verge of fledging were killed in the lower commons box by sparrows and another where an adult was killed in the box. However we did have one successful June brood of four bluebirds and a July fledging of four, both in the upper commons, and an unusual late brood (August) of three bluebirds in the lower commons, for a total of **12** bluebirds fledged. The story with House Wrens was about the same with instances of predation and only **10** birds fledged. Both numbers are on the low side of average, but at least we had some success this summer.

Tree Swallows made an early appearance and even attempted to nest, but sparrows ravaged their nest and discouraged them from trying again. In an attempt to reduce the sparrow menace, we are going to experiment next year with two different types of boxes that research shows have some effect on deterring these bully-birds.

September is the month when the fall migration gets going. One bird we might see overhead is the Broad-winged Hawk. These long-range migratory raptors soar in large swirling "kettles" while riding thermals to give them lift before streaming out to catch the next thermal to the south. The weekend of 17 September is the peak time for seeing them. Shorebirds are also on the move, but to see them, you need to go to Delaware, Virginia Beach, the Eastern Shore (Assateague Island National Seashore is one hotspot), or the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Some shore birds (Spotted Sandpiper, Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper) can be seen locally at places like Burke Lake Park or along the Potomac River (Occoquan NWR in Woodbridge, for example) but the numbers of species and birds will be small compared to those to be found on the coastal beaches. As for songbirds, the fall is a good time to see some migrating warblers. But compared to the spring, the fall movement is more diffuse and less colorful. Even so, with the somewhat cooler and less humid days, September is still a great time to get out to see the birds of Hickory Farms and elsewhere in our area. To that end, this year's adult fall bird walk will be held at the Occoquan Bay NWR 13950 Dawson Beach Road in Woodbridge: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/occoquan-bay>. The date is **17 September at**

THE BIRDS OF HICKORY FARMS (CONTINUED)



0900 at the refuge parking lot. Rain date is Sunday, 18 September, same time. To make the outing more manageable, we'd like to keep it to a maximum of eight participants, on a first-come, first-served basis. Please e-mail me at bandjcoz@gmail.com no later than Thursday, 15 September, if interested. Bring binoculars and bug spray. There is no entry fee and restrooms are available. We would plan to walk about 1.5 miles. The refuge is flat, with wide gravel or dirt trails and offers woods, fields, wetlands, and bay habitat, which provides for a wider variety of birds than we would get to see here in the neighborhood.

NEWSLETTER ITEM DEADLINE AND DISTRIBUTION NOTICE

Newsletter items are due the 25th of the month, for the next month's issue. Please send submissions to newsletter@hickoryfarms.org.

Newsletters are distributed via the HFCA listserv and posted on the HFCA website. Unless as required by bylaws, paper versions of the newsletters are no longer delivered to households. All are encouraged to access the digital newsletter via the listserv or the HFCA website. See below for information on how to join the listserv. A limited number of hard copy newsletters will be available each month in the Little Free Libraries.

JOIN THE LISTSERV TO ACCESS NEWSLETTERS, NOTICES ABOUT EVENTS, AND MORE!

All are encouraged to connect with Hickory Farms by joining the Hickory Farms Listserv! Hickory Farms utilizes Google Groups to manage our listserv. We chose this platform because it's simple, easy to use and free.

While any email address works with Google Groups, we highly recommend having a Gmail account because it is most neatly integrated with Google. If you don't have a Gmail account, you can sign up for one at <http://www.gmail.com>.

Once you have an account, visit <https://groups.google.com/my-groups> to sign into Google Groups. From there, you can go straight to <http://groups.google.com/g/hickory-farms-hoa/> and click the "Ask to Join." In the Reason for Joining, please include your address, phone number, and own/rent status to include in the neighborhood directory.

Once your membership is approved, you'll receive emails when they are sent to the listserv. You can adjust your membership settings - like changing single emails to a weekly digest - in your Google Groups Settings.

Please don't forget to review the guidelines on the Hickory Farms website here: <https://hickoryfarms.org/hickory-farms-listserv>. There's also information on how to post to the listserv, manage your account and more.

Finally, if you need basic Google Groups help, visit: <https://support.google.com/groups/answer/1067205?hl=en>. You can always contact the admins of the listserv for help or questions by emailing hickory-farms-hoa+managers@googlegroups.com.

FAIRFAX COUNTY VOTING INFORMATION FOR UPCOMING ELECTION

Vote in person:

- Election Day, Tuesday November 8, 2022 : 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Early: September 23-November 5 (<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/early-voting>)

Vote by mail:

Apply by 5 p.m. October 28 (<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/absentee-voting-mail>)