



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

February 2025 Edition



HICKORYFARMS.ORG P.O. BOX 2239, FAIRFAX VA 22031

HFCA BOARD & VOLUNTEERS

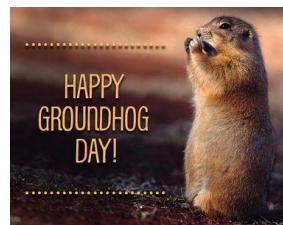
- President: **VACANT**
- Vice President: Telah Jackson
- Secretary: **VACANT**
- Treasurer: Judy Deng
- Assistant Treasurer: Tad Weed
- Common Areas: Melissa Stark
- Webmaster: Bryan Crabtree
- Neighborhood Watch Coordinators: Allie Shaw and Steve Kubrak
- At Large: Pam Barrett and Charles Chu
- Architectural Reviews: Louis Eswood, Keith Ferguson, Donna Garfield, Josef Gasimov, Edmond Kiechlin, Justin Mensen, and Bob Sottile
- Common Areas Committee: Bob and Judy Cosgriff, Rich Dudley, Larry Rogers, Melissa and Jarrett Stark
- Neighborhood Block Reps: Jim Bever, Alyssa Eswood, Ellen Head, Justin Mensen, Meredith Perkins, Lee Sottile, Jen Spencer
- Newsletter Editor: Jennifer Maloney
- Social Committee: Laura Bucher and Juliette Giordano

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HOW TO CONTACT ...

- Board of Directors: hfca@hickoryfarms.org
- Architectural Control Committee: acc@hickoryfarms.org
- Treasurer: treasurer@hickoryfarms.org
- Common Areas: commonareas@hickoryfarms.org
- Webmaster: webmaster@hickoryfarms.org
- Newsletter: newsletter@hickoryfarms.org



THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY SPIRIT

By Bob Cosgriff

As Hickory Farms celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2025, it is worth considering that over the past fifty years, many people have served on the board of directors or in other volunteer capacities to operate the Hickory Farms Community Association (HFCA) for the benefit of all our residents. In addition to things that the HFCA has to do by charter, such as collect the annual dues, maintain the common areas, and conduct business through monthly meetings, it also promotes social events and communicates with residents via our website. Additionally, it interacts as necessary with the Braddock District supervisor, the Braddock District Council, and other elected local and state officials to address problems that might require outside help.

In essence, an HOA is the smallest unit of democratic government: it has a written set of responsibilities, authorities, and rules. It holds annual elections to choose its leaders. It can 'tax' residents through annual dues. It can legally enforce certain standards of residential appearance and decorum. In order to operate successfully, it requires the active participation of all residents. Over the years, many residents have volunteered their precious time to take an active role in community governance. Indeed, many of the same people have served multiple years on the board. As they will tell you, it is often difficult to get others to step forward and help. This is not just a problem in Hickory Farms, but rather something that affects many, if not most, homeowner associations. But the bottom line is: someone has to do it.

At the present time, HFCA has no president or secretary. These positions are legally required as a condition of our incorporation and registration with the State Corporation Commission. These vacancies mean that official responsibilities of these positions must be picked up by the remaining two board officers and other at-large directors. As the saying goes, this is no way to run a railroad.

So what is to be done? The short answer is: we need two people to volunteer to fill out the remaining term of the president and secretary until the annual election in October. This will require a commitment of that most precious of commodities—time. One excuse often given for not volunteering is “I’m just too busy.” Yes, it is true that everyone is busy these days with work, with family, with other commitments. Even retirees are busy! Those who are already serving and in some cases have served for the past several years are also busy, as were those residents who served in the 1980s, 1990s, and the 2000s to get us to where we are today as a community.

Hickory Farms has much to be proud of. Over the years, HFCA has been officially recognized by Fairfax County in many ways, including for our efforts to protect and enhance our natural environment as well as having several individuals selected as Braddock District Citizen of the Year and Lord or Lady Fairfax. None of this happened by accident. HFCA has always been an active, friendly, and forward-looking community. As we enter our “Golden Anniversary” year, we must collectively and individually make the commitment to continue this heritage into the future. So, again, the Board is looking for two homeowners to step forward now to continue the work of the association during 2025. Please contact Vice-president Telah Jackson at vicepresident@hickoryfarms.org and cc: Melissa Stark at Commonareas@hickoryfarms.org to discuss what would be required for each position.

HICKORY FARMS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT IS PAST DUE

By Judy Deng, Treasurer

The annual HFCA HOA dues payment (\$290) deadline was January 31st; any unpaid dues need to be immediately paid. For questions, please contact the HFCA Treasurer at treasurer@hickoryfarms.org or visit <https://hickoryfarms.org/annual-assessment>.

Hickory Farms Community Association Bylaws Article VII, Section 2(c) governs annual assessments. Assessment payments are the responsibility of the property owner. Payments that are not postmarked or in the physical possession of the Treasurer by February 7, 2025, are late and the homeowner will be charged an additional \$50. Payments received after that date that do not include the additional \$50 charge (total payment of \$340.00) will be returned to the homeowner for non-payment. On March 1, 2025, delinquent accounts will be turned over to the Association's attorney for collection. At that point, the amount owed by the delinquent homeowner will be \$340.00 plus all associated attorney fees and could include significant court costs if HFCA files a lawsuit. These procedures are in accord with the Hickory Farms Community Association Bylaws, which have no provision for waiver.



James R. Walkinshaw, Braddock District Supervisor, publishes a regular e-newsletter, The Walkinshaw Advisory, with information and updates pertinent to our district. The latest issue includes information on Fairfax County Park Authority 2025 camp registration times. Visit the [Park Authority Camp Registration page](#) to search camp locations and listings and find tips to prepare for registration day.

Visit <https://linktr.ee/jrwalkinshaw> for more information and to subscribe.

THE BIRDS OF HICKORY FARMS

By Bob Cosgriff

The new year's daily backyard bird census got off to a great start with **18** birds logged on 1 January. The first species was Northern Cardinal, which was also #1 in 2020. First day highlights were a solitary female Purple Finch, Brown Creeper, and Cooper's Hawk. On subsequent days, we welcomed Eastern Bluebird, Eastern Towhee, Hermit Thrush, Red-winged Blackbird (male and female), and Brown-headed Cowbird (male). At the time I submitted this article, our backyard species count for the year stood at **31**, which ties 2019 as our third-highest January count and falls just short of 2022 (33) and 2023 (32). Our daily average to date is **20** species. On three days in January, we saw five woodpecker species (what we term the "grand slam"). The sixth possible woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, has yet to make an appearance, but it's only a matter of time.



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker pecking at a tree at Yazoo NWR (www.fws.gov)

Since we typically see about 60-65 species per year, we have already seen half of what we can expect to see in 2025. The big question is: what will the other 30-plus species be and when will we see them? The fun of backyard birding is getting the answer to those questions bird by bird as time goes by. There is always a surprise waiting!

Although we have experienced temperatures well below average in January, coupled with ice and snow events, we have to look forward to the inevitable coming of springtime and the return of breeding birds to our neighborhood. In the fall, we cleaned out our 10 bluebird houses so that they will be ready for the upcoming breeding season. In about two months, bluebirds will begin building their nests. We also cleaned out and lowered the martin colony. In late March/early April, we will put some fresh pine needles into the gourds and raise the array to await the return of the martins. We are hopeful we will get more than the four nesting pairs we observed last year.

We will be away during the last two weeks in February so there will be no article next month (March). We will pick up the backyard count in March and have an updated report for the April newsletter. In the meantime, keep your eyes open to observe the winter birds of Hickory Farms as we await the arrival of springtime!

JOIN OUR LISTSERV!

Don't miss any news! There's no better way to stay in touch than through our Hickory Farms email listserv. Visit <https://hickoryfarms.org/>, click "Email Listserv" in the "For Residents" menu and follow the instructions.

STUDENT YELLOW PAGES



Lily Bucher
Kiera Stark
Cedar Batz

Lrbucher4@gmail.com
commonareas@hickoryfarms.org
571-398-1467

Babysitting/mother's helper, pet sitting
Pet sitting
Dog walking, dog sitting

If you offer services such as those listed above, or others such as tutoring, etc., and wish to be included in future listings, please email the Newsletter Editor at newsletter@hickoryfarms.org.

HFCA BOARD MEETING NOTICE

HFCA Board Meetings are held via Microsoft Teams. Unless otherwise notified or due to an unforeseen change, HFCA Board Meetings will be held the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7 pm.

For further information, contact any HFCA Board Member or hfca@hickoryfarms.org.

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. All are encouraged to access the digital newsletter via the listserv or the HFCA website.