



HICKORY FARMS

MAY 2026



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

President Column

Greetings Neighbors!

As we move fully into spring, our neighborhood is really starting to come alive. Lawns are greening up, trees are filling out, and it's great to see more people out walking, biking, and enjoying the warmer weather.

This time of year is a good opportunity for all of us to take a little extra care with our properties. Keeping lawns mowed, edging sidewalks, and staying ahead of weeds goes a long way toward maintaining the overall appearance of our community. Small efforts from each homeowner make a noticeable difference for everyone.

I also want to take a moment to highlight a couple of important safety reminders. With more residents and children outdoors, please be mindful of your driving. We've had reports of vehicles traveling too quickly through the neighborhood and not consistently observing stop signs. Slowing down and staying alert helps keep everyone safe.

Additionally, I want to remind residents that the discharge or use of weapons—including firearms, bows, slingshots, and similar equipment—is not permitted within common areas and poses a serious safety risk. Our shared spaces are meant to be safe and welcoming for everyone, and I ask all residents to be mindful of how their actions impact the broader community.

I continue to encourage residents to get involved. Whether it's helping with small projects, sharing ideas, or volunteering a bit of time, community participation is what keeps our neighborhood running smoothly—and helps keep costs down.

As mentioned previously, the Board is continuing to explore the possibility of bringing in a management company. We are reviewing several options to better understand what services they provide and what the long-term impact would be on our community, both operationally and financially. No decisions have been made, and we'll share more information as we learn more.



Thank you, as always, for helping make this a great place to live.

Steve Kubrak
President, Hickory Farms Community Association

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Upcoming Events

-  **HFCA Board Meeting**
Will be held May 19th at 7 pm via Microsoft Teams
-  **Newsletter Items Due**
Due on May 25th

How To Contact...

- Board of Directors:** hfca@hickoryfarms.org
- Architectural Control:** acc@hickoryfarms.org
- Treasurer:** treasurer@hickoryfarms.org
- Common Areas:** cac@hickoryfarms.org
- Webmaster:** webmaster@hickoryfarms.org
- Newsletter:** newsletter@hickoryfarms.org
- Neighborhood Watch:** neighborhoodwatch@hickoryfarms.org

The Birds of Hickory Farms
By: Bob Cosgriff

The last day of March brought us the long-awaited **Brown Creeper** (*Certhia americana*) and to date in April we have welcomed **House Wren** (*Troglodytes aedon*) (4/12—our earliest arrival by two days), **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** (*Regulus calendula*) (4/13), and **Gray Catbird** (*Dumetella carolinensis*) (4/15—tying 2024 for our second-earliest arrival), bringing our species count to **41** as of 20 April, when this article was submitted to the editor.

In other bird news, **Purple Martins** (*Progne subis*) returned on **12 April**. Hickory Farms resident Rich Dudley spotted a male and female on that date. The next day, I spotted two males on the colony. This is the earliest date so far that martins have arrived. The first year (2023), because the colony was new, we did not see martins here until 13 May. In 2024, the date was even later (6/15) for some reason, but in 2025 the birds arrived on 4/23, which is more in the ballpark for Northern Virginia. Because the martins returned even earlier this year, it suggests that our colony is now known to birds that nested here previously. I think we can cautiously say that our colony is established and we should see martins every year going forward. Our hope is that the total number of nesting couples will continue to grow; last year we had six nesting couples, so it would be great to see eight or 10 couples this year.



To mark the return of these beautiful and beneficial birds, Purple Martin is our Bird of the Month.

Check out <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/search/?q=purple+martin> for more information.

On the bluebird trail, we have five boxes with complete nests with a total of **20** eggs as of 20 April. The first egg was laid on 7 April, about average. This is a great start to the 2026 breeding season. Neighbor Phil Donnelly is going to take over box monitoring duties for three weeks starting 25 April while we are on an extended trip. It is important for someone to look in at least weekly to determine the status of the nests, count eggs and chicks, and deal with any problems that might arise, such as dead chicks, House Sparrow nest takeover, wasp nests, etc. In the June newsletter we should have lots to report about the bluebirds.

While we are gone, there are certain to be many more beautiful birds arriving as the spring migration gets into full swing in early May. Hopefully, we will get to see some of the warblers, vireos, and other neo-tropical migrants such as Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Scarlet Tanager after our return on 12 May. So stay tuned and in the meantime I encourage you to get outside to enjoy the very best time of the year for seeing and hearing the beautiful birds of Hickory Farms!

Approved ACC Applications January through April 2026

Property	Modification	Approved Date
1023 Wheatfield Court	Replace shed	Apr 25, 2026
4326 Farm House	Install retaining wall and replace fence	Mar 13, 2026
10020 Cotton Farm	Replace all entry doors	Feb 9, 2026
4285 Country Squire	Replace siding	Jan 30, 2026
4350 Harvester Farm	Replace all entry doors and shutters	Jan 30, 2026

| HFCA Board Vacancies – We’re Looking for Volunteers

| Open Position: Vice President

This is a Board of Director position that helps keep our association running smoothly.

Key responsibilities include:

- Representing HFCA at the Braddock District Council
- Reviewing and signing VPOAA documents on behalf of HFCA for homeowners selling their homes, with input from the ACC and Treasurer
- Ensuring the language in VPOAA Parts 1 and 2 is kept up to date in accordance with DPOR Common Interest Community (CIC) Board requirements
- Completing and submitting the annual registration renewal to the DPOR – Common Interest Community (CIC) Board

| Open Position: Assistant Treasurer

This role assists the Treasurer and helps ensure the financial operations of the association run smoothly. This position may be either a Board of Director role or an Officer position.

Key responsibilities include:

- Reviewing and concurring with payment of invoices and reimbursements submitted by the Treasurer
- Learning the responsibilities of the Treasurer throughout the year in order to serve as Acting Treasurer if needed
- Conducting the annual review of HFCA bookkeeping

| Open Position: Architectural Control Committee Chair

Key responsibilities include:

- Coordinate the actions of the ACC in reviewing and approving all requests for exterior change to homes.
- Ensure that all restrictive covenants pertaining to appearance, including issues on streets, common grounds (in coordination with Grounds Chair) and properties are enforced in accordance with HFCA procedures, including conducting an annual community-wide house-to-house review/inspection by the ACC and other volunteers.
- Provide VPOAA Part 1 inspection and compliance.

If you're interested in serving your community or would like more information about these roles, please visit hickoryfarms.org/board-of-directors and reach out to the HFCA Board at hfca@hickoryfarms.org.

| From the Neighborhood Watch

May 2026

- Coffee with a Cop- Saturday, May 2nd from 10:00AM-11:30AM at the Target (10301 New Guinea Rd, Fairfax, VA 22032)
- West Springfield District Community Advisory Committee Meeting - Tuesday, May 5th from 6:00PM-7:30PM at the West Springfield District Station (6140 Rolling Rd, Springfield, VA 22152)

June 2026

- West Springfield District Community Advisory Committee Meeting - Tuesday, June 2nd from 6:00PM-7:30PM at the West Springfield District Station (6140 Rolling Rd, Springfield, VA 22152)

Hickory Farms Rules and Regulations Reminders

The HFCA Board of Directors has noted a recent increase in instances where community guidelines are not being followed. As a reminder, the Hickory Farms Rules and Regulations are provided to all homeowners at the time of purchase. We also ask that owners of rental properties ensure their tenants receive a copy.

To keep our community running smoothly, please take a moment to review the guidelines on our website: hickoryfarms.org/rules-and-regulations. Below are a few specific reminders regarding topics brought to the Board's attention over the past few months.

Location of Sanitary Containers Reminder

Currently several homeowners regularly store their sanitary containers in a location that violates the rules and regulations by being "forward of the house". Examples of this would be:

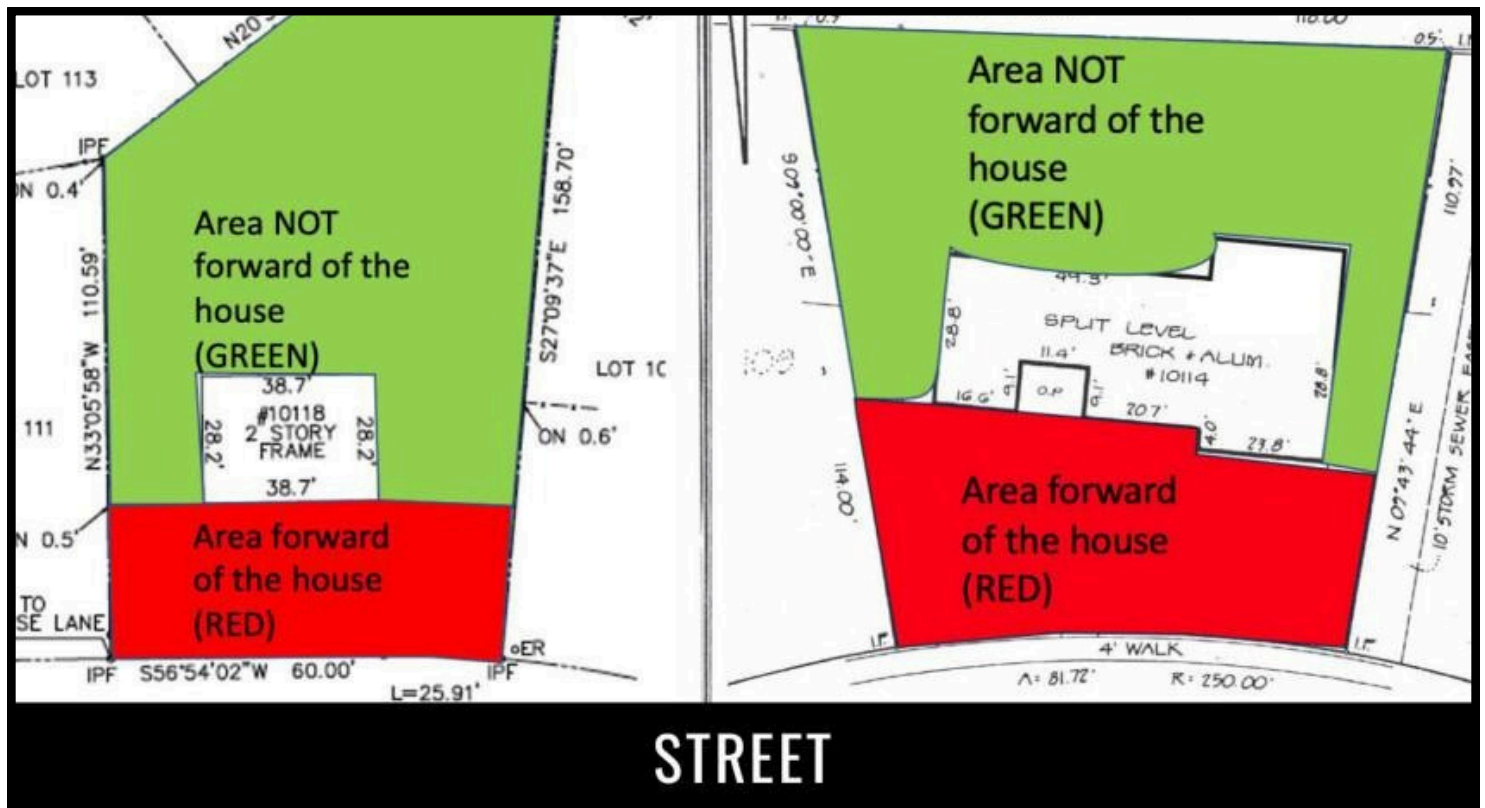
- In the driveway in front of the garage door.
- Anywhere between the sidewalk and the forward line of the house.

The Hickory Farms Rules and Regulations state:

1.13 Restriction on Containing and Dumping Rubbish, Trash, Garbage, Yard Debris, etc. [Declarations, Article VII (Restrictive Covenants), Section 13]:

- Garbage shall be set out only on trash collection days, or the evening prior to scheduled pickup, and shall be removed from street-side on the collection day. This is to maintain an attractive appearance and to avoid attracting rats and raccoons. Sanitary containers shall otherwise not be forward of the house.

Examples below illustrate what is "forward of the house" and what is "not forward of the house."



Please engage with your neighbors to kindly bring this to their attention in case your neighbors are not aware of the Restrictive Covenants or Rules and Regulations on this topic, because your neighbors may not be actively getting or reading the newsletter.

Additionally, the ACC & Hickory Farms Board of Directors will make reasonable attempts to communicate this matter to homeowners in a kind and courteous manner in the coming weeks.

Hickory Farms Rules and Regulations Reminders

Keeping Our Common Areas Beautiful: A Reminder on Dumping & Littering

Hickory Farms is known for its scenic trails and lush green spaces, and we want to ensure they stay that way for everyone to enjoy. Recently, however, there has been a noticeable and concerning uptick in the dumping of debris and household items within our community common areas.

We have particularly noted issues in the Rabbit Run area off Cotton Farm Road, specifically on the right-hand side heading towards the cemetery. In recent weeks, we have discovered a variety of items left behind, including:

- Used tires and metal bed frames.
- Piles of molding wood.
- Most recently, an entire tree that a resident decided to dispose of in the woods rather than through proper channels.

While it may seem like these "hidden" spots are convenient for disposal, these items create significant safety hazards, attract pests, and damage the natural beauty of our neighborhood. Removing these heavy items also places an unnecessary financial and physical burden on our Common Areas Committee (CAC) members.



Understanding the Rules

To keep our community standards consistent, please remember that under the Common Areas Rules and Regulations via 2.1: Use of the Common Areas and Facilities [By-Laws, Article VII, Section 1.(a)], the following is strictly prohibited:

e. No dumping, littering (including grass clippings), or posting signs or announcements is permitted.

How You Can Help

- **Use Proper Disposal Services:** Please use curbside pickup for yard waste and schedule bulk pick-ups for furniture, tires, and large debris.
- **Tree Removal:** If you have a tree removed from your property, please ensure your contractor hauls the debris away or you can take it to the Fairfax County I-66 Transfer Station for a small fee. Our common areas are not a disposal site for private landscaping projects.
- **Engage with Neighbors:** If you see someone unaware of these rules, please kindly bring this to their attention. They may not be reading the newsletter or may be new to the community.

Thank you for doing your part to keep Rabbit Run and all our shared spaces clean, safe, and beautiful for all residents!

Hickory Farms Rules and Regulations Reminders

Safety Reminder: Firearms and Projectile Weapons

To ensure the safety and peace of mind of all residents, the Board of Directors would like to remind the community of the rules regarding our shared spaces. As outlined in our governing documents:

Hickory Farms Resolution No. 2 (Common Areas Rules and Regulations), Section 2.1(h): "The discharge of firearms, bows and arrows, and pellet guns on, over, or into the Common Areas is strictly prohibited."

Our Common Areas—including the woods, trails, and open fields—are frequently used by neighbors of all ages. To prevent accidents and maintain a secure environment, this rule must be strictly followed at all times.

Reporting Safety Concerns: The safety of our neighbors is our highest priority. If you encounter a situation where these items are being used and you feel there is an immediate threat to safety:

- Call the Police: Contact emergency services (911) immediately.
- Notify the Board: Once you are safe, please notify the Board of Directors to report the incident at hfca@hickoryfarms.org

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping Hickory Farms a safe haven for all our residents.

NoVA Lawn Maintenance Tips

We noticed that many neighbors have questions about lawn care, most specifically when and how often to mow and when to treat weeds. A monthly article will be run in each newsletter to go over monthly tips from the previous month and the current month.

Since we are in Northern Virginia (NoVA), we are in the "Transition Zone." This means our weather is a chaotic mix where it's often too hot for cool-season grasses (like Tall Fescue) and too cold for warm-season grasses. Most of our lawns are **Tall Fescue**, so these articles are tailored specifically for the Northern Virginia climate and the heavy clay soil we deal with in Fairfax County.

APRIL: The Forsythia Warning - Timing the Crabgrass Shield

In Northern Virginia, the "Forsythia" is your green light. When those bright yellow bushes start to drop their flowers, the soil temperature is hitting 55°F—the exact moment crabgrass seeds begin to wake up.

This is your window to apply a **Pre-emergent Herbicide**. This creates a chemical "shield" at the soil surface. Because we have such long, humid springs, a "split application" often works best in our area: apply half now and the other half in late May. **Warning:** If you plan on "overseeding" bare spots this spring, you cannot use standard pre-emergent. It will kill your new grass just as fast as the weeds. In NoVA, we generally recommend waiting until Fall to seed, but if you must do it now, look for a "starter fertilizer with weed preventer" specifically labeled for new seed.

MAY: The Growth Explosion - Raise the Blade

May is when your lawn looks its absolute best before the Virginia humidity tries to take it down. The growth rate is staggering right now, but the biggest mistake NOVA homeowners make is "scalping" the lawn to try and save time between mows.

Set your mower to 3.5 or even 4 inches. This is the "Golden Rule" for Virginia Fescue. Taller grass shades the soil, which keeps the root zone cool and prevents our notorious summer weeds from germinating. If you cut it short now, you are essentially inviting crabgrass to move in and the sun to bake your roots. Remember the "One-Third Rule": never remove more than a third of the grass height in one session, or you'll stress the plant into a yellow funk.

Recommended Mowing Frequency: Once a week is standard, but check your lawn's growth. In mid-to-late May, 2 to 3 times a week might be necessary for high-maintenance lawns, or whenever the grass has grown enough that you can remove only one-third of the blade.

Best Time of Day to Mow: Mid-morning (10 a.m. to noon) is ideal, after the dew has dried. Late afternoon (4 p.m. to 6 p.m.) is the second-best option to avoid stressing the grass.

Leaf Management: If leaves are still present, keep mowing to shred them into small pieces. It is great for your soil!

Mailbox Improvement Week - Give Our Mail Carriers a Hand!

National USPS **Mailbox Improvement Week** is coming up **May 18–24**. While **Duran** is a majority of our neighborhood regular, we have a whole team of carriers who work hard to get us our mail. Since they drive right up to your house to deliver, let's make those daily stops a little easier by giving our mailboxes some quick TLC (Tender Loving Care).

Why Take a Look?

First Impressions: Your mailbox is one of the first things people see. It **represents you and your home**, so keeping it clean and upright sets the right tone before guests even reach the front door.

Neighborhood Value: A line of well-maintained mailboxes makes the whole street look sharp. This collective "curb appeal" leaves a great impression on visitors and potential homebuyers driving through.

Support the Crew: Whether it's Duran or another carrier, a sturdy, accessible mailbox makes their job faster and safer as they pull up. **Stay Dry:** A snug door keeps your letters and packages from getting soaked during spring rain.

Quick Fixes

Clean it up: A bucket of soapy water and some adhesive remover for old stickers goes a long way.

Straighten it out: Check that your post is upright. If it's leaning, give it a quick shim or tighten the bolts.

Make it visible: Your house numbers should be at least one inch high so carriers and emergency services can spot you easily from the road.

Check the height: Standard height is 41–45 inches from the ground.

Trim back any bushes or grass that might get in the way of the delivery truck's path.

Thinking of a New One?

If your mailbox is beyond repair and needs a full replacement, remember to **submit an application to the ACC** for approval first.

The Hickory Farms Strategic Planning Committee is exploring a group buy for residents interested in a new mailbox. The design is intended to match our new entrance signs; two prototypes are shown below.

If you are interested, please email commonareas@hickoryfarms.org for more details.



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 [Email Listserv](#) and follow the instructions.

HFCA Board Meeting Notice

HFCA board meetings are held via Microsoft Teams the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7 pm. Unless otherwise notified, due to unforeseen conflicts.

To join a board meeting, please send an email to hfca@hickoryfarms.org. You will be provided with the Microsoft Teams meeting URL, followed by the meeting number and pass code.

Student Yellow Pages

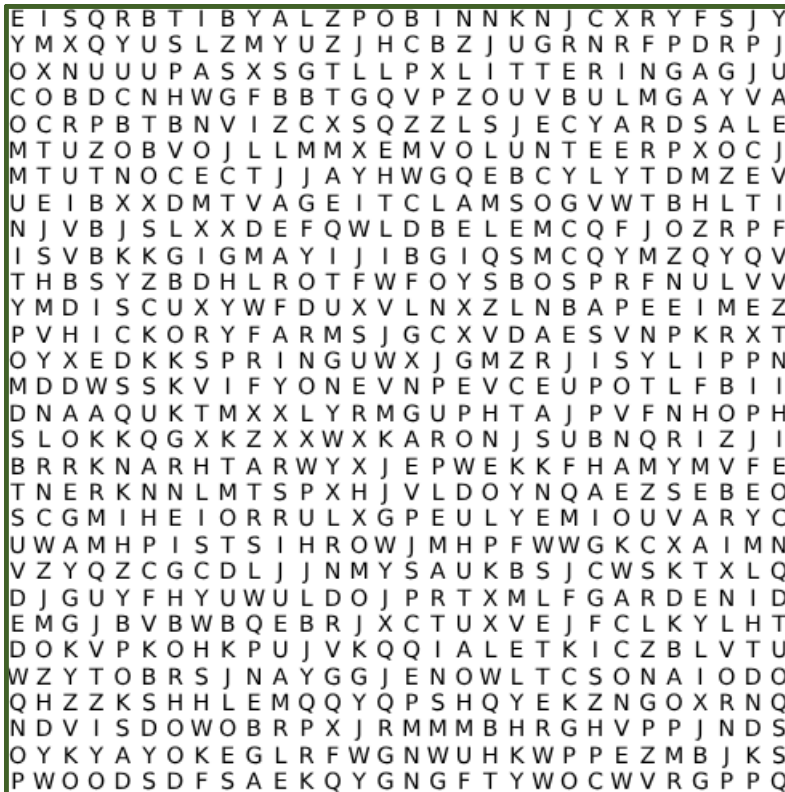
Name	Contact Information	Service
Lily Bucher	571-386-7648	Babysitter/Mother's Helper, Pet Sitting
Kiera Stark	vastarkvolunteer@gmail.com	Pet Sitting/Dog Walking & Babysitting
Caiden Stark	vastarkvolunteer@gmail.com	Pet Sitting/Dog Walking
Cedar Baltz	571-398-1467	Dog Walking/Dog Sitting

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 Kiera Stark at newsletter@hickoryfarms.org.

Newsletter Item Deadline and Distribution Notice

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

Newsletters are distributed via the email, paper delivery and posted on the HFCA website. If you have not received your newsletter via email, please email secretary@hickoryfarms.org.



Words:

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|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Purple Martins | Hickory Farms | Neighborhood | May |
| Common Areas | Newsletter | Littering | Volunteer |
| Mailbox | Yard | Sale | Spring Garden |
| Community | Birds | Woods | Lawn |

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