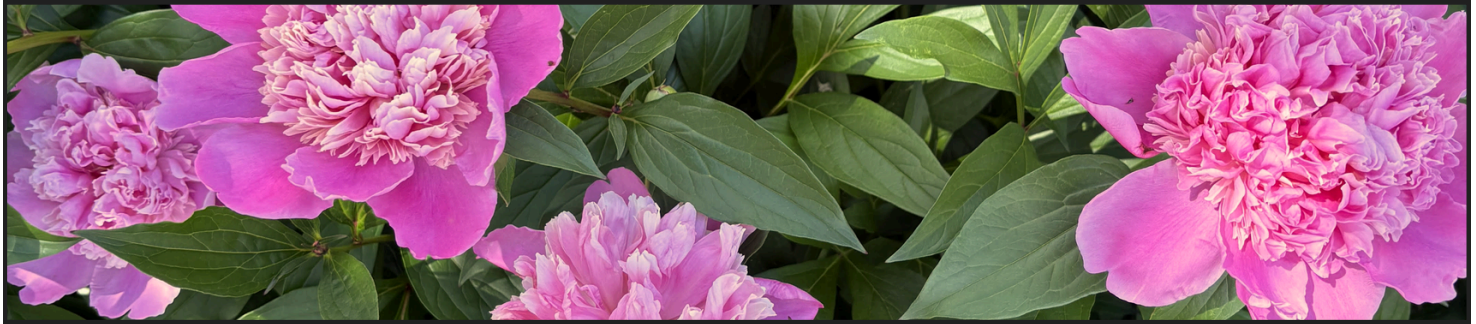




# HICKORY FARMS

JUNE 2026



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

## President Column

Greetings Neighbors!

June is here, and with it the start of summer. The days are long, the neighborhood is busy, and Hickory Farms is looking its best. It's a great time to be outside, and a great time to make sure our properties reflect the pride we all take in this community.

On that note, we want to encourage all residents to appreciate and protect the natural character of our neighborhood. Hickory Farms is home to a variety of mature trees and plantings, some of which have ecological significance beyond their beauty. Our Restrictive Covenants require that all lots be maintained in a neat and attractive manner, and we ask everyone to be mindful of the trees and landscaping on neighboring properties as well as their own. If you observe any damage to trees or landscaping, whether on private property or in common areas, please don't hesitate to bring it to the Board's attention.

We also want to offer a friendly reminder about garbage and recycling containers. Per our Rules and Regulations, sanitary containers should not be kept forward of the house except on collection day and the evening prior. A simple rule of thumb: if you can see your cans from the street in front of your home, they should be moved back out of sight. Or if you step out of your house and can see your own cans, they need to be moved back. Keeping containers stored properly is a small thing that makes a big difference in the overall appearance of the neighborhood.

Rules and Regulations for reference: <https://hickoryfarms.org/rules-and-regulations>

Deeds and Declarations for reference: <https://hickoryfarms.org/deed-and-declarations>

Enjoy the summer, neighbors. Get outside, say hello, and look out for one another. That's what makes Hickory Farms more than just a place to live.



Steve Kubrak

HFCA President

## In This Edition

Community Emergency	2-4
Sanitary Containers Reminder	4
New Mailbox Interest	4
The Birds of Hickory Farms	5
Approved ACC Applications	5
NoVA Lawn Maintenance Tips	6
Community Lawn Sale Update	7
From the Neighborhood Watch	7-8
Student Yellow Pages	9
Join Our Listserv	9
HFCA Board Meeting Notice	9
Newsletter Item Deadline & Distribution	9
Word Search & Sudoku	9

## Upcoming Events

-  **HFCA Board Meeting**  
Will be held June 16<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm via Microsoft Teams
-  **Newsletter Items Due**  
Due on June 25th

## How To Contact...

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

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## Community Emergency - Possible Dues Increase by 50%

### Background

We hope the title of this article has grabbed your attention! We need your help.

We are privileged to live in a wonderful neighborhood. We just celebrated our 50th anniversary. Hickory Farms was developed in three phases in the late 1970's and early 1980's.

- Phase I (1975, with occupancy in late 1976) was Farm House Lane, Still Meadow Road and Cotton Farm Road west of the creek;
- Phase II was Cotton Farm Road east of the creek, Harvester Farm Lane and Tumbleweed Court; and finally,
- Phase III, started in 1981, which consisted of Country Squire Lane and Wheatfield Court.

### Volunteers

Since the beginning of Hickory Farms, the management of our neighborhood has been performed entirely by volunteers. We have been blessed with the service of a number of residents who have dedicated their time and skills that have made Hickory Farms one of the most desirable communities in Fairfax County. Our volunteers receive no compensation for their efforts, just the rewards of contributing to a beautiful, desirable and organized community. Having some fun along the way, and meeting and working with neighbors.

Our volunteers are organized into three groups, 1) our Board of Directors, 2) our Officers and 3) our other Valued Volunteers. Currently the following individuals serve us in these roles:

### Board of Directors

- President - Steven Kubrak
- Secretary - Clair Hill
- Treasurer - Judy Deng
- Vice President - VACANT

### Officers

- Common Areas Committee - Chair Melissa Stark
- Acting Architectural Control Committee - Chair Bob Sottile
- Assistant Treasurer - VACANT
- Newsletter Editor - Kiera Stark
- Social Committee Chair - Laura Bucher & Juliette Giordano
- Webmaster - Bryan Crabtree
- Community Yard Sale Coordinator - Pete Scala

### Valued Volunteers

- Neighborhood Watch Coordinator - Allie Shaw & Steve Kubrak
- Architectural Control Committee \* Bob Sottile, Keith Furguson, Donna Garfield, Ed Kiechlin, Josef

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## | Community Emergency - Possible Dues Increase by 50%

Common Areas Committee - Bob & Judy Cosgriff, Rich Dudley, Larry Rogers, Melissa & Jarrett Stark

Welcome Wagon Committee - Dan Cook & Raleigh Onks

Listserv - David Tropiano

A full description of these positions is located on our website:

- <https://hickoryfarms.org/board-of-directors>

### **The Dilemma**

Recently, it has become more difficult to find volunteers as homeowners who have volunteered have moved from our neighborhood or have been unable to continue to serve. In fact, filling our current President position took over 2 years, before Steve Kubrak graciously volunteered to volunteer as Hickory Farms President.

As noted above, we currently have the following open positions – one Board Position and one Officer Position:

- Vice President –
  - **HAS BEEN OPEN SINCE OCTOBER 2025**
- Assistant Treasurer –
  - **HAS BEEN OPEN SINCE OCTOBER 2025**

Additionally, we will need to fill the following positions by the beginning of 2027 as our current President, Steve Kubrak, and our current Secretary, Clair Hill, can no longer serve us beyond 2026.

- President –
  - **OPEN JANUARY 1, 2027**
- Secretary –
  - **OPEN JANUARY 1, 2027**

### **Management Companies**

Given this dilemma, the Board of Directors needed to explore the possibility of engaging a management company to perform some or all of the duties historically performed by our neighbor volunteers. As in any organization, when faced with a problem, all potential solutions must be explored.

In the meantime, our common areas need to be maintained, our annual dues must be billed and collected, vendor contracts must be negotiated, vendor invoices verified and paid, income taxes must be calculated and filed, budgets need to be prepared, bank accounts need to be reconciled, homeowner improvements must be analyzed and approved or modified to be approved, community documentation needs to be provided to future residents and the fee collected, our website maintained, etc. All of these activities have to be performed or managed by our reduced number of volunteers. This has become increasingly difficult.

If volunteers do not surface, a third party will need to be engaged to perform these essential services.

- In short, if the open positions now and pending open positions are not filled, we will have no choice.

### **The Dues Impact – Outsourcing**

Over the past several months, your Board of Directors has solicited proposals from management companies. We reached out to a number of organizations. Notably, a few management companies did not propose due to the size of our community - 198 homes were insufficient.

**Community Emergency - Possible Dues Increase by 50%**

- Our dues for 2026 were \$300.
- The two management companies that provided the most robust proposals quoted the pricing below.
- If we must engage a third-party;
  - OUR ANNUAL DUES WOULD INCREASE BY BETWEEN 36%-48%

Now for the results. As we all know, our dues are billed annually and determined by the Board of Directors as part of the annual budgeting process.

**Our Next Steps**

We have been listing our open positions in our monthly newsletter for several months. Additionally, as noted above, soon we will need a new Hickory Farms President and Secretary. We hope that outlining this dilemma and the potential impact on our annual dues will uncover some **NEW VOLUNTEERS!**

In the meantime, we plan on having the two management companies present to the Board of Directors late summer early fall to obtain more details about their services.

We will need to proceed with hiring a management company unless we can get the appropriate number of volunteers.

Respectfully,

The Hickory Farms Board of Directors

HICKORY FARMS	
DUES ANALYSIS	PER YEAR
CURRENT DUES - 2026	\$ 300
NUMBER HOMES	198
ANNUAL DUES	\$ 59,400
PROPOSAL #1	
COST PER MONTH	\$ 1,800
PER YEAR	\$ 21,600
ADDITIONAL COST PER HOME	\$ 109
NEW ANNUAL DUES	\$ 409
DUES INCREASE	36%
PROPOSAL #2	
COST PER MONTH	\$ 2,400
PER YEAR	\$ 28,800
ADDITIONAL COST PER HOME	\$ 145
NEW ANNUAL DUES	\$ 445
DUES INCREASE	48%

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

**HFCA Rules & Regulations - Location of Sanitary Containers Reminder**

To keep our neighborhood looking its best and prevent critters from getting into the trash, please remember the HFCA Rules & Regulations guidelines (Sec. 1.13) for sanitary containers:



- **When to set out your sanitary containers:** Place your garbage and yard debris cans at the curb **either the evening before** scheduled pick up or the **morning of** collection day.
- **When to bring back:** Empty containers must be removed from the street side and stored away **on the collection day.**
- **Where to store:** Keep bins stowed **behind the front line of your house** (not forward of the house) between collection days.

**New Mailbox Group Buy Interest**



The Hickory Farms Strategic Planning Committee is exploring a group buy for residents interested in upgrading their curb appeal with a new mailbox designed to match our new entrance signs. Please see the design prototype below.

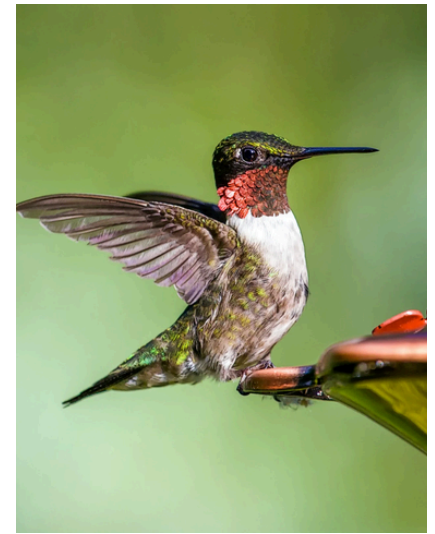
If you are interested or would like more details, please email [commonareas@hickoryfarms.org](mailto:commonareas@hickoryfarms.org).

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**The Birds of Hickory Farms**  
**By: Bob Cosgriff**

We were on a three-week trip to Europe from 21 April to 11 May, so we missed the height of the spring migration here. As a result, our backyard species count totaled only 41 when we departed; we picked up one additional bird, **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** (*Archilochus colubris*), after our return in mid-May to bring us to **42** species to date. In previous years, we would have reached the mid-50's by now thanks to the annual influx of warblers and other neo-tropical migrants. The compensation for not being able to see some of our favorite birds here was that we got to see some wonderful new birds on our trip, particularly in England. We saw species we had only read about and always wanted to see someday. A bonus was that we met a very obliging British birder at a wonderful wetland refuge in a London suburb who spent several hours with us, identifying by sound and sight birds we certainly would have missed without his help. This demonstrates what I have mentioned in previous articles, namely, that birding is a lifelong interest that you can take anywhere. A corollary is that you will always find fellow birders wherever you go which can make for some great experiences meeting some very interesting people, whether in different county or state or even in another country.



While we were gone, Hickory Farms resident Phil Donnelly took over the job of monitoring the bluebird trail to keep our records complete. I'm happy to report that as of 23 May, we have produced three broods totaling 15 bluebirds with one box of five chicks which were on target to fledge by Memorial Day. We currently have two boxes with a total of 9 eggs which should hatch by 2 June. We also have one box with 4 Tree Swallow eggs which should hatch by the same date. Three boxes remain empty; however, there is the chance that they will be taken in the second round of egg-laying. I also expect the boxes that have produced broods will be reused for a second breeding. One highlight is that Box #1, in the common area near the creek, has its first bluebird nesting in many years. I believe it is a combination of the skylight on the box which has deterred sparrows and the planting of trees and shrubs in that field a few years ago which has created a more attractive habitat for bluebirds. We are off to a great start for this breeding season and have time for another round of egg-laying, and possibly even a third. This could possibly be a record year. Stay tuned!

As for our martin colony, we have counted at least 10 birds and there may be more, since they don't always show up at the same time or some may be in the boxes incubating eggs. It is always enjoyable to hear these beautiful and beneficial birds twittering and watch them flashing through the sky above the upper commons catching insects.

Getting back to numbers: there are still birds that we could see in our backyard and/or Hickory Farms this summer: Great-crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Acadian Flycatcher, Chimney Swift, Barn Swallow, Eastern Phoebe, Wood Thrush, Black Vulture, Red-shouldered Hawk, and Great Blue Heron to name a few. Hopefully, I can report some additional sightings next month.

If you are interested in attracting hummingbirds to your yard, I recommend a combination of a feeder and a variety of flowers that attract hummers. To prepare nectar, use ¼ cup of refined sugar for each 1 cup of water and bring to a boil until the sugar goes into solution. Allow it to cool and fill your feeder. Change the sugar water and clean the feeder at least weekly. Do not waste your money on commercial feeding solutions or dyes. The solution should be clear, not red. As for flowers, Salvia (red or blue-black), Cardinal Flower (Lobelia), red petunias, and Trumpet Vine are all hummingbird magnets. Basically, any plant with an elongated tube-shaped flower will bring hummers to your yard. To find out more about the only breeding species of hummingbird in the eastern United States, see [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Ruby-throated\\_Hummingbird/id](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Ruby-throated_Hummingbird/id) to learn about our Bird of the Month for June.

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**Approved ACC Applications January through April 2026**

Property	Modification	Approved Date
4344 Farm House	Construction	May 12, 2026
10003 Cotton Farm	Replace all entry doors	May 19, 2026

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## NoVA Lawn Maintenance Tips

In Northern Virginia, June and July are all about survival and maintenance for our lawns. Because most homes in NoVA have cool-season grasses (primarily Tall Fescue, sometimes blended with Kentucky Bluegrass), the summer heat and high humidity put a massive amount of stress on the turf.

The main goal right now isn't growth—it's keeping the root system healthy and avoiding disease. Here is how to manage your lawn through the peak of summer:

### 1. Mowing: Keep it High

The single most important thing you can do in June and July is raise your mower blade.

- **Target Height:** Cut at **3.5 to 4 inches**.
- **Why it matters:** Taller grass blades shade the soil, which keeps the roots cool, retains soil moisture, and naturally blocks sunlight from dormant weed seeds (like crabgrass).
- **The 1/3 Rule:** Never cut off more than one-third of the grass blade at a time. Cutting too short in the summer shocks the plant and can cause it to brown out instantly.
- **Leave the clippings:** As long as you are mowing regularly, leave the grass clippings on the lawn. They act as a natural mulch and return valuable nitrogen to the soil.

### 2. Watering: Deep and Infrequent

Frequent, shallow watering creates weak, shallow roots that burn up in a July heatwave.

- **The Goal:** Lawns generally need about **1 inch of water per week** (including rainfall).
- **The Routine:** It is much better to water deeply 1–2 times a week (e.g., 20–30 minutes per zone) than to water for 5–10 minutes every day.
- **Timing:** Always water **early in the morning** (between 4:00 AM and 8:00 AM). This allows the grass blades to dry off during the day. Watering in the evening leaves the grass wet overnight, which is a massive invitation for fungal diseases.

### 3. Fertilizing: Just Say No (For Now)

- **Skip the Nitrogen:** Do **not** apply heavy nitrogen fertilizer to cool-season lawns in June or July.
- **Why it matters:** Nitrogen forces the grass to push out tender new top growth right when the weather is too hot to sustain it. This exhausts the plant's energy reserves and makes it highly susceptible to **Brown Patch**, a common summer fungal disease in NoVA.
- **Exception:** If you want to support root strength without forcing top growth, you can apply an organic organic-matter booster or a pure potassium application, but traditional fertilizers should wait until September.

### 4. Weed & Pest Control

- **Spot Treat Only:** Avoid spraying blanketing "weed and feed" products across the whole lawn when temperatures are above 85°F. The chemical stress combined with the heat stress can scorch and kill your actual grass. Instead, carefully spot-treat tough summer weeds like crabgrass, clover, or nutsedge on cooler mornings.
- **Grub Prevention:** If you have historically had issues with beetles and grubs ruining your turf, **June to early July** is the ideal window to apply a preventative grub control product before the larvae hatch and begin feeding on the roots.

**Going Dormant is Normal:** If we hit a prolonged dry spell in July and you don't have an irrigation system, your fescue lawn may start to turn brown and look dead. It's likely just going dormant to protect itself. It can survive in this state for 3 to 4 weeks—just avoid heavy foot traffic on it while it's stressed.

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## Community Yard Sale Update

Unfortunately, we fell short of the 10 households needed to hold a community yard sale this year. We will solicit interest again in March 2027 about holding a neighborhood spring yard sale.

Thank you to everyone who expressed interest and support.

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## From the Neighborhood Watch

### June 25: Personal Safety

#### Have You Ever Felt Uneasy Walking Through a Dark Parking Garage?

What steps could you take to make yourself safer?

This is just one of the many important topics we'll cover in our upcoming **Personal Safety Presentation**.

**Event Details: Thursday, June 25, 2026**, at **6:30PM** at the West Springfield District Station Community Room (6140 Rolling Road, Springfield, VA).

Officers from the West Springfield District Station will lead this lecture-based course, which is designed to enhance your awareness and personal safety. Topics include:

- Situational awareness
- How to recognize and respond to potential threats
- Strategies for defending yourself in dangerous situations

The presentation will last approximately one hour and will include time for questions both during and after the session. **No registration is required.**

For questions prior to the event, please contact MPO Tony Capizzi at **703-277-2363** or [Anthony.Capizzi@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Anthony.Capizzi@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Please note: We follow Fairfax County Public Schools for weather-related cancellations.

### July 11: Personal Safety for the College Bound Student

Are you, or your child, heading off to college this year? Before you go, it's important to learn some key personal safety tips to help you stay aware and protect yourself on and around campus.

Officers from the West Springfield District Station will present a Personal Safety for College-Bound Students lecture on:

**Saturday, July 11, 2026**, at **10:30 AM** at the West Springfield District Station Community Room (6140 Rolling Road, Springfield, VA).

This lecture-based course covers situational awareness, how to recognize and respond to danger in different settings, and strategies to defend yourself if necessary. The presentation lasts about an hour, with time for questions during and after.

No registration is required — just come and join us!

If you have any questions beforehand, please contact MPO Tony Capizzi at **703-277-2363** or [Anthony.capizzi@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Anthony.capizzi@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Please note: We follow the Fairfax County Public Schools schedule for any weather-related cancellations.

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## From the Neighborhood Watch

### July 14: Neighborhood Watch Training

Neighbors Helping Neighbors — That’s What Neighborhood Watch Is All About

If you saw someone breaking into a car, would you know what to do? Do you know how to contact the police in both emergency and non-emergency situations? These are just a few of the important topics we’ll cover during our upcoming **Neighborhood Watch Training**.

Join us for this informative session:

**Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 6:30PM** at the West Springfield District Station Community Room (6140 Rolling Road, Springfield, VA).

This training is required for anyone interested in participating in a Neighborhood Watch program in their community. You only need to complete the training once—unless you’d like a refresher or have additional questions. **No registration is required.**

For questions, please contact MPO Tony Capizzi at **703-277-2363** or [Anthony.Capizzi@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Anthony.Capizzi@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Note: We follow Fairfax County Public Schools for weather-related cancellations.

### July 25: Avoiding Scams and Fraud

Have you ever received an email from a “prince” offering you millions—or a text claiming you owe money on your EZ-Pass account?

Scams like these are becoming more convincing and more common. Don’t fall for them.

Join us on **Saturday, July 25, 2026, at 10:30AM** for an informative presentation: “Avoiding Scams and Fraud”

Hosted by local law enforcement, this session will cover:

- Common scams circulating in our community
- How scammers target victims (and how to spot the signs)
- Steps you can take to protect yourself and your loved ones
- What to do if you think you’ve been targeted

**Location:** Lorton District Station – Community Room (8855 Lorton Road, Lorton, VA)

**No registration required**

**Questions?** Contact MPO Tony Capizzi at [Anthony.Capizzi@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Anthony.Capizzi@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-277-2363.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:secretary@hickoryfarms.org).

V A C A T I O N Y G E T V Y H B E V A J U G H U S  
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Words:

June Summer Warm Weather Birds Ice Cream Garden  
 Outdoors Sunshine Vacation Archilochus colubris Flowers  
 Sunglasses Hickory Farms Neighborhood Walking Nature  
 Wildlife Plants July Independence Day

# WORD SEARCH

# SUDOKU

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