



HILLBROOK HILITES

Hillbrook Tall Oaks Civic Association Newsletter

June 2018

ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Sunday, June 10

4:00 - 6:00 PM

Location: Conti Court

Here's the scoop—come join your neighbors for a cool treat to beat the heat. We have had many new families move into Hillbrook Tall Oaks. This is a great opportunity to come out and meet your neighbors.

AirBnB—Short term Rental Update

Thank you to all of those who completed our survey concerning short term rentals as well as those of you who attended the Town Hall in April. The results of the survey show a 50-50 split between banning short term rentals and regulating/allowing short term rentals. Given the split, the HTOCA Board is not able to advocate a position on behalf of the neighborhood.

However, we will continue to provide resources to you regarding updates on the status of this legislation and where information concerning this legislation can be found. Please continue to check our website www.htoca22003.org for updates.

Additionally, information on upcoming hearings can be found on Fairfax County's website, available here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-zoning/zoning/short-term-property-rentals>.

Note the next Board of Supervisors Public Hearing will take place on **June 19, 2018 at 4:00 PM**. *Please check the Fairfax County website frequently as this subject to change at any time.* Public hearings are held in the Board Auditorium at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035.

If you feel compelled to provide feedback, either for or against, short term rentals you can do one or more of the following:

- 1) Email Fairfax county at: ordadmin@fairfaxcounty.gov
- 2) Call Fairfax County at: 703-324-1314, TTY 711
- 3) Attend and Provide testimony at the Public Hearing on June 19th. Please note that you are required to sign up in advance to speak at public hearing. For more information please visit: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/speakers-form>

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Get Involved!

OUR ANNUAL BOARD ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN SEPTEMBER

We need your help. A number of positions are opening up on the Board and we need you to fill them. If you would like to serve on the board please send an email to hillbrooktalloaks@gmail.com.

Remember our neighborhood association is only as good as its volunteers!

A Note from your Co-Presidents

Dear Neighbors and Fellow HTOCA members

Perhaps, in part, stimulated by the recent HTOCA sponsored discussions about the Fairfax County's proposal to allow to short term rentals in neighborhoods like ours, a number of residents have raised a series of other issues to the Board, hoping for some resolving action on the part of our civic association. These range from complaints about neighborhood electrical outages to the visual, safety and other property management issues related to individual homes within our neighborhood.

So what might members expect their civic association to do?

County and governmental actions having direct impacts on the neighborhood.

Broad issues like the Fairfax County proposal to allow short term rentals in neighborhoods through permitting process deserve Board consideration. HTOCA hosted a town hall meeting and posted informational background documents as well as conducted a community survey to gauge community desires. In cases, where a community consensus can be ascertained, the Board would advance the community position to appropriate state, county or other officials. Where consensus cannot be achieved, the HTOCA Board will post pertinent information on its web site and provide information on how community residents can post their own views and wishes to deciding officials.

The Board in the past, for example, has represented community positions on the expansion of service by the Montessori school and the proposal to establish a mosque on nearby Braddock Road, both of which raised significant traffic safety and/or congestion issues.

Public Utility and Community Service organization actions having broad impact on the neighborhood.

Where impacting actions affect broad segments of the neighborhood, the Board will seek to represent the community to the service provider seeking to resolve the issues involved. Recently, HTOCA Board representatives met with Dominion Electric to resolve a rash of electrical outages affecting residents on Kingston Drive. A remediation plan is currently being pulled together by Dominion and we will report back as soon as we have additional information.

Complaints about individual neighborhood homeowner property management issues.

It is important to recognize that a community civic association unlike a home owners association does not have any enforcement powers regarding the management and condition of individual community home owner dwellings. Enforcement of home owner conditions and management is left to the County code enforcement authority. Admittedly, the County code enforcement actions have been seen wanting by many community residents. What seems appropriate for the civic association is to work with other civic and home owners associations to engage the County on more effective code enforcement measures and actions.

HTOCA also will move to post appropriate home and building code information to educate neighbors on the county rules and regulations affecting home and property management, and to lay out how to file complaints. It is the responsibility of Individual home owners to file complaints to the county, which they may do **anonymously**. HTOCA, as a civic association, will not file individual complaints against fellow home owners in the community.

We hope this information will prove useful to you in understanding the role and responsibilities of HTOCA in maintaining and upholding the quality of our community.

Kurt & Ashley

Co-Presidents
HTOCA

Fairfax County Code Compliance

According to its website, the Department of Code Compliance (DCC) investigates “county neighborhood complaints, consisting of issues affecting safety and quality of life. Compliance is achieved through the enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance, Virginia Maintenance Code, Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (Residential), Grass Ordinance, Noise Ordinance and the Uniform Statewide Building Code (unpermitted construction).”

For those of you who have raised concerns about property management within the neighborhood we encourage you to review the County Code available on the FCCC’s website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/code>.

This website also provide guidance on how to file a complaint should you feel compelled to do so. For more information, you can contact the Department of Code Compliance by:

Phone: 703-324-1300, TTY 711; or

Email: DCCCodeComplianceE-mail@fairfaxcounty.gov

Think Summer!

KEEP THOSE PESKY MOSQUITOS AWAY — A tip from Hilary Lewis

A tip to keep pesky mosquitos at bay. Take plastic one(1) gallon bottles and cut a large chunk out of the side leaving the top and handle intact. Fill these up about 3/4 to the edge of the cut. Put 1/2 half of a Mosquito donut in each one. You can get a pack of 6 at Home Depot which will last until July if you have 6 bottles. If every one put these around their yard we would have almost no mosquitoes because the water attracts the mosquito to lay their eggs in it but they will never hatch. If done in April, it will stop the first batch of hatching and as the season goes on there will be less and less mosquitoes to lay more eggs or bother us. Just a half of a donut in each now and add half a donut every month and a half. You don't have to replace the water. If the rain doesn't keep them filled, just add some. So, lets go hunting!

Editors Note: A recent Washington Post article discussed recent reports on the increase in vector-borne infectious diseases as climate change makes Fairfax County more hospitable to tropical species of mosquitoes and other carriers. Check out this link for further information: https://wapo.st/2lbCT3w?tid=ss_mail&utm_term=.4980a54dd5bc.

Contact Us

Questions? Want to Get Involved? Use the information below:

HTOCA

PO Box 1112
Annandale, VA
22003-9112

Email: hillbrooktal-loaks@gmail.com

Visit our website:
www.HTOCA22003.org

Think Summer! Cont.

THREATS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD TREES

-BY GINA FISHMAN

The most significant threats affecting our forests fall into two categories: invasive species and climate change.

Experts agree that the Emerald Ash Borer(EAB) is the most destructive threat facing Southeast American trees today. It is now considered to be the most destructive forest pest ever seen in North America. EAB is a green jewel beetle native to eastern Asia that feeds on leaves of green, white, and blue ash trees. Our climate is very similar to a large portion of Asia, specifically, China, which makes our area prime habitat for many of these invasive species such as kudzu, Tree of Heaven, Asian long-horned beetle, Japanese stilt grass and wisteria. An increase in global trade has made it easier for insects to cross oceans and settle in the US. Rolf Gubler, a biologist who oversees Shenandoah National Park, noted that these pests thrive because they don't have any, or enough, natural enemies or predators to keep them in check.

The gypsy moth and the stinkbug are two invasive species that have spread with ease. The Emerald Ash Borer arrived in the 1990s most likely on packing material in cargo ships or airplanes from Asia. It is now found in 28 states including Virginia. Adult EABs can only travel about a half-mile from the tree they emerged from, but they spread farther when people transport infested firewood and nursery trees to non-infested areas.

According to Va. Tech professor of forest biology John Seiler, the destruction of the North American ash trees "could be the chestnut all over again". One in 4 trees in the East used to be a chestnut and now there are almost no mature chestnuts trees thanks to chestnut blight, caused by an Asian bark fungus beginning in the early 1900s. By the 1950s, billions of trees had died.

According to the EPA, forests occupy 740 million acres in the U.S. (1/3 of the nation's land area) and as global temperatures rise, it becomes harder for those forests to function and thrive.

The hemlock wooly adelgid is a ruthless invasive pest that sucks the sap out of hemlock and spruce trees. It was first reported in the U.S. in the 1950s. Hemlocks are easier to treat and more likely to recover than ash trees.

The gypsy moth is known for its defoliation impact on hundreds of species of deciduous trees and shrubs. This pest has destroyed millions of trees since 1889. Luckily,, over the years, natural predators like stink bugs, parasitic wasps and flies, beetles and small mammals like mice have contributed to keeping the populations down between outbreaks.

Some other **threats** are **Anthraxnose fungus** which affects dogwood trees causing tan spots and premature abscission of leaves, cankers on twigs, succulent shoots at the lower trunk and spotted flowers.

Sudden oak death, caused by plant pathogen phytophthora ramorum which causes leaf spots, cankers on the stems and twig dieback. This can kill a tree in a matter of weeks. **Bot canker** - caused by the fungus **Diplodia corticola** was observed last year in oaks in West Virginia. The fungus limits the trees ability to access essential nutrients and water, ultimately killing them. **Pine bark beetle** which causes Popcorn-sized lumps of pitch, S-shaped feeding cuts on the inside of bark and needle discoloration from green to brown.

What you can do:

Don't transport firewood. You risk transporting diseases.

Know the signs of trouble. If a tree is showing signs of an infestation, contact an arborist immediately.

Water during droughts. A soaker hose under your trees for an extended period of time: watering deeply (8--12 inches) monthly for mature trees and weekly for new young trees

Powdery mildew: Treat with horticultural oil 3 times in one week when no rain is predicted.

Know Thy Neighbor

WELCOME COMMITTEE: HELPING NEW NEIGHBORS PUT DOWN ROOTS

If you've recently seen even more friendly faces walking around the neighborhood than usual, you've spotted the **HTOCA Welcome Committee** in action. Starting this spring, this group of residents has been visiting neighbors who have moved in during the last few months to say hello and drop off a welcome package, including the HTOCA neighborhood directory, an information sheet and a discount card for Meadows Farms Nursery.

The Welcome Committee helps answer new neighbors' frequently asked questions ranging from "When's garbage/recycling day?" to "What's the HTOCA all about?" It also includes detail on neighborhood events and clubs, government services and utilities, and suggested places to dine and visit around town. Accompanying the package is a note that states: "**We're glad you're putting down roots in Hillbrook-Tall Oaks.**"

Just moved into the neighborhood? Know someone who has? Please contact the Welcome Committee hillbrooktalloaks@gmail.com so we can roll out the welcome mat!

Do you have Newsletter Ideas?

Let one of our Newsletter Committee members know or send an email to: hillbrooktalloaks@gmail.com.

Contact Us

Questions? Want to Get Involved? Use the information below:

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