

WAKEFIELD CHAPEL WOODS

Newsletter

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This newsletter will be posted on our website under wcwha.org/documents. To ensure privacy of our homeowners, all contact information will be removed before posting. All contact information (excluding emails) can be accessed through the Members page on the website. If you have forgotten your password and are unable to reset it, send us an email at wcwha.org@gmail.com.

President's Note

Dear Neighbors,

The Board and I hope you are doing well and were able to enjoy the summer with family and friends. It's hard to believe that Summer is almost gone and we're heading into fall. School is already in session and all the activities are just around the corner. We continue to be so grateful for our volunteers and have so many neighbors to thank!

The Board and I would like to extend a very special thank you to Al Meyer! Al retired from the board this year after 40+ years of managing our Parkland. He spent countless hours walking the neighborhood checking on the parkland ensuring the debris was removed and heading up the annual parkland cleanup with the many volunteers. Al, I hope I can speak for our neighbors to say a HUGE THANK YOU and to your wife Joy for all the time and effort you put into enhancing and maintaining our beautiful community! Al also celebrated his 90th birthday this year 🎉 🎂

And big shoutouts to Errol Segall, he has been maintaining our bridges by replacing the rails and fixing the benches. And to Fred Wright and Brian Kiviat who are always on hand to help with removing debris in the common area. 🙌

Our annual board meeting will be held on Monday, October 30 at 7:00 PM via google meets. It's only an hour so we hope you can take the time to join us.

Prior to the board meeting, WCWHA will send out an invitation to join the virtual meeting. This invitation will be sent to all our community members that are on our email list.

To ensure quorum, please return the proxy what will be sent to you. If you cannot make the annual board meeting, we would request that you either scan and email your proxy to wcwha.org@gmail.com or give it to a neighbor or a board member.

And we are always on the lookout for volunteers to help with the board and other community activities!

As always, please let us know if you have any suggestions or concerns, you can always reach us at wcwha.org@gmail.com.

All the Best,
Cindy Griffin, Board President

WCWHA Board Meeting Schedule

As usual all homeowners are invited to attend Board meetings. Currently, because of COVID precautions, all meetings are being held virtually via Google Meets (they allow 1 hour for free). The dates for 2023 meetings are listed below (and on the <https://wcwha.org/> website).

Meetings are on Mondays starting at 7:00 PM ET unless otherwise stated.

2023 Meetings – 7:00 PM

Monday, October 30 (Annual Meeting)

2024 Meetings – 7:00 PM

Monday, January 29, 2024

Monday, April 29

Monday, July 29

Monday, Oct 21 (Annual Meeting)

WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS! (Telephone #'s have been removed for privacy. They can be found in the Directory)

We would like to welcome new neighbors to our community!

8513 Sugarbush Ct. - Brian and Beth Yeh

Children: Annabelle and Colin

8606 Ordinary Way - Dustin and Shanleigh Tipling, Amelia (4th grade) and Drew (Kindergarten)

8606 Ordinary Way

4500 Fidelity Ct. – Alicia Freedy

4504 Fidelity Ct. - Tom and Sara Arnold

4528 Banff St. – Caitlin DiMaina and Stephen Lee

We also send a fond farewell to our current residents, Francisco Dallmeier and Joy Parton as they have sold their home. We wish you all the best!

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE

The Board and our volunteer Architectural committee request that owners ensure that shutters and doors do have the same approved colors. In addition, to maintain and upkeep overgrown shrubs/trees, weeds, falling fence, peeling paint, etc.

This committee monitors our neighborhood to keep homeowners in compliance with our by-laws' architectural rules. Not an easy job to say the least. And I cannot say enough about the outstanding job they do.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind our homeowners about the need to comply with the WCWA Architectural Guidelines, which can be found on our web site. We have noticed that the exterior of some of the houses are deteriorating. This includes missing window shutters. If the committee has requested, you to fix these items we do ask you to comply. This helps keep our neighborhood in tip top shape and keeping our property values high.

Information regarding the guidelines, etc. can be found here <https://wcwa.org/documents>. The Request For Approval Of Exterior Modification is attached and can be found here <https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/6c753f4f-dd49-43d7-9d94-0a66dfdea008/downloads/REQUEST%20FOR%20APPROVAL%20OF%20EXTERIOR%20MODIFICATION%5B.pdf?ver=1674512119684>

The request form is also attached. If in doubt, please contact our super nice architectural committee captain Paul Brayshaw via wcwa.org@gmail.com

EROSION

How Your Lawncare Strategies Can Affect Turkey Run, written by Patrick Read

Turkey Run Creek, which runs through the Wakefield Chapel HOA Park, is a valuable resource for everyone living here, and you know it as a landmark for our community. It could use your help right now!

You may have noticed a lot of grass growing around and even in the creek lately, along with algae and underwater plants. Normally, new underwater plants and algae would be a good thing, because they provide more oxygen and food for the fish and other animals living in the water. However, this recent growth is not so good. When large amounts of algae appear in big mats on the surface or underwater, it's known as an algal bloom. These occur when there's a large influx of nutrients into the water, such as from fertilizer. Initially, oxygen levels in the water increase and the animals that eat algae are well-fed, but when the nutrients run out and the excess algae dies, there's so much algae to decompose that the bacteria which do so have to multiply. A lot. Eventually, they use all of the oxygen in the water, creating a "dead zone" with no oxygen, which is hazardous to aquatic life. Imagine a place where you can't breathe, despite being surrounded by normal air. That's what happens in a dead zone.

Turkey Run has several schools of dace, a kind of small fish, living downstream of these algal blooms. You've probably seen them a few times if you've looked closely at the water. When the algae dies and creates a dead zone, those fish will most likely suffocate. Turkey Run will lose their beneficial services and become filled with dead fish, making the problem worse and damaging the entire ecosystem.

Thankfully, there is a way to avoid this scenario: by not introducing extra nutrients that cause algal blooms. Most of the time, the extra nutrients come from fertilizer washed into the creek by rain or simply falling down a hill. If your lawn is near or directly adjacent to the creek, a good solution is to avoid spreading fertilizer.

Thankfully, there are steps other than fertilizer to maintain a healthy lawn. methods such as introducing other plants like clover, onion grass, and any of the natives found here: <https://www.plantnovanatives.org/native-grasses>. Diverse and native lawns require no fertilizer, as they are adapted to the soil conditions of this area and require less care because the plants provide resources for each other. You may even find that clover and onion grass make up large parts of your lawn already! You can also use compost made from food and yard waste, which usually contains the necessary nutrients for your lawn, but doesn't release them in water as easily as fertilizer (<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/recycling-trash/composting-organic-waste>).

If neither of these appeal to you or are possible, then I urge you to be content with watering your lawn, or just letting it grow without extra care. Please, save the fish and our Turkey Run.

Bamboo

The bamboo growing along the creek is serving as an excellent means of erosion control by anchoring the soil with its spreading root system helping as a barrier against soil erosion. Please help keep it alive. 🌿

OUTREACH

Sidewalks

For us walkers (me included), we would request that you please trim tree branches that overhang the sidewalk near your homes 🌳 .

WCWHA Directory

To save money and eliminate the paper version of the quarterly newsletter, the Board switched to emails with timely information via WCWHA email Listserv managed by our volunteer dedicated and delightful Donna Caruso. Donna maintains our website and keeps an online version of our homeowner directory which is located here <https://wcwha.org/members> (login required). It is also attached. If any changes are needed, please contact Donna via wcwha.org@gmail.com

The latest WCWHA Directory is attached for your convenience. The directory is updated frequently as we get new information (changes in residents, etc.) and posted it on the website where you can view and download it. <https://wcwha.org/members>. 📄

In order to do this, you will need to enter your password. All of you have previously been sent an invitation to create a password. If you did not create a password or have difficulty signing in, email us at wcwha.org@gmail.com and we will send you another invitation to create one (or another).

Please review the Directory and let us know about any changes to your contact information. Many of you have opted to give up your home phones and are using your cell phone exclusively. If that's the case for you and we have a non-functioning number for you, please let us know by emailing us at the above email address.

You will notice that the Directory contains only phone numbers, no emails. This has always been based on a desire to protect your emails from misuse by others. However, emails are so widely used by all that we may want to revisit that decision. For many of us, it would be so useful to have all your information in one place. Please let us know your opinions/concerns about this.

Many of us miss the printed directory so we plan to publish one in 2024. Decisions about email inclusion will obviously need to be made prior to that.

ACTION REQUEST: Please contact wcvha.org@gmail.com if the attached directory does not have your up to update contact information before the end of the year.

HELP NEEDED - WEBSITE

If you haven't visited our website, take a look 🙄! Lots of information and useful links there. For instance, we have links to important HOA documents, important County sites (including COVID information), libraries, transportation, utilities, our up-to-date member directory, and others. However, we have been using the current website for several years but are feeling that the platform is a bit clunky and limiting in the flexibility of use. If you or have a kid with website-building skills and would like to help with this (I'm sure this constitutes as community service), please contact Donna Caruso at 703 323-4741 or email her at wcvha.org@gmail.com.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Have you been looking for a service provider for an upcoming project – landscaper, painter, plumber, etc.? Did you know we have a list of providers on our website (<http://www.wcvha.org>) that have been recommended by your neighbors? If you visit our site, you will find several services that have been recommended. However, you will also notice that they do not cover all areas of service or that there may be only one or two are in some sections. *If you have recently used someone whose service pleased you, please share that person's name and contact information along with a brief description of your experience with them by emailing it to wcvha.org@gmail.com.*

COMMUNITY

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

During the COVID Public Health Emergency (PHE) we publicized a program whereby WCWHA residents needing any kind of logistical help could call on their neighbors for assistance. Several of you generously volunteered to assist others, and we had a few requests for help.

Now that the COVID situation is stabilizing, the Board continues to believe that there are some members of our small community who may need assistance with logistics (e.g., picking up groceries or medications). Therefore, we encourage any WCHHA resident needing help to reach out to a Board member (listed below) as we continue our Neighbors Helping Neighbors program.

If you would like to volunteer to help others, please contact our Board Member Vice President Tom Hermann who is absolutely wonderful to work with. Let him know your availability and things you can do to help (driving to appointments, picking up prescriptions, shoveling snow, mowing the lawn, etc.). Tom can be contacted via 703-425-5159 or tom.e.herrmann@gmail.com or wcvha.org@gmail.com.

Volunteer Opportunities

Food for Others (FFO) is a local food pantry and distribution group that welcomes volunteers at its "Market" as well as to distribute food at locations in Fairfax County and schools. Their main office is on Prosperity Ave. in Merrifield. See their web site for background information and volunteer needs.

<https://foodforothers.org/>

Detecting Carbon Monoxide Carbon monoxide

Detecting Carbon Monoxide Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas that can cause serious health problems and even death if you're exposed to it. Common symptoms include headache, dizziness, nausea, and vomiting. Carbon monoxide can be produced by appliances that burn fossil fuels such as natural gas, oil, or propane. A carbon monoxide alarm is a device that detects the presence of carbon monoxide and alerts you to the danger. Every home should have a carbon monoxide alarm installed near every sleeping area. Having a CO detector near every sleeping area will give you time to get out safely if there is any danger from CO buildup in your home. Carbon monoxide alarms, which come in many varieties and sizes, are important emergency preparedness items that you can purchase to prevent a future tragedy.

DOGS

Please make sure your dog is leashed when in the park 🚫

In Fairfax County, dogs are required to be on a leash at all times in public areas unless they're in a designated off-leash area.

Section 41.1-2-4. Unrestricted dogs prohibited; leash law.

(a) No dog shall run unrestricted, as defined in Section 41.1-1-1, in the County. Any person who is the owner of a dog found unrestricted in the County shall be in violation of this Section. This Section shall not apply to any person who uses a dog under his direct supervision while lawfully hunting, while engaged in a supervised formal obedience training class or show, during formally sanctioned field trials, while a dog is in an area owned, leased, controlled, or operated by Fairfax County designated by resolution of the Board of Supervisors as an off-leash dog exercise area ***(our parkland is NOT an off-leash area.)***

It is a violation of this Section for any owner of a dog to place such dog or allow it to be placed into custody of any person not physically capable of maintaining effective control of restricting such dog.

FYI - Violations of the above are subject to issuance of a summons for violation of this Section. (26-04-41.1; 10-11-41.1.)

For more information about Fairfax County laws related to dog ownership, please visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/sites/health/files/assets/documents/pdf/animal-control-ordinance.pdf>

Thank you all for making our community a great place to live!