

WAKEFIELD CHAPEL WOODS

Newsletter

President: Don Payne

Vice President: Ron Jones

Secretary: Michael Phan

Treasurer: Scott Schaefer

Member at Large: Liz Segall

<http://www.wcwha.org>

March 12, 20112

Annual Dues to be collected by March 31

Just a reminder our community's annual dues for each household will be *due by March 31*. If you are the homeowner, you should have received a mailing earlier this month with the invoice and instructions. We are happy to report that, once again, our dues will remain at **\$140. The monies collected are used primarily to maintain and enhance our parkland, which last year included mowing and removal of fallen trees.**

SPRING CLEAN UP AND REPLACEMENT OF SWING SET - A TWO PART PROJECT

Many of you remember that our park swings were destroyed by a falling tree last year, and our (volunteer) park manager, Al Meyer, let us know that replacement costs would be around \$6130 including new swings (\$2716) plus the labor and equipment costs to install them. We are delighted to give you some great news! Thanks to the hard work of Vice President Ron Jones and Al Meyer we applied for a county

grant and have just received notice that we will receive \$3000 to help defray our costs. *Part of the agreement with the county is that our Association will provide at least \$2115 in sweat equity (at the allotted \$21.36 per volunteer per hour that is a total of 99 hours) from our volunteers, which includes project planning, assembly and installation of swings, cleanup etc.*

ON SATURDAY, MARCH 31 WE WILL NEED YOUR HELP TO CLEAN UP THE PARKLAND.

ON SATURDAY, APRIL 14, WE WILL AGAIN NEED YOUR HELP TO COMPLETE THE SWING SET REINSTALLATION SO WE REMAIN ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THE GRANT. WE WILL NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS THAN USUAL!!

We had initially planned to do the swing set installation at the same time as the annual Park Cleanup. However, *because of the unusually warm weather the grass has already begun to grow. We can't wait until April 14 to do the cleanup. Therefore, we've had to had an extra day – March 31 – for just the cleanup.* Please come on the 31st and bring your pruners, rakes, wheelbarrows, saws, etc. to help clear brush and get the park in shape for the summer. In the past our children have been a tremendous help working with adults, picking up debris and it's a great way for students to earn community service hours. On April 14 (RAIN OR SHINE) we will meet a second time to work on the swing set. On both days, please meet Al and others at the Banff bridge for assignments so we can have a coordinated approach to refreshing the park. ***Be sure to sign in so we may credit the hours you work toward our required 99 hours.***

On April 14th, Al will be providing guidance to other volunteers and possibly a group of Boy Scouts who will begin the process of assembling our new swings. *Any questions? Contact Al at allanemeyer@aol.com or call him at 703-978-2559.*

Reminder: Website and Email and Contractor Reviews

- Check out our association website at www.wcwha.org.
- Sign up to receive occasional email messages by contacting Mary Fry, our webmaster, at contact@wcwha.org.
- If you have had work done on your house lately, and have been happy with your contractors, please share their name and your recommendation with the rest of us. Send the information to contact@wcwha.org and it will be added to other reviews on the "Neighbor to Neighbor" page of our website.

WCWHA Board Meetings Scheduled for 2012

We have established the following schedule for Board meetings this year. *We encourage any interested members to attend by contacting that month's host.* If you have a particular issue you would like to discuss, please let President Don Payne know in advance.

Meetings begin at 7 PM

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

March 20 - Jones, 4600 Country Lane
May 8 - Desko, 4504 Fidelity Ct.
June 19 - Segall, 8507 Sugarbush Ct.
September 11 - Schaffer, 4514 Banff St.
October 16 - Annual Membership Meeting, WFES Cafeteria
December 4 – Phan, 4503 Whistler Ct.

The Following Articles are COMMUNITY NEWS from Braddock District

If you would like to be on the email list to receive notices from Braddock Supervisor John Cook, please sign up at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/

NVCC Wakefield Chapel Forum

Supervisor Cook is hosting a meeting of citizens interested in what's happening with Northern Virginia Community College and the surrounding neighborhoods on *April 17, 7:30 to 9:00 PM at the Nancy Sprague Technology Center*. Representatives from NVCC will be giving updates. Braddock Supervisor Cook will be there to answer questions. A more specific agenda will be forthcoming, but if you have an specific items you'd like to see addressed, please give Ann Sharp a call at 703-425-9300 or email her at ann.sharp@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Fairfax County Police Sponsor Bicycle Rodeo

The Fairfax County Police, West Springfield District Station's Neighborhood Patrol Unit will be hosting a bicycle rodeo for grade school aged children (6-12) at the station on *Saturday March 31st. The rain date is April 21*. The Springfield District Station is looking for volunteers, so if you can

help, please let them know. During the Rodeo, children will learn about bicycle safety, and then participate in a challenging obstacle course that is designed to reinforce safe riding. Additionally the police department will have several police vehicles and equipment on display along with a visit from McGruff the Crime Dog.

Spring is Around the Corner, How Healthy is Your Tree?

Over the last couple of years, we have heard about, and some communities have seen firsthand, the devastation caused when a mature tree falls on a house.

Trees are an important and valuable resource in an urban environment. Not only do they provide many environmental services, they can add thousands of dollars to the value of a home. That said, trees can be dangerous when they fall. Even perfectly healthy trees can fail in weather that is extreme enough. We can evaluate and monitor trees for signs of disease and structural weakness that can cause them to fall in less extreme or even ordinary weather events.

The very best way for a property owner to evaluate the health and soundness of their trees is to hire a certified arborist to evaluate them. The County has a good website on tree care and a page devoted to hiring an arborist (<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/treehazards.htm>; http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/hiring_an_arborist_flier_final.pdf). Trees are very good at hiding damage and disease, so even healthy looking trees should be examined by a professional.

Here are some of the indications of problems for which a property owner can look:

- Die back in the crown. Branches must make their own food, so branches growing in the shade may die as part of the natural process of tree growth, but dying branches high in the crown are a sign of disease or damage.
- Mushrooms near the base of the tree, especially if they radiate out in lines from the base of the tree, can indicate rot in the root system.
- Shelf fungus or mushrooms growing on the side of the tree are an indication of rot in the trunk of the tree.
- Peeling bark exposing wood, rotten wood or cavities in the trunk are also signs of rot in the trunk of the tree.
- Excessive leaf loss or dead leaves in the tree can be a sign of pests or disease that can weaken a tree.
- Included bark is a sign of weak branch unions. There should be a ridge of bark in the joint between two branches or between a branch and the trunk. This indicates a strong joint that is being properly wrapped by wood as the tree grows. Sometimes the bark dives down into the joint and forms a wedge that weakens the joint. Some trees, like Bradford Pears, are known for having included bark and weak joints.
- Noticeable change in the lean of a tree. Trees can grow with a lean, usually to reach for the sun, but that lean is stable. When a tree that wasn't leaning starts to lean or a leaning tree starts to lean more, that is an indication that it is becoming uprooted. Sometimes an increased lean will be accompanied by a disturbance around the base of the tree or cracks in the soil away from the lean.

If you see any of these problems you

should call an arborist immediately. Trees are valuable living things and they deserve the same standard of care as we and our pets have – a periodic visit with an appropriate health care professional.

Avoid Spring Mulch Volcanoes

Once again, Spring is right around the corner and many homeowners are heading to lawn and garden stores for their annual supply of mulch. Mulch mimics the benefits created by the forest floor. The generally recommended mulching depth is two to four inches. Unfortunately, many landscapes are falling victim to a plague of over mulching. A new term, “mulch volcanoes,” has emerged to describe mulch that has been piled up around the base of trees. Deep mulch can be effective in suppressing weeds and reducing maintenance, but it often can cause problems for trees according to Jim McGlone of the Virginia Department of Forestry. McGlone warns that over mulching:

- Promotes tree disease – bark is not a good barrier against soil fungi;
- Prevents water from reaching roots – mulch can help hold and infiltrate water into the soil beneath it when spread in a two to four inch layer, deep mulch may not allow water to penetrate and may promote the growth of fungal mats that help shed water;
- Provides homes for rodents – deep piles of mulch are good homes for rodents, particularly if they can burrow in under fungal mats and stay dry; rodents living in mulch piles can gnaw on bark and damage the cambium layer beneath the bark, which can quickly kill young trees;
- Promotes girdling roots – the warm, moist environment of a mulch volcano can induce a tree to start growing roots

from the trunk which are poorly formed and can circle or strangle the tree;
•Creates a stink – aerobic decomposition of mulch is the smell of good soil, but deep mulch piles can prevent the penetration of oxygen, leading to anaerobic decomposition which smells like swamp gas.

A good reference for how to mulch trees can be found at this site:
<http://www.treesaregood.org/treecare/resources/ProperMulching.pdf>.

ANNANDALE HIGH SCHOOL BOOSTERS 5K RUN/WALK

AHS Athletic Boosters is sponsoring their 6th annual 5 K Run Walk on ***Saturday, May 19 at 8:30 am. at Annandale High School, 4500 Medford Dr.*** The certified course winds through the community and concludes at the school's track.

Registration before race day is \$15 for students and faculty; \$18 for general

public; \$22 from May 5 through race day.

Free T-shirts and awards in 14 categories.

To register and for more information visit www.annandaleatoms.com.

Upcoming Calendar

March 31 – WCWHA dues due

March 31 - Bicycle Rodeo, West Springfield District Station

April 2 – 6 – Fairfax County Public Schools Spring Break

April 9 – Fairfax County Public Schools Student Holiday

April 17 – NVCC Wakefield Chapel Forum, 7:30 to 9:00 PM at the Nancy Sprague Technology Center

May 19 – AHS Walk/Run, 8:30 am at AHS