



HILLBROOK HILITES

Hillbrook-Tall Oaks Civic Association (HTOCA) Newsletter

February 2023

IT'S TIME TO MAKE ALL RESIDENTS CHARITABLE HEROES (M.A.R.C.H.) AGAIN

For the third year in a row, we call on all our neighborhood heroes to donate to a critically important cause in our community: The Annandale High School (AHS) Food Pantry.

Sponsored by the Hillbrook-Tall Oaks Civic Association (HTOCA) and organized by **Katie Clary**, M.A.R.C.H. will seek donations of non-perishable food, household and personal hygiene items to the high school's four-year-old Food Pantry.

The AHS Food Pantry opened in November 2018 to serve the more than 65% of students and families who experience food insecurity. Katie noted that in the last two years, our neighbors have donated more than 1,500 items.

With rising costs everywhere, the need for non-perishable items and cleaning supplies is greater than ever. This year we aim to collect the Pantry's Top 10 most-requested items, which you can find at this [link](#), including these items:

- Personal hygiene : shampoo, toothbrushes, razors, body wash
- Household: paper products, dish detergent, laundry soap, cleaning items
- Non-perishable food: white rice, cereal, tomato sauce, masala flour, PB&J

We will be collecting items from neighbors between March 2-16, with a planned drop-off date at the Pantry on March 22. Four generous neighbors have offered to host collection sites in their carports and driveways:

- **4910 Dodson Drive** (The Rossignols)
- **4905 Kingston Drive** (Kevin Gilligan & Laurelie Wallace)
- **6932 Pacific Lane** (The Kents)
- **6821 Winter Lane** (The Martinezes)

Please keep an eye out for more details, including a neighborhood flyer and email. If you would like to volunteer to distribute flyers around the neighborhood or for collection pickups/drop-offs at AHS, **please contact Katie at 612-750-2356 or claryfamily@gmail.com.**

Also, please consider signing up to help the pantry on distribution days here: [AHS Pantry Volunteers: AHS PTSA Pantry Distribution Help for the 2022-2023 School Year \(signupgenius.com\)](#). No previous experience necessary.



Second Annual Winterfest, December 2022

Also In This Issue...

- Know Thy Neighbors: Meet the Christians
- Vacuum Leaf Service Issues
- New Birding Club
- Annandale Community Revitalization and Parking Reimagined
- Neighborhood Watch Updates
- Women's Wellness Group AND Garden Club Updates
- Fairfax County Rules of the Road

... and More!

KNOW THY NEIGHBORS: MEET THE CHRISTIANS

If you've been to any neighborhood event over the last eight years or noticed a free-range biking and blading crew rolling up and down the streets, then you've probably met the Christians! Here is their story:



Photo courtesy of Suzanne Erera

Who's in your household? Matt and Suzanne, Walter (12) who is a 7th grader at Poe Middle School, Nina (9) who is a 3rd grader at Columbia Elementary, and two adolescent cat brothers, Smudge and Duncan, that we adopted a year ago.

How long have you lived in Hillbrook-Tall Oaks? We moved into the neighborhood in February 2015 on the one day that week that it didn't snow!

Where are you originally from? Matt is from a military family but spent a lot of his youth in Sleepy Hollow Woods in Annandale. He attended what is now Justice High School. Suzanne grew up in central New Jersey on the northernmost point of the Jersey Shore, about 10-15 minutes away from the beach.

Any interesting memories from living here? So many! That week we moved in, we managed to get all our stuff in the house but still had a ton to do to get everything livable - with busy 4- and 1-year-olds, and then we were snowbound by the next day. I (Suzanne) remember how beautiful our new year was in over a foot of quiet snow. Another top memory was when the family's sister and brother-in-law, **Lauren Erera & Marc Henderson**, decided to move into a home just down the street, and all the great times we've had with friends and family since.

What's your favorite part about living in Hillbrook-Tall Oaks? We love the trees and the birds and wildlife, our friends and family in the neighborhood and all of the neighborhood events. We really enjoy seeing the foxes sleep and play in our yard, and we love that our kids have friends in the neighborhood and can ride around and also play up at Poe.

What advice do you have for your fellow residents? Come enjoy the neighborhood events! We'd love to meet you!

2022-23 COLLECTION LEAF-ING PLENTY OF ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Another year, another disappointing - and potentially dangerous - leaf pickup season for our neighborhood.

As part of "Leaf Area 8," residents of Hillbrook-Tall Oaks continue to wait for our third round of three planned vacuum leaf services this season, happening sometime this month.

Several concerned neighbors, including HTOCA President **Al Sample**, have noted that the timing and delays these last few years have caused not just an inconvenience but also a potential safety issue. Large, sometimes frozen leaf piles begin straying into the street, providing less room to walk safely and creating hazardous conditions.

Al reached out to Chris Herrington, Director of Public Works and Environmental Safety, to discuss these issues as well as recommendations for improvement during a recent Board meeting.

Chris noted that Fall's wind storms and warmth likely contributed to the early high volume of leaves that neighborhoods like ours experienced this year. He also noted that equipment part shortages affected both the county and its contractors.

On top of this, Fairfax usually hauls leaves out to a local composting facility, which temporarily shut down during prime leaf pickup time this season. All of these factors caused a perfect storm that has continued to frustrate not just us, but the more than 20,000 other households, mostly in eastern Fairfax, that rely upon and pay taxes for this service. You can find more details [here](#).

So what's next? The HTOCA Board told Chris that we would strongly prefer **scheduled pickups TARGETED to occur between November 1 and December 31**. While we recognize that exact dates may differ due to scheduling and circumstances beyond the county's control, putting a target in place may improve chances that the bulk of them are off our streets prior to our first snow or freeze. This may also reduce the length of time between each pickup.

Chris also noted that the **county is currently evaluating the challenges and plans to solicit both consultants as well as the public's help in an improvement plan**. The county is taking a holistic look at its solid waste service model, which it owes the state by 2025.

This includes some initial planning discussions this spring with the county's executives and Board of Supervisors, as well as public hearings on the matter starting this fall. To learn more or to get involved, please contact the county at DPWES-TrashCS@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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NEW BIRDING CLUB ABOUT TO TAKE FLIGHT

HTOCA Board Member Danielle Brosious and her bird-loving husband, Dan Boyd, recorded a whopping 46 different bird species in their backyard last summer.

Now Danielle is interested in finding fellow bird lovers in the neighborhood to start a new club. Here's what she had to say:

Calling all bird enthusiasts! Spring migration is right around the corner and we are excited to introduce the HTOCA Birding Club to our community.

We will meet once a month in the neighborhood, in backyards, or at nearby parks to observe and talk about all things avian. If you are interested in joining, please email daniellebrosious@gmail.com.



YARD WASTE REMINDER, NEW TREE DISEASE

Here's a friendly reminder that **yard waste, such as sticks and grass, shrub and tree trimmings, is only collected and processed for recycling between March 1 and December 24 every year.** As you get ready for our next pickup season, please remember to place your yard waste in compostable paper bags or rigid containers (no plastic bags) separately at the curb for collection. More info is here: [Curbside Yard Waste | Public Works and Environmental Services \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/news/curbside-yard-waste).

In other environmental news, neighbor **Mary Jane Balicki** forwarded let us know that Fairfax has confirmed Beech Leaf Disease (BLD) is now present in the county. If your beech tree saplings' leaves of have dark green stripes in the veins or if more mature trees have reduced foliage, they may be showing signs of BLD. Infected trees may also exhibit puckered, cupped or distorted leaves. More info here"

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/news/beechn-leaf-disease-confirmed-fairfax-county>

WOMEN'S MONTHLY WELLNESS WALKS KICKING BACK OFF MARCH 11

The monthly walks for the Women's Wellness Group will **begin on the second Saturday of each month, beginning March 11**. Please join them at Poe Middle School, Exit 2, at 8:30 a.m. for a walk around the neighborhood.

Their first social event will be the Women's Appreciation Potluck brunch in May.

Everyone is welcome. If you have questions or would like to learn more, please contact **Alisha Martinez** (alishakmartinez@gmail.com or 617-290-0728).

GARDEN CLUB POPS BACK UP

Up from the snow and cold pops the Garden Club!

It's time to get to work and also to learn about so many fun things planned:

- Two speaker events scheduled for March and April
- A Spring neighborhood walking tour to sort out details for
- Community projects to discuss

We got an invitation to a nearby Garden Club last month to join them for one of their speaker events. Two members headed over there and enjoyed not only the program, but also meeting their club. So much fun to share garden triumphs and challenges with new friends. We made plans to team up again to show off each other's neighborhoods in the blooming season.

The Garden Club meets on the **second Wednesday night of each month at 7 p.m.** Locations vary, so email Betsy Martin (betsybmartin@gmail.com) to find out where we are.

Also, Green Spring Gardens has just posted their lecture series [here](#) – amazing information and cheap, so check it out! Email frogs@friendsofgreenspring.org for more information or to register.

Here's to spring!



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NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH: WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER

Our Hillbrook-Tall Oaks Neighborhood Watch team has embraced this statement, the motto of the National Neighborhood Watch Institute, as our guiding principle. A recent incident illustrates how necessary vigilance is in preventing crime.

Late the morning of October 25, a resident of Kingston Drive out for a walk observed a man behaving strangely around a parked vehicle at the corner of Winter Lane and Dodson Drive. Flagging down the car of one of our four Neighborhood Watch members who happened to be on patrol at the time, she reported her concerns. The member immediately drove to the intersection and the man, upon seeing the Neighborhood Watch signage on the car, quickly entered his car and fled the area quickly. Based upon his demeanor and rapid departure, it seems as though he was not here for legitimate purposes.

Since the Watch team can't patrol 24/7, we encourage residents to call the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD)'s non-emergency number at **703-691-2131** if they are concerned about something they see happening in the neighborhood. We also encourage everyone to keep that number handy and carry a phone with them during walks.

Noise Victory: Car Meet-Ups Shut Down

Many neighbors, especially those closest to the Hillbrook Drive entrance, have complained about loud car meet-ups and music into the evening. These meet-ups regularly occurred in and around the former K-Mart parking lot between 9-10 p.m. causing multiple complaints from neighbors. Board Member David Decker attended the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) recently, where he learned that a combination of the county getting its legal ducks in a row, various citizen and shop owner complaints, and neighborhood residents like **Mark Crawford's** letter-writing have helped stop this activity.

Warmups, Kia & Hyundai Car Theft Reminders

- From FCPD's new Auto Crimes Enforcement (ACE) Unit: **Beware of "warmup theft"**. Think twice before leaving your car unlocked, running, and unattended. Many think it will never happen, but car thieves are out there looking for vehicles left unattended and running in driveways and parking lots.
- **Kia & Hyundai Thefts**: Consistent with a nationwide trend, thieves are exploiting the lack of an immobilizer chip on some models. Manufacturers have advised owners on ways to address the problem. Speak to a dealership about options available to you.

Information-Sharing Apps to Consider:

Many neighbors use information-sharing apps such as **Nextdoor and Neighbors by Ring**. Both are very good for learning about and reporting activities and incidents in and around Hillbrook-Tall Oaks. Both apps are free and available for both IOS and Android systems.

Join our team! If you're interested in crime prevention in our neighborhood and would like to help with the Neighborhood Watch, please contact David Decker at DTDecker5025@gmail.com.

MONTESSORI SCHOOL EXPANDS TO WELCOME MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The Montessori School of Northern Virginia (MSNV)'s Director of Marketing Communications Andreka Johnson shares this update:

MSNV will expand to include a middle school in Fall 2023. Over the next two years MSNV will introduce seventh and eighth grade to the Hillbrook campus while simultaneously shifting its primary classes to other campuses. The Middle School program offers students a thoughtful environment with experienced teachers attuned to students' development and academic needs. Rigorous coursework allows students to cover a wide breadth of subjects ranging from math and science to world languages and the humanities. Students participate in the planning of their coursework, including their creative and physical expressions.

A Montessori program integrates academic studies with real-life experiences. Components of this curriculum include a student-run microeconomy teaching financial literacy, community service positions for students to learn how a social organization works and to do meaningful work, field studies, apprenticeships and internships. These real-life experiences leave students feeling worthy, confident and able, allowing them to express themselves growing their responsibility and independence as they find their place in the community.

Here are the remaining events for MSNV's 2022-23 school year. Please note that the dates with asterisks anticipate that there will be additional street parking nearby its Pacific Drive campus.

Tue, March 7	6:30-9:00pm	School Event*
March 14 - March 18	Mornings	Class Event
Tue, March 21	6:30-9:00pm	Meeting
April 24 - April 28	Mornings	Class Event
Tue, June 6	6:30-9:00	School Event*

* indicates school-wide or multiple class event with street parking

Concerned about drivers speeding through our streets to get their kids to school?

If the speeders appear to be dropping off or picking up at MSNV, Head of School Kari Cafeo encourages Hillbrook-Tall Oaks residents to contact with her with the license plate so she can discuss and reinforce that their school exists within our residential community of walkers, joggers, dog-walkers and bikers.

Kari's email is kcafeo@msnv.org.

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MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED NEARBY



According to [Annandale Today](#), there is a proposal to develop a mixed-use multifamily apartment complex at **4251 John Marr Drive**. A property group is proposing a six-story building with up to 280 residential units and 11,220 square feet of ground-level retail. See proposed rendering to the left.

Developed in 2020 on the site of a Kmart, which closed in 2018, current tenants include The Block food hall and the K Market grocery

store. The plan is to retain and enhance the majority of the center's existing retail.

The proposal requests a rezoning from the C-6 commercial designation to a PRM (planned residential mixed-use district) for a 3.3-acre area at the northern section of the 11.8-acre property. **The Board awaits additional information about this [plan](#), including the zoning request, and will share with neighbors once we receive it.**

PARKING REIMAGINED

Fairfax initiated a review of the county's vehicle parking and loading zone requirements in August 2021. In November 2022 it issued an update of a whitepaper, PARKING REIMAGINED, on the matter. **The Parking Reimagined whitepaper outlines a goal of lowering the minimum number of required onsite parking spaces that must be provided in commercial, industrial and residential settings.**

On February 14, Fairfax County staff will make a presentation on its proposal for reducing required parking to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Land Use Policy Committee. Then on February 16, staff will make a separate presentation to the Fairfax County Planning Commission Land Use Committee. On April 19, the Fairfax County Planning Commission is tentatively scheduled to hold a public hearing on the staff proposal.

Some business and residential organizations view the information provided thus far in the Parking Reimagined documents as less than transparent and insufficient to allow citizens to make informed judgments on the changes in county parking standards.

More than eight Mason District citizen and homeowners' associations as well as some shopping center owners, have signed a letter asking the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to provide more detailed information on the proposed parking changes and their impacts. The Mason District Council has also signed this letter.

Learn more, get involved and submit your thoughts at [Parking Reimagined | Planning Development \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#).

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: RULES OF THE ROAD FOR FAIRFAX COUNTY

For the benefit of new and long-time residents, below is a compilation of Fairfax County and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) regulations regarding walking on the roadside (street shoulders), parking of vehicles on public streets and private property, and adhering to traffic signs and laws.

Situation	Requirement	Regulation	FINES
Walking on Road Shoulder	The County of Fairfax owns the road and adjoining right-of-way (ROW) in front of every residence in Hillbrook-Tall Oaks. The ROWs extend beyond the paved road - typically around 8 feet deep or more. It is legal for pedestrians to walk on the ROW road shoulder. This act does not constitute trespassing on adjacent private property. The Virginia Dept. of Transportation maintains the roadways, shoulders and drainage ditches.	Source: VDOT Area Land Use Manager;; and Fairfax County Department of Transportation staff.	
Speeding in Residential Areas	Obey posted speed limits. Typically, in Fairfax County, the posted speed limit for residential streets is 25 miles per hour (sometimes slower depending on road conditions). Speeding is a Moving Violation that places points on your driving record, which can ultimately result in revocation of a driver's license. [see www.dmv.virginia.gov/drivers/points_assess.html]	Virginia Code Section 46.2 -878.1	\$8.00 per mile over, plus \$67.00 and then another \$200.00; other charges
Stop Signs	Operators of cars and trucks must bring their vehicle to a complete stop before proceeding through a STOP sign. Slowing, and then cruising through a stop sign (a.k.a. "Hollywood roll through") is not legal. This is a Moving Violation that places points on your driving record.	Virginia Code Section 46.2-821	\$97.00; driving record points
Parking on Paved Streets	Fairfax County code stipulates that residents park vehicles so as not to create a safety hazard for pedestrians, cyclists, or motorists entering or exiting the street from driveways. It is not acceptable to park in a manner that forces traffic to cross the road's center line.** Watch out for children playing near parked cars. Whenever possible, park cars in driveways.	Fairfax County Department of Transportation, On-Street Parking Team	\$50.00
Stop Signs - Parking near stop signs is prohibited	Cars and trucks may not be parked within 30 feet of a stop sign.	Section 82-5-1. - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances; 46.2-1236- Code of Virginia	\$50.00
Intersections - Parking Near Intersections is prohibited	Cars and trucks may not be parked within 20 feet of an intersection.	Section 82-5-1. - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances; 46.2-1236- Code of Virginia	\$87.00 \$50.00

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW, CONTINUED

Situation	Requirement	Regulation	FINES
Near Driveways - Parking too close to driveways is prohibited	No car, truck, trailer, or other vehicle may be parked within 10 feet of the left or right side of a public driveway or residential driveway.	Section 82-5-1. - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances; 46.2-1236-Code of Virginia	\$50.00
Fire Hydrants – Parking	No car, truck, trailer, or other vehicle may be parked within 15 feet of the left or right side of a fire hydrant.	Section 82-5-1. - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances; 46.2-1236-Code of Virginia	\$50.00
Cross Walks – Parking	No vehicle parking is allowed in or within 20 feet of a cross-walk. [Note: There is a cross walk on Cindy Lane at Hillbrook Drive.]	Section 82-5-1. - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances; 46.2-1236-Code of Virginia	\$50.00
Posted Signs - Parking	No person may park a vehicle at any place where official signs are posted that prohibit parking;	Section 82-5-1. - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances; 46.2-1236 - Code of Virginia	\$50.00
Parking of Boats on Trailers	Boats on single-axle trailers may be stored on residential property on an approved paved area.	Section 82-5-7. - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances	
Parking on residential lawns	Parking of vehicles for extended periods*** on lawns in the front or back of a residence is prohibited. Vehicles may only be parked on approved surfaces.	Section 82-5-. - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances	Fine \$200.00
Unattended Vehicles – Parking	A vehicle can be towed if parked on a public street and not moved at least 300 feet after 15 days.	Fairfax County Police Department General Order #520.4	Towing Costs; Impoundment Fees
Vehicles with Expired Inspections - Parking	Parking vehicles on public streets without a current State of Virginia safety inspection sticker is prohibited.	Section 82-5-26.1.; Fairfax County Code of Ordinances; 46.2—600 Code of Virginia	\$92.00
Valid State License Plates - Parking	It is unlawful for any person to park on any highway any vehicle not displaying current state motor vehicle license tags on both the front and rear of the vehicle if required by the state of registration. (3-13-63; 1961 Code, § 16-130; 31-88-82; 08-06-82; 48-09-82.)	Section 82-5-26.1 - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances; 46.2-711 Code of Virginia	\$92.00
Commercial Vehicles	Section 82-5-7 of the Fairfax County Code prohibits parking of commercial vehicles in residential communities when the vehicle exceeds 21 feet in length or eight feet in height. The restrictions may not apply to commercial vehicles temporarily parked while performing work or service.	Section 82-5-7 - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances	\$100.00, Towing Costs, Storage Costs
Commercial Vehicle - Dwelling Location	Parking of one commercial vehicle (where explicitly defined) per dwelling is allowed, subject to the following limitations: 1) the vehicle must be owned and/or operated only by the occupant of the dwelling unit where it is parked.	Section 4102.1 B Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance	\$200-\$500 per offense
Commercial Vehicles With Signage – Parking on Private Property	Only one commercial vehicle bearing signage may be parked in a residence driveway by the owner/lessee of the residence – and only if the vehicle measures less than eight feet in height, less than 21 feet in length and less than 8.5 feet in width. This vehicle may not be parked on the street.	Section 82-5-7 - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances; Fairfax County Code Enforcement	\$100.00, Towing Costs, Storage Costs

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW, CONTINUED

Situation	Requirement	Regulation	FINES
Commercial Vehicle Parking in Residential Districts - Limousines and Taxis	One resident of each single-family dwelling unit zoned for residential use may park one vehicle licensed and registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia as a taxicab or limousine on such public streets, provided other vehicles are permitted to park thereon.	Section 82-5-7. - Fairfax County Code of Ordinances	\$100.00
Commercial Vehicle - Tow Trucks	Parking of commercial towing and recovery vehicles in residential areas is prohibited.	Section 4102.1.B Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance	\$200-\$500 per offense
Unattended Vehicles	Removal and disposition of certain unattended vehicles: Any motor vehicle, trailer or semitrailer found on the public streets or public grounds unattended for more than 15 days may be towed and stored at the direction of a police officer.	Section 82-5-29. Fairfax County Code of Ordinances	Storage and towing costs
Outdoor Storage – Vehicles	Trailers used to transport materials and/or equipment are subject to Fairfax County outdoor storage regulations. Vehicles that measure less than eight feet in height, less than 21 feet in length and less than 8.5 feet in width may be parked in a residence driveway by the owner/lessee of the residence. These vehicles are also classified as “outdoor storage” and must not be located in the front yard of a residence - and may not exceed 100 sq. ft. in area.	Section 4102.1.B Fairfax County Code of Ordinances	\$200 min.; up to \$500 per repeat offense.
Outdoor Storage – Vehicle With Tarps	Vehicles (e.g., open trailers or trailers covered by tarps) are considered outdoor storage. Items stored in the open bed of a vehicle or trailer are regulated as outdoor storage and must comply with associated regulations (see limitations above).	Section 4102, Fairfax County Code of Ordinances	\$200 min.; up to \$500 per repeat offense.
Who to Call:	Fairfax County Department of Public Safety Communications Non-Emergency phone number - (703) 691-2131		
	Fairfax County Police Parking Enforcement - 703-280-0336		
	Fairfax County Department of Code Compliance - 703-324-1300		
	Fairfax County Department of Planning and Development, Planner of the Day - 703-324-1380		
	Fairfax County Department of Transportation 703-877-5600		

* Fines per violation/citation

** If two school buses cannot safely pass each other on the street because of where and how it is parked repark it or move the vehicle. A school bus is 8.5 ft wide. Two buses = 17ft. in width. Additional space is needed for the buses to pass each other safely.

*** Temporary parking on an unsurfaced area in a front yard for a period not to exceed forty-eight (48) hours for loading, unloading, cleaning or repair of vehicles or trailers.

Note: Short-term, temporary parking on residential streets by commercial delivery trucks, postal vehicles, and contractors is allowed.

Exceptions: This table describes key requirements under Fairfax County and State of Virginia regulations. There may be exceptions to these policies depending on circumstances and provisions of law not described here.

Compiled by Mark Crawford, Hillbrook-Tall Oaks Civic Association, January 2023.

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