

HILLBROOK HILITES



Hillbrook Tall Oaks Civic Association (HTOCA) Newsletter

May 2020

SUMMER EVENTS EXTRAVAGANZA: PARADE, FOOD TRUCKS, SCAVENGER HUNTS & MORE!

We have not let the global pandemic slow us down this year. In fact, we have had one of the more active summers in recent history, all thanks to the bright ideas and generous volunteers in our community.

From a spirited graduation drive-by parade in early June (*see photo, right*) to stuffed bear and scavenger hunts for the kids (and kids at heart) around the neighborhood, we have certainly put the “social” into our social distancing.

And who can forget our newest summer tradition: Neighborhood Food Trucks! The Hillbrook-Tall Oaks Civic Association (HTOCA) hosted three food trucks this summer. DC Slices pizza and sweetFrog frozen yogurt were neighborhood favorites, so we are excited to welcome them back **THIS Saturday, August 29, from 4:30-7:30p** at the Poe Middle School parking lot (7000 Cindy Lane).

Preordering for DC Slices starts Tuesday, August 25, at this link: <https://www.goodfynd.com/vendors/dc-slices-4>. sweetFrog will provide onsite ordering.

After August, we'll host one final food truck event on Saturday, September 26, and we'd love your input on which food truck visits us next. Given the successful turnout, we have received interest from several vendors.

Please check out each of the vendors listed below on www.goodfynd.com to learn more about them and respond to the survey we emailed on August 23 no later than **Sunday, August 30**.

Dinner Truck Options: Caliburger, Himalayan Soul Foods, Kabob Mix, Margaret's Soul Food, Pakos Fresh Mex, The Roaming Coyote, Urban Poutine

Dessert Truck Options: Anita's Frozen Cotton Candy or sweetFrog

We look forward to seeing which food truck receives the most votes!

We love our volunteers! And we need more of you. We are looking for volunteers to serve on the Board, join upcoming Mason District Council and Fairfax Federation meetings, and volunteer for our various social committees and upcoming events. **Please email hillbrooktalloaks@gmail.com to learn more about how you can help.**



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- Neighborhood Group Home
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- Meet a Local Mask Maker
- 2020 Glass Recycling, Census & Election Information

KNOW THY (NEW!) NEIGHBOR: MEET THE MOSELYS



Photo courtesy of Jacque Chevalier Mosely

Over the last four months the Welcome Committee has been busy **welcoming 15 new neighbors** throughout the Hillbrook and Tall Oaks community! With more new neighbors moving in these last few weeks of summer, we thought we would introduce you to some of our newest arrivals - and their newest arrival, too.

Who's in your household? Jacque, Ben and Fletcher (6 months)

How long have you lived in Hillbrook-Tall Oaks? Since late July

Where are you originally from? Jacque grew up in the Winterset neighborhood just a couple of miles west in Annandale, and went to W.T. Woodson High School. Ben is from Donalsonville, Georgia, a small town in the very southwestern corner of the state.

Any interesting memories from living here? A storm during our first week living here knocked a tree limb onto Jacque's car, causing not a small amount of damage. No one was hurt, and we had a good laugh... the abundance of mature trees is one of the reasons we fell in love with the house and neighborhood.

What's your favorite part about living here? Everyone has been so friendly and welcoming. We're excited for Fletch to grow up here and make friends in the neighborhood.

What advice do you have for fellow residents? Be kind to one another and VOTE in November (or early)!

New to the neighborhood? Need to update your contact info?

Please email hillbrooktalloaks@gmail.com to send your contact information so we can include you in communications and the upcoming Neighborhood Directory.

NEW STORM DRAIN LABELING A SUCCESS

Only rain in our neighborhood drains, thanks to the efforts of the Hillbrook-Tall Oaks Civic Association Drain Labeling Expeditionary Force (HTOCADLEF) this summer.

You may have noticed the new labels around the neighborhood. A cadre of volunteers clad in orange reflective vests and handling very sticky glue (really, don't test just how sticky it is!) replaced or labeled more than 60 stormwater drains in the neighborhood.

These labels have a shad fish to remind us that what goes in the drains goes directly to our local streams, then to the Potomac River and then on to the Chesapeake Bay.



Photos courtesy of Lauren Erera

The water in a storm drain does not go to a treatment plant, so nothing is removed from the water. That means pet waste, yard debris, fertilizer, motor oil, pesticides and trash all have the potential to flow into our streams and the Chesapeake Bay.



Pollution that enters our water through the storm drains is called non-point source pollution because it comes from all our homes and communities - many diffuse sources, not a single "point" source. Non-point source pollution is the leading cause of water quality deterioration in the Chesapeake Bay.

For this project, we partnered with the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, which provided training, supplies and support. Check out the website for lots of interesting information: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation/>.

Thanks to all of our volunteers, including Mary Jane Balicki, who organized the event, as well as John Sears and his son Henry, Al Sample and his daughter Emily, Suzanne Erera and her children Walter and Nina Christian (*shown above left*), and Lauren Erera and her stepdaughter Hannah Henderson.

Questions?

Need to Pay Your Annual \$25 Dues?

Want to Get Involved?

HTOCA

PO Box 1112
Annandale, VA

22003-9112

Email:

hillbrooktal-loaks@gmail.com

Visit our website:

www.HTOCA22003.org

UPDATED HTOCA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Events and dates are **subject to change pending updates to Virginia's covid-19 protocols**. Please check your email for updates as dates get closer.

- **AUGUST FOOD TRUCKS:** Saturday, August 29 - 4:30-7:30p in the Poe Middle School parking lot (7000 Cindy Lane)
- **SEPTEMBER FOOD TRUCKS:** Saturday, September 26
- **NATIONAL NIGHT OUT:** Tuesday, October 6.

LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE STREET LIGHTS INSTALLED

Does your street seem a little brighter at night lately? It should. In the past two months Fairfax County had Dominion Energy, Inc., the provider of electricity to Hillbrook-Tall Oaks, replace all of the existing streetlights (either Mercury-Vapor or High-Pressure Sodium) with light-emitting diode (LED) bulb units. The county made the switch to the lower power-consuming LED street lighting to reduce streetlighting costs.

Fairfax County chose to install LED bulbs that have a lumen output that is approximately 30 percent greater than the bulbs they replace. In addition, these bulbs do not have diffusers that restrict the range of lighting flare generated by the bulbs. Consequently, many residences will see deeper light penetration in their yards, an outcome that some people may like, and others may not like. For houses with bedrooms that front on a street, the level of darkness in the bedroom may be reduced due to the increased lumen output and lack of lighting flare control.

So what can be done if you find your yard and bedroom to be too bright? There is a solution to confine the LED flare and thereby reduce the amount of light hitting your property a residence. Upon request, Dominion Energy contractors can install at no charge to residents a finned bracket on the streetlight that can steer light away from your yard. The device seems fairly effective at holding light to the street and limiting leakage into yards.

As for the impact of LED streetlighting on wildlife on Hillbrook-Tall Oaks, it is uncertain. Some scientific literature suggests that some species of birds, bats, turtles, and other wildlife could be affected.

Fugitive light-controlling brackets for lighting units are installed on a pole-by-pole basis. Go to the power pole(s) in your yard or across the street from your yard where you want light dispersion limited – and copy the 9-character (letters and numbers) identification code on each pole (*see photo below for an example*). Then e-mail Leo Ratchford of Fairfax County Department of Public Works at leo.ratchford@fairfaxcounty.gov or call him at 703-324-2367. Alternatively, a request can be made through Dominion Energy's customer service office at cs@domenergy.com.



Photo courtesy of Mark Crawford

DIRECTORY UPDATE COMING SOON, CALL FOR ADS

We plan to publish an updated version of the Neighborhood Directory sometime this year. Thanks to everyone for providing your latest, greatest information for the directory - including our many new neighbors!

if you have updates to share or would like to advertise your business in this year's directory, please email hillbrooktalloaks@gmail.com.

SUMMER SCAVENGER HUNTS A SUCCESS

In the ongoing quest to keep the kiddos entertained during quarantine, Board member **Alisha Martinez**, with help from Board member **Terry Boyd**, came up with an ingenious plan: Let's get the kids out to walk around our beautiful neighborhood and find items neighbors have hidden for them.



Photo courtesy of Alisha Martinez

We hosted two successful scavenger hunts in the neighborhood in late spring/early summer. Several children participated, including 13-year-old Cadence Ayers (see photo right) and Sofia (18) and Isabella (4) Martinez (see photo left).

Children of all ages had a chance to participate in the events, which were held throughout April and May.

Every participating child received a fun prize package care of the HTOCA Board of Directors.



Photo courtesy of Ellen Ayers

Kudos to all the children who participated in the fun!

WOMEN'S WELLNESS HITS 100 WORKOUTS

Alisha Martinez has hosted more than 100 virtual workouts for the women in the Hillbrook-Tall Oaks neighborhood since March. Due to professional commitments, virtual classes will discontinue but we will meet on Saturday mornings until October 31. We invite neighbors to join any Saturday morning at 8:30 a.m. for a 30-minute cardio or yoga workout at the basketball courts behind Poe Middle School.

We are following all social distancing protocols and ask that you bring a yoga mat, water bottle, and mask. In the case of inclement weather, we will offer the class virtually.

For more information, please visit the Hillbrook-Tall Oaks Community Wellness Groups' website at <https://sites.google.com/view/hillbrook-talloaks> or reach out to Alisha Martinez (alishakmartinez@gmail.com or 617-290-0728). We hope to see you soon!

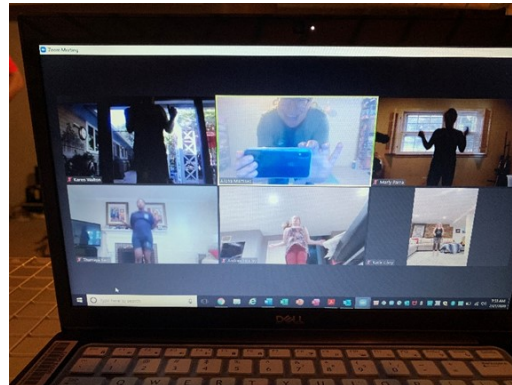


Photo courtesy of Alisha Martinez

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NEW GROUP HOME SERVES TROUBLED YOUTHS

A group home for youths opened in early August at 4700 Monterey Drive. The Discovery Mood and Anxiety Programs center provides mental health, substance use, and eating disorder treatments for youths ages 11-17. Staff are present 24/7 but do not live there. The Annandale center is licensed for up to eight residents, says Sandra Sellani, spokesperson for [Discovery Behavioral Health Inc.](#), a healthcare company that operates more than 100 treatment centers nationwide. According to Sellani, a home-like setting “creates an environment that is conducive to recovery and integration back into family life.”

Discovery also operates a residential treatment facility in Fairfax Station and is opening a new one in Fairfax. The facilities specialize in “evidence-based treatment, such as dialectical behavior therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, acceptance commitment therapy, and other modalities to create a comprehensive, personalized treatment plan for each patient,” says Amy Brown, president of Discovery’s Mental Health Division. The program also includes experiential activities, such as creative art expression, music, and meditation. Patients have a multidisciplinary treatment team that provides medication management and education by a board-certified psychiatrist, individual therapy, family therapy, and psycho-education groups.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the nation to experience an unprecedented level of stress and anxiety about the health of ourselves and our loved ones,” says Discovery Behavioral Health President John Peloquin. “Those already suffering from mental illness are facing even greater challenges. This is why we believe it is imperative to open our new mental health treatment centers, providing greater access to care for all of us enduring the current national health emergency.”

Excerpted from the Annandale Blogspot. <https://annandaleva.blogspot.com/2020/08/new-group-home-in-annandale-provides.html>



Recent HTOCA Virtual Board meeting. Missing: Mark Crawford

It's annual HTOCA Board elections time, and we are looking for a few more folks to join us! Along with planning and running the neighborhood social events, Women’s Wellness and Welcome Committees, we also advocate on the neighborhood’s behalf on topics of interest within Mason District Council and the larger Fairfax County Federation, where we receive two votes.

The Board has been meeting virtually, as you can see above, typically on the third Tuesday of each month. Our meetings are open to any and all who want to join.

If you are interested in putting your name on the ballot, please let us know before the end of August by emailing hillbrooktalloaks@gmail.com. Keep an eye out for the annual ballot, which we will email all residents sometime in early September since we will not be hosting the Neighborhood Block Party this year.

BINGO NIGHT: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are actively seeking volunteers to help with a **Virtual Family Bingo Night** the HTOCA Board will host sometime this fall/winter. If you are interested in helping set up the Bingo Night and/or facilitate the game, please reach out to hillbrooktal-loaks@gmail.com.

ANNANDALE FIRE DEPARTMENT DONATION

HTOCA recently donated \$100 to the Annandale Volunteer Fire Department (AVFD) to support its annual fundraiser. We thought it would be a neighborly gesture to support the AVFD and thank them for their service and always showing up when needed, for both fire and medical emergencies.

The AVFD was founded in 1940 by civic-minded citizens of Annandale, one of 12 volunteer fire departments in the county. Their professionalism and kindness are greatly appreciated by the residents of Hillbrook-Tall Oaks. Our wish is to see less of them in the coming year, but only because we hope to have fewer fire and health emergencies. Knowing that they are there if needed is a great comfort to us all.

And thanks too for showing up at our annual Block Party - the fire truck is always a hit with the kids, young and old.

2020 ELECTIONS INFORMATION

For official, definitive information on how to vote here in Virginia and to ensure that you understand your options to be able to vote, please go to:

www.elections.virginia.gov

The Department of Elections promotes and supports accurate, fair, open and secure elections for the citizens of the Commonwealth. The website provides information on mail-in voting, early voting, registering and becoming an Officer of Election, among other information.

You can also access your Virginia voter record to update your registration, apply to vote absentee and view your polling place, election district, absentee ballot status and voting history.

Democracy depends on each of us doing our part, so vote.

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COUNTY'S PROPOSED REVISED LAND USE ZONING ORDINANCES (zMOD) RAISING CONCERNS

Since 2017, Fairfax County has been updating and modernizing its land use zoning ordinances. The intent is to make them more understandable and current. After conducting public input meetings, the proposed new land use zoning codes are ready for review by county land use planning committee and the Board of Supervisors, with public hearings to be scheduled. The schedule set a goal of this winter for completion and adoption.

One issue being addressed is a new approval process for giving homeowners the ability to add **accessory dwelling units (ADUs)** within their home. Currently, the process allows for an ADU that would include two bedrooms and a kitchen area for up to two elderly persons aged 55 and above, or persons with disabilities of any age. If a property is two or more acres, such units can be constructed as a separate structure on the property. In the past, these proposed additions required a public hearing and a special permitting approval to give neighborhoods an opportunity for input.

The proposed new ordinance addressing ADUs within a current home would make this an administrative permitting process without a public hearing process, while also eliminating the age or disability use qualifications. The intent is to create more affordable housing opportunities in Fairfax County. The public hearing and permitting requirement remain for detached ADUs.

This proposed new ADU process could have significant impacts on the character of single family neighborhoods. Some fear that it could create bordering house intrusions in single family neighborhoods. **The Mason District Council homeowners' association, which includes HTOCA, is opposing these proposed changes.** The council's letter to MDC members contains more details on this subject, which we can forward to any interested neighbors. You also may follow this and other zMod revisions on the county website. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-development/zmod>.

The HTOCA board is monitoring these developments and may be engaging the community more about these proposed changes.

COMMUNITY COURTESY: LET'S SPREAD IT

Unfortunately we have heard from several concerned neighbors these last few months regarding vandalism of yard signs as well as the ongoing issues with not picking up after dogs during walks. As a reminder, please:

- Pick up after your pets during walks
- Respect neighbors' yard signage and property
- Don't vandalize street or HTOCA signs

We're all in this together, folks - please help us spread the word - and common courtesy.

NEIGHBOR HAS MADE 550 FACE MASKS

Carol Schuttinga, who lives at 5020 Dodson Drive, has been busy making home-made masks that she makes available to neighbors. We thanked her for her efforts and asked what inspired her. Here's what Carol had to say:

"It's been my pleasure to be able to make masks and have them available to people who need them. It's actually been a blessing to have something to help fill my time in these last few unusual months.

"I have been sewing since my early teens. For about 25 years, I had a small craft business making scarves until I retired four years ago. Retirement left me with a good supply of elastic, which I had used in my scarves. And like most seamstresses, my fabric drawer was full.

"This left me well-prepared to sew masks, the first 50 in response to a request on NextDoor, which also gave me the instructions on how to make them. Another request came from a friend working in healthcare at a retirement community. Another request came from a business where masks were required and almost impossible to acquire. I realized that this was definitely a need!"

"Since then, I've given away masks to my family, my church family and the neighborhood. **I've made a total of 550 to date.**"

GLASS RECYCLING UPDATES

As most of you may know, Fairfax County is no longer accepting glass as part of curbside recycling pickup. **Options are to throw away glass in the trash, or collect and deliver it to glass recycling bins within the county.** The closest location is at the Mason District Government Center at 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale.

Entrepreneurs have provided a third option. Listed below is a link to a business offering to collect and deliver your glass monthly to the county glass recycling bins: <https://purplepilotprogram.wixsite.com/website>.

2020 CENSUS: WILL YOU BE COUNTED?

The U.S. Constitution requires that each decade we take a count, or a census, of America's population. For each resident who does not respond to the census, Fairfax County could lose \$12,000 in potential funding over the course of a decade. This money goes to our hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads, and other resources based on census data.!

For information on how to complete the census by phone, mail or online, go to: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/census>.

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