



February 2018

President's Report

THE UTILITIES SERVING HALLCREST

Last year's Annual Meeting on November 2 focused on five major utilities that serve our community: Dominion Energy (electric), Fairfax Water, Washington Gas, and the Sewer and Stormwater divisions of Fairfax County Public Works Department. The point was to hear their maintenance plans in light of the fact that Hallcrest is a 45-year-old community concerned about aging pipes, cables, and connections.

The electric, water and gas companies sent executives to make presentations about their plans and answer residents' questions. Our Delegate to the General Assembly, Rip Sullivan, couldn't come, so his legislative aide, Kate Petersen, gave a talk about issues the General Assembly deals with affecting our community. Rip had alerted us to new legislation requiring the licensing of home inspectors, and our inclusion in the resulting regulations and hearings that formally implemented this provision.

Julie Wagoner, an operations specialist with Dominion Energy in charge of reliability and planning for upgrading existing facilities, has been with the company for nearly 30 years. Julie also introduced a technician, Randy Fansler, to whom Hallcrest presented an Appreciation Ward for his on-site work in replacing and upgrading our streetlights. A couple of years ago, the Association had negotiated an upgrading of the major cables and connectors in Hallcrest involving a 3 or 4-year plan, which is about half completed and continuing.

Susan Miller, Fairfax Water's public affairs officer and former chemist in the water quality laboratory, explained their program for repairing and maintaining the water system since they took over from the city of Falls Church several years ago. A year ago, the water company responded immediately to two main breaks that took a full day to repair and which involved the repaving of a significant section of Hallcrest Drive.

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Reminders:

*Return all trash containers
to yards after pick up.*

*Blue recycling bins should not
be left on the front stoop.*

*Seek AC approval before
any changes to home's
outside appearance.*

*Leave outside lights on
(front & rear) on at night
for security.*

Pick up after your dog.

Get to know your neighbors.

THANKS!

. . . continued from p. 1

Huey Battle, Regional Manager in charge of Community Involvement for Washington Gas, explained the company's vigilance and response plan for maintenance of their delivery system. About a year ago, for instance, Washington Gas sent a contractor to install some sophisticated chemical plates in four locations on our streets designed to retard corrosion on their mains.



Randy Fansler receives his Appreciation Award.

Previously, I had conversations with both the County sewer and stormwater divisions about their maintenance efforts and plans. The sewer technicians pointed out that they run TV cameras through their mains at least once a year (and more often if problems are suspected). They also indicated that one of the mains in Hallcrest is being upgraded currently, with others planned for similar treatment. The stormwater people always respond quickly to any problems that arise. Board members have retrieved and helped with skateboards and other lost toys that have mistakenly gone into some of the drain openings. Residents have often helped clearing the drain openings of snow and ice.



Armando Boylates receives his Appreciation Award.

All utility representatives brought informative literature complete with contact numbers and names of those who handle specific problems. The response of attendees was most positive and appreciative for maintenance details, much of which was also contained in Hallcrest's 2017 Annual Report which had been delivered to residents and owners prior to the Annual Meeting.

We presented an Appreciation Award to Davey Tree's Armando Boylates who had headed the team that planted a number of new and colorful beds of knockout roses, butterfly bushes and other flora to enhance our common areas. Armando brought his wife and young son with him, and a number of Davey supervisors.

Our meeting included the reelection of six of our seven-member Board of Directors, plus the introduction of new member, Catherine Lincoln who will be in charge of the Architectural Control. Catherine is a long-time resident of Hallcrest, whose late husband, Bob Lincoln, served as vice president for a number of years. We also recognized the efforts of Board-member Ben East, who is moving on in his role with the State Department.

We are most fortunate to have ready, willing and able owners who unselfishly serve on our Board and significantly contribute to the enhancement of this community.

I also reported the establishment of a Long-Range Planning Committee, which is drafting a report on specific projects and ideas for future implementation. If any residents have any suggestions for such things, please send them to me at: ML.CT2@verizon.net.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clark Taylor".

***** **REMINDERS** *****

This is a reminder that old pumpkins on the front porch are garbage and cannot go on the community brush pile. They must go into the household trash for pick-up. The squirrels will have a field day eating them on the front porch.

Residents should also be sure and disconnect their hoses so, when freezing temperatures come, the trapped water won't crack their pipes or outside faucets.

HELP NEEDED!

If you have an idea for an interesting, useful or unique subject that other residents might enjoy and that you have pertinent expertise about, let Clark know and it will be considered for inclusion in a newsletter or our Annual Report. Also, we are always looking for suggestions about ways the Association might consider to enhance the community or improve services. That's how we got 15 compost bins and 14 beds of knock-out roses.

COMMUNITY EVENTS IN 2018

One of the many things that distinguishes Hallcrest Heights from other area communities is the number of events that delight residents. This year, planning is underway for the ever-popular **Dumpster Day**, when two dumpsters are placed at each end of the community; **Volunteer Day** when about 20 residents spend 2 hours on a Saturday painting, picking up branches, spreading wood chips along our perimeter path and pulling vines off trees; the **International Cookout**, when our residents from other countries prepare special snacks for hungry neighbors; and especially the **Remodeling Open House Tour** so Hallcrestians can see what several neighbors have done with projects to enhance their interiors. Last year, the six homes that displayed such wonderment caused other neighbors to decide to go and do likewise.

If you have undertaken such a remodeling project, let Clark know you would like to be included in this 2-hour Sunday display time, usually in late June or July.

Other events are the visit of Santa Claus, the Annual Meeting and possibly a free drop-by of a number of experts on landscaping for special advice.

More details on dates, times and specifics later.

THE “HAPPY PLAYGROUND” OPENS!



Named for the Matskos' beloved dog, Happy, who was noted for his love of small children, the long-planned small playground was sited and constructed in a hectic week in October, much to the delight of the growing number of children in Hallcrest. After reviewing three different bid proposals, The Board chose Game Time, a firm which has built a number of playgrounds for communities and churches in the area.

Thanks to the reducing price of oil, Hallcrest had the funds, partially designated for the re-paving of our streets, to provide for this addition to our community. Sited in a convenient area adjoining Dibner Park, the playground includes slides, climbing features, and a colorful steel structure that are altogether low maintenance, happy enhancements that add value to Hallcrest and delight children age, 5 to 12.

The new playground, designed for any additions deemed feasible on or adjoining the nearly 1000 square foot lot, is supported by sturdy poles set in concrete, and surrounded by a 12 inch-deep comfort base of small wood chips. The playground is managed by Hallcrest's Playgound Committee and has posted rules requiring adult supervision and other standard requirements, such as no dogs, only dawn to dusk use, etc.

TWO VERY EXPERIENCED MEN AND A BOBCCAT MADE IT HAPPEN



Once the playground equipment pieces were delivered, it only took a week to install the playground.

Step 1 was to cut and level the 1,000 square feet of the site adjoining Dibner Park.

Step 2 was to position the supporting poles and set them in concrete.

Step 3 was to get delivery of an Everest sized mountain of small cut wood chips. These provided a 12-inch deep cushioned base once the drainage strips and tarpaulin covered the bare ground.

Step 4 was to try and get some neighborhood children to christen the structure. That was not a hard job as their faces show. *(Photo on previous page!)*

Lastly, two rules signs completed the legal requirements.



BOY, DO WE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS!

The holiday season always arrives with flashing lights, whooping horns and sirens here in Hallcrest. All that announces the arrival of Santa perched atop McLean's antique fire engine, as always piloted by our friend Mike Paris. Some 30 kids (a few in their 50's) got candy canes and a "Ho, Ho, Ho" from Santa as he was driven around the community.

Next was the Davey-contributed tree on the Eldorado Oval. Shown here, are five helpers who decorated the tree, assisted by Barbara Tyler and handyman Dan Fleig (who made sure the tree was level and upright).



Santa arrives - driven by Mike Paris on the antique McLean fire engine.



Decorating the tree on the Eldorado Oval.

PLEASE SECURE YOUR RECYCLING

This is the time of year when we experience unusually high winds. When that happens on a Monday, the contents of your recycling bin get blown all over the neighborhood. Please bag up the small items and put the bag in your recycling bin so this does not happen. McLean Trash usually picks this stuff up if it's in the immediate area, but a lot of it gets scattered making Hallcrest look very unsightly. Thanks for your help.

HANDYMAN JOBS – NOW IS THE TIME TO PLAN

Board members often get calls from residents asking what contractors can do this or that task. Even if it's not a major remodel, which this firm also does, Home Equity Builders has a multi-talented worker by the name of Patrick Mullen who also does those handyman tasks which usually confound residents.

I used this firm to totally remodel our master bathroom; but I also keep a list of nagging chores so when the page gets filled up, I call Patrick and he comes and spends a full or half day doing it all – from caulking, to painting, to stop leaking faucets, to replacing cabinet hinges, to finding the right part for something, or just to advise what to do. Patrick and his team have done many major and small jobs here in Hallcrest and I recommend them highly. They are not the cheapest, but they sure are the best. This fall, I got the following email from HEB, so I repeat it below.

Home Equity Builders is an award winning design/build remodeling firm, but we also have a Handyman division that can help you get over the hump with those nagging chores that never seem to get DONE.

Due to Pat's ever present ability to finish jobs early or on time, we have openings in our schedule.

Now is the time to prepare for autumn winds and winter conditions!

Things you might not necessarily think of

- snake dryer vent and reconnect pipe
- hang pictures and mirrors
- replace door knob and/or deadbolt-
- put away seasonal furniture
- replace bathroom exhaust fan
- drywall repair
- painting (whole room to touch up work)

Stairs

- remove spindle blocking light switches
- re-secure railing newel post
- re-secure railings

Cabinetry

- re-secure laundry room cabinets
- replace kitchen cabinet hinges
- re-secure cabinet drawer guide
- adjust cabinet height & re-anchor counter top to fit new appliances

Electrical

- replace light fixture
- change light bulbs
- install GFI outlet
- move electrical box and reinstall cover plates
- rewire outlets and connect ground wires
- install under-counter lights
- install wall lights/sconces
- Repair attic fan

Plumbing

- clean filter on washing machine
- adjust tub/shower diverter
- reattach faucet handle in kitchen
- replace kitchen faucet and soap pump
- install faucet and pop up drains in vanity sink
- install insta-hot and change water filters

In the Bathroom

- adjust and reinstall shower doors
- clean screen on shower head;
- tighten toilet bolts and caulk base molding in children's bathroom
- caulk tubs
- grout tile
- repair leak damage

Outdoors

- repair rotten wood
- reinstall window shutter
- unstick painted shut windows
- repair soffit
- replace downspout and anchor straps
- install flashing
- caulk windows & doors
- repair/replace railings, supports, steps

What can Home Equity Builders do for YOU?

Call 703-759-2530 or email office@hebinc.com with your list of tasks.

Sharon Rainey
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www.hallcrestheights.org

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**The next meeting of the Board will be on
Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 7:30 at 7327 Eldorado Street**

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❖ *Hallcrest Herald* ❖

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