



WORDS FROM THE RIDGE

A Newsletter for the Residents of the Forest Ridge Community



FALL 2021

FRHOA PO Box 493, Sterling, VA 20167-0493

E-mail: info@forest-ridge.org

Web: www.forest-ridge.org

The Forest Ridge Homeowners Annual Meeting will be held October 7, 2021, at 7:30pm at the Eastern Loudoun County Sheriff's Station Conference Room

It is important that your vote be represented at the Annual Meeting. There must be a quorum number of 55 votes for the meeting to meet legal requirements. If you cannot attend, please complete the proxy form on page 3 in this newsletter and either mail it in or give it to a board member.

Notes from HOA President Fred Stewart

Thank You for Your Support

On behalf of the Forest Ridge Homeowners Association Board of Directors, thanks to all of our homeowners for their continued support throughout the year. Your suggestions and comments have been key in determining our direction and priorities. We look forward to working together to continue to make Forest Ridge an even better place to live, to maintain and *improve* property values and to distinguish our physical community from others. Thanks again for your continued support.

FRHOA Improvements to Better Serve Our Homeowners

The Board has been looking for ways to improve our services and to save money. Our FRHOA annual dues are a good value at \$135 per year. Most HOAs have a fee in excess of \$100 per month. Your Board is constantly looking for ways to manage it's financial resources and better serve the Forest Ridge community at the same time. This electronic version of our spring newsletter is an example. Please feel free to provide feedback Re: this electronic media.

If you are not sure if we have your email address, please send it along with your name (owners name) to info@forest-ridge.org. In addition to the emailing, the newsletter will be posted on our website accessible to everyone www.forest-ridge.org.

As of now our FRHOA Fall Newsletter will continue to be hardcopy mailed to each homeowners' address via the U.S. postal system to ensure distribution of our annual election and proxy information.

Signage

Election season is so long past that all campaign-related signage should be gone. Our FRHOA Covenants (written in the late 1970s) allow homeowners to display political signs in their yards 60 days before an election and remove them no later than 10 days after the date of any federal, state, or local election.

Sheds

The FRHOA does not allow detached sheds. Our Covenants only allow for one structure on each lot. That structure is a single-family home. Occasionally a homeowner will request approval for installation of a detached shed. Our covenants would need to be modified to allow them. However, in order to modify our covenants, we must have signatures from 75 percent of all homeowners. Seventy five percent of our 550 homeowners is 413. The signatures must be from homeowners, not tenants. Many factors would need to be considered, including but not limited to: size; architecture; structure composition; electric power, placement on lot, Fairfax and Loudoun County regs, etc. In many ways not having backyard sheds likely makes for a much more attractive community.

Continued on next page

Become Involved in Your HOA

The FRHOA is composed of volunteers. We are always looking for interested homeowners to volunteer to help. A good way to become involved is to attend the monthly FRHOA Board meetings which are held the first Thursday of each month except for July. These meetings are held at 7:30 PM in the Eastern Loudoun County Sheriff's office 46620 E. Frederick Drive, Sterling, VA. Currently we are using ZOOM to conduct our meetings in addition to physical presence. The Board has invested in some electronic equipment to improve the quality of our ZOOM experience.

Information on the FRHOA can be accessed anytime by going to our website at www.forest-ridge.org. On our website you can find the minutes of recent meetings, our By-laws, our recent newsletters, a listing of the Board of Directors, all of our important documents, our Architectural Control Committee (ACC) Regulations and our ACC Architectural Change Form. This form is required to be filled out and submitted before you make any changes to the exterior of your home including decks, driveways, fences, shingles, shutters, siding and swimming pools. Come join us. We always welcome additional volunteers. You can make a difference in your community.

Respectfully, Fred Stewart, President FRHOA



Sterling Fest 2021!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2021 AT 11 AM EDT – 5 PM EDT
Free • 150 Enterprise St, Sterling, VA 20164
www.sterlingfoundation.org/sterlingfest/



Cox Farms
CENTREVILLE, VA

Fall Festival & Corn Maze
Sept 25-Nov 7, 2021
coxfarms.com/fall-festival/



Pumpkin Village
AT LEESBURG ANIMAL PARK

September 18-November 2, 2021
<https://www.pumpkinfestleesburg.com/>



Historic Encounters Days

Thursday, September 16 2021
Friday, October 29, 2021
Thursday, November 16, 2021
10:00 am - 2:00 pm
at the Loudoun Heritage Farm
Museum
21668 Heritage Farm Lane, Sterling, VA 20164



Notice of the Forest Ridge Homeowners' Annual Members Meeting

The Forest Ridge Homeowners Association will hold its Annual Members meeting at 7:30 PM on Thursday, October 7, 2021 at the Eastern Loudoun County Sheriff's Station Conference Room at 46620 E Frederick Drive, Sterling, VA.

To be entitled to participate, the lot owner of record must have paid all annual assessments through Year 2021 in full by September 30, 2021, including any penalties or legal fees, if incurred. One vote per lot is allowed.

Three members of the nine-member board are elected each year at the Annual Members Meeting. It is imperative that we have enough members or proxies at the meeting, so please mail in your proxies or provide them to a board member directly if you are unable to attend.

Forest Ridge Homeowners' Association PROXY FORM

Use this FRHOA Homeowners' Association Proxy document if you want to vote at this homeowners' meeting but cannot physically be there.

This Proxy is valid for attendance and voting at the Forest Ridge Homeowners Association Annual Members Meeting to be held October 7, 2021 or at any adjournment thereof, for the election of Directors and any other business which may properly come before the Meeting.

One homeowner per lot may vote on Association business. Any homeowner wishing to vote by proxy must complete this form. The proxy may be mailed to the Association (FRHOA, PO Box 493, Sterling, VA 20164-0493), given to a neighbor who will attend, or given to any current Board Member any time prior to the Annual Meeting on October 7, 2021.

If this form is signed but no proxy is selected, the Forest Ridge Board of Directors President will be the default proxy.

Your (Homeowner) Name (Print): _____

Your Address: _____ Lot Number: _____

Your Signature: _____ Date: _____

The signed member appoints (Check only one---more than one invalidates the Proxy)

FRHOA Board Members as of September 2021:

- Fred Stewart
- Garvin Davenport
- Glenn Heselton
- Marjorie Heselton
- Wesley Hall
- Marion Kirk
- Bruce Kirk

Architectural Control Committee (ACC)

Spring and summer have in past years been busy times for the HOA's Architectural Control Committee (ACC) members. The summer 2021 saw a decrease in the number of ACC change requests by homeowners updating and improving their properties and in the number of requests for resale inspections for homes going on the market.

Approved Change Requests: The ACC approved 24 Change Requests between May and early August as compared to 28 during the previous period in 2020. The projects included several new or replacement picket, split rail, and paddock style fences, deck replacements, replacement front doors, new shutters, siding, window replacements, and new roofs.



Resale Inspections: The ACC completed 10 required resale inspections this summer compare to 14 during the summer of 2020. While many of the properties inspected this year were in good conditions with few to no violations, several properties had such violations as mildewed siding and decks, cracked asphalt driveways, and storage containers located in backyards rather than on or under decks as required.

Violations: The HOA, after being notified by Forest Ridge residents of possible violations at properties within the neighborhood, confirmed violations at 6 properties this summer. The HOA notified the owners of the need to correct the violation(s). Property owners were notified of trash cans left out in the front of the houses beyond rubbish collection days, winter holiday lights not taken down, unapproved deck alterations, furniture and debris left on the front yard and curb, and window air conditioners installed in the front windows of homes.

ACC Change Requests Process: The HOA Covenants allow 30 days to review a Change Request and that no changes are allowed until approval is given by the HOA/ACC. In most cases this year, the ACC approved requests within two weeks from the time the ACC began the review of the change request. To speed the review process, applications must include all details of the changes on the HOA's change request form and any supporting documents. The ACC will not initiate a review of proposed changes that lack the necessary details and supporting documents. The ACC will only review ACC Change Requests and supporting documents in PDF format submitted to the ACC email box: ACC@forest-ridge.org or a hard copy mailed to the Forest Ridge HOA PO Box 493, Sterling, VA 20167-0493. **Electronic submissions that include the homeowner's email and are in PDF format speed the review process, particularly in cases when the ACC needs to contact homeowners for needed clarification or additional details.**



Fall and Winter Reminders:

- The early summer rains and the summer heat and humidity always lead to the buildup of algae/mildew on siding, particularly on the house sides that have little to no exposure to the sun. The HOA reminds owners to clean off the algae to keep the property and neighborhood looking nice and to avoid receiving violation letters later in the fall.
- The HOA reminds owners that trash and recycling bins on non-collection days are required to be stored on the back or the sides of houses so the cans are not visible from the street.
- With fall around the corner, the HOA is reminding property owners not to blow leaves into the streets as the leaves will collect and potentially clog the storm water drains throughout the neighborhood.
- All lawn waste should be disposed of properly and not dumped on the common areas. Leaves, yard waste, and holiday trees discarded in the common is a violation of the ACC guidelines.
- The HOA provides an exception to the Covenants rules barring signage by allowing display of political signs no larger than 2x2 feet 60 days prior and 10 days after the November election day.
- Holiday/Seasonal lights can go up 45 days before the holiday and must be taken down 30 after the holiday.

Trees and Common Areas

This year marked the return of the 17-year Cicadas.



Wasn't that incredible! In their efforts to procreate they drilled into the soft bark of small limbs to lay their eggs. The result is dead limb ends that break off and litter our lawns. They seemed to have particularly liked oaks. The trees that have been attacked may appear to be dead, but are likely to regain their health in a year or two. A word of caution; those little limb ends are lousy with oak mites and picking them up is an invitation for them to get a bite out of you.

We seem to be trending down in the number of trees that we cut each year. We cut just over 100 trees in 2018, dropped to 71 in 2019 and only cut 62 last year. We have cut or plan to cut 40 trees so far this year. Barring a bad storm, it looks like this year is going to end up like one of the last two. Our average cost to cut down and cut into blocks each tree is a reasonable \$285. It was \$363 last year and \$311 in 2019.

When we cut a tree down, it is our normal procedure to cut it up into lengths that might fit in your fireplace or fire pit. Homeowners are encouraged to take the wood. You will need to split most of the blocks and haul them home, though. Just be careful of the poison ivy.

For those neighbors new to our neighborhood, and thinking about getting some of the wood, our Homeowner's Association has some rules in place relating to the common areas, that protect our shared spaces from human harm and help maintain our home values. Those rules are:

- Homeowners are not permitted to cut, prune, or otherwise clear trees, shrubs, or other vegetation from common grounds or neighboring properties to clear site lines, or to cause same.
- Common grounds are for the enjoyment of the entire FRHOA community and all users are required to clean up after activities.
- No motorized vehicles are allowed on common grounds.
- No dumping of yard waste or trash is allowed on common grounds.
- No cutting or removal or planting of bushes, shrubbery, or trees is allowed on common grounds

With the onset of Fall, homeowners will have the task of removing leaves. Please remember that it is a violation of our HOA Regulations to move your leaves and yard debris into the common area.

Homeowners are generally the first to notice dead or dangerous trees near their home so we ask that you notify us when you see one. The FRHOA will then determine if the tree needs to be cut down for safety purposes. Note that we sometimes leave dead trees standing if they don't pose a danger to life or property. After all, most natural forests have a combination of live and dead standing trees and dead trees on the ground. It doesn't take long after trees are cut for decay to start on trees in contact with the ground, so the sooner the wood is picked up the better.

If you see a dead or dangerous tree in the common area near your home or you are interested in getting some firewood, please let the HOA know. Contact the Trees and Common Area Chairman at: trees@forest-ridge.org or commonarea@forest-ridge.org

And please, if you are in the common area or on the roads and paths in our neighborhood, help us all out by picking up any trash that you find. Thanks in advance!



