Parkfairfax FORUM

The Official Newsletter of the Parkfairfax Unit Owners Association www.Parkfairfax.org

October 2024 Volume 46. Issue 10

Contractor Caution

By Community Association Management

Finding a contractor who will perform quality work at a reasonable price can be a daunting task. It's always a good idea to ask for and check references and to contact the Better Business Bureau and your state licensing bureau to see if there are complaints against a prospective contractor. In addition, the following warning signs can alert you to unscrupulous, disorganized, inexperienced or financially troubled contractors who may deliver broken promises, bad work and blown budgets rather than professional results.

First Impressions: In any business, first impressions are important. How a contractor presents himself and maintains his truck, tools and equipment are good indicators of how well he'll take care of you and your job. He should look neat and professional, and his vehicles and equipment should be clean and in good repair.

Beware Low Bids: Price is always an important consideration when selecting a contractor, but don't let a low price or a special deal blind you to a potential problem—both can be signs that you should be wary. A bid far lower than others may indicate the contractor isn't experienced enough to know the actual cost of the job or he never intends to finish the work. Disreputable contractors may bid low to secure a contract and then tack on extra charges as the job progresses.

Take Your Time: If you are pressured during the bidding process by tactics such as "limited-time offers," look for a different contractor. Hiring a contractor is not a split-second decision; for this reason, many states give homeowners three days to cancel a home improvement contract—without obligation—after signing it. A prospective contractor should take his time as well, carefully reviewing the specifications of your job before submitting his bid. If he doesn't take notes and measurements and make material and labor calculations, or if he simply names a price based on a similar job, he may not be detail-oriented or thorough enough to do a good job.

Beware Materials Discount: A prospective contractor may offer you a discount, hoping to earn your future business following a job well done, but be wary if a contractor offers materials at a



discounted rate. Small contractors rarely buy materials in the high volumes necessary to yield big discounts, and unless they severely overestimated quantities for a previous job, they rarely stock large inventories of material. Discounted materials are usually seconds, ungraded or below-grade minimums for code, any of which would compromise the quality of your project.

Only 20% Up Front: While the price may be right, what about the terms of payment? In general, don't choose a contractor who asks for more than 20 percent of the total cost of a job up front. While some projects require a large initial payment to cover a deposit for products like cabinets or special-order ceramic tile, it doesn't apply to commodity materials like roofing and lumber, which a legitimate contractor will usually purchase on account with at least 30 days to pay.

Beware Cash-Only Jobs: Finally, a contractor who works on a cash-only basis raises a big red flag. Not only does paying in cash

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Parkfairfax Condominium Unit Owners Association

3360 Gunston Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22302

Phone: 703-998-6315 Fax: 703-998-8764

Website: www.Parkfairfax.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Scott Mulrooney, President At-Large Representative smulrooneyatlarge@ parkfairfax.org

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Jim Wicker

At-Large Representative jwickeratlarge@parkfairfax.org Recreation Committee Term Expires: April 2027

If you need to contact all Board members at once, you can email them at **boarddirectors@ parkfairfax.org**. To reach all board members and our management team at once, email us at **boarddirectors-mgmt@ parkfairfax.org**.

COMMITTEE CHAIR CONTACTS

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Landscape Committee Scott Knudsen cscottknudsen@gmail.com

Recreation Committee

-Vacant-

Transportation and Land Use Committee Bob Gronenberg

bob2@comcast.net

Meetings begin at 7 p.m. at the Association Office and is also available via Zoom. The meeting agenda is posted on the bulletin board outside of the main office. Board package material is available for residents to review at the Association Office and website, www.parkfairfax.org.

The Newsletter deadline is the 10th of each month preceding publication month. Email editorial announcements, commercial and classified ads to Lora Reynaud, covenantsdirector@parkfairfax.org.

Publication of advertisements in no way implies an endorsement of the products or services by Parkfairfax Condominium Unit Owners Association or its Board. The opinions of columnists and letter writers are their own and in no way reflect the opinions of Parkfairfax Condominium Unit Owners Association or its Board. It is up to the advertiser to keep track of when the ad expires. You will not receive notice from Parkfairfax that the ad has expired.

Letters to the Editor of 150 words or less are welcomed from owners, mortgagees or residents of Parkfairfax. It must be signed and include your unit address and phone number (address and phone number will not be published) and submitted by the 10th of each month preceding publication.

MAIN OFFICE:

Do not hesitate to contact any management team member for comments, concerns, questions, and complaints.

General Manager

Francisco Foschi, ext. 101 ffoschi@parkfairfax.org

Assistant General Manager Dana Cross, ext. 104 dcross@parkfairfax.org

Covenants and Communication Director Lora Reynaud, ext. 102

covenantsdirector@parkfairfax.org

USP/Service Coordinator Guy Andrew, ext. 103 gandrew@parkfairfax.org

Management Assistant Lolita Clark, ext. 106 lclark@parkfairfax.org

Accounting Coordinator Tamara Kanouff, ext. 108 accounting@parkfairfax.org

Administrative Assistant Winee Tyson, ext. 100 wtyson@parkfairfax.org

Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8 am - 5 pm 2nd Saturday: 9 am - 12 pm

MAINTENANCE OFFICE:

Director of Operations

Alonzo Alexander AAlexander@parkfairfax.org

Jennifer Jett-Bowling jjett-bowling@parkfairfax.org

1200 W. Glebe Road Phone: 703-578-3427 Fax: 703-578-9785

HOURS:

Monday - Friday: 7 am - 3:30 pm After Hours Emergency Number: 1-866-370-2977

Police Officer

Sergeant Derek Santos Derek.Santos@alexandriava.gov

Barkan Management Co. 8229 Boone Blvd Suite 885 Tysons, VA 22182 (703) 388-1005

How to Spot a Spotted Lanternfly

Shared by Scott Knudsen, from Time magazine

The spreading invasion of Spotted Lanternfly (across the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast states) that began ten years ago in Pennsylvania has finally reached Alexandria, Virginia. Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) is native to Asia. This insect has a proboscis that allows it to pierce the bark of a tree and feed on its sap. Its most-preferred host tree is Tree of Heaven (ToH), which is also native to Asia.

Spotted Lanternfly Life Stages









Once established in an area, though, SLF can feed on at least 70 species of native and ornamental trees. SLF nymphs will sometimes swarm and cover the base of a tree by the hundreds. Although tiny, their feeding in large numbers can weaken a tree through the loss of its sap and by the accumulation of a black, sooty mold that develops on their sticky honeydew secretions. Ornamental Cherry trees and Maple trees are reportedly particularly susceptible.



Harmless Milkweed bugs.

To reduce the possibility of SLF becoming established in Parkfairfax, the Landscape Committee and Parkfairfax management are planning to treat and remove all

See Spotted Lanternfly continued on page 4.

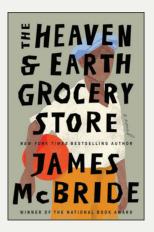
BOOK CLUB

Heaven and Earth Grocery Store

by James McBride

Tuesday, October 15, 7 pm

Parkfairfax Community Room (next to the office)



In 1972, when workers in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, were digging the foundations for a new development, the last thing they expected to find was a skeleton at the bottom of a well. Who the skeleton was and how it got there were two of the long-held secrets kept by the residents of Chicken Hill, the dilapidated neighborhood where immigrant Jews and African Americans lived side by side and shared ambitions and

sorrows. Chicken Hill was where Moshe and Chona Ludlow lived when Moshe integrated his theater and where Chona ran the Heaven & Earth Grocery Store. When the state came looking for a deaf boy to institutionalize him, it was Chona and Nate Timblin, the Black janitor at Moshe's theater and the unofficial leader of the Black community on Chicken Hill, who worked together to keep the boy safe.

As these characters' stories overlap and deepen, it becomes clear how much the people who live on the margins of white, Christian America struggle and what they must do to survive. When the truth is finally revealed about what happened on Chicken Hill and the part the town's white establishment played in it, McBride shows us that even in dark times, it is love and community—heaven and earth—that sustain us.

Bringing his masterly storytelling skills and his deep faith in humanity to *The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store*, James McBride has written a novel as compassionate as *Deacon King Kong* and as inventive as *The Good Lord Bird*.

We meet the third Tuesday of every month; everyone is welcome. Light snacks will be available. Please contact Catherine Kitchell at catherinekitchell@gmail.com to be added to the mailing list or for any additional information.

Contractor continued from page 1.

limit your financial recourse if problems arise, the contractor is likely not operating a legitimate business, which includes paying taxes and insurance. Look elsewhere for a professional to perform the work.

This article is referenced from: https://thecamteam.com/contractor-caution/.



2024 Parkfairfax Upcoming Activities Mark your calendars now for these exciting events!



Holiday Tree Lighting with the Alexandria Choral Society



Saturday December 7th, 2024 6-7pm

The Island at the corner of Preston Rd. and Valley Dr.

The above events are hosted by the Parkfairfax Activities Committee. If you would like to join the Activities Committee, please attend the Activities Committee meeting held the first Tuesday of every month, starting at 6:30PM at the Parkfairfax Community Room (Mgmt Office), 3360 Gunston Road.

Key City Compost and Compost Crew

Key City Compost and Compost Crew recently combined forces. The two companies are working to optimize routes to reduce the amount of time their trucks spend on the road.

Much of what you are accustomed to about the service will stay the same: you will use the same bin and put it out on your front porch weekly for collection.

There will be some changes: Food scraps will be collected on a different day of the week. You will also need to create an account in the Compost Crew customer portal and add your payment information

Contact Compost Crew at 301-202-4450 or info@compostcrew.com if you have any questions. Participants should watch for an email from Compost Crew soon with additional information.

Spotted Lanternfly continued from page 3.

of the invasive ToH trees in our community. This will dramatically reduce the possibility that SLF will come to Parkfairfax.

How can one recognize SLF? The four photos below show the SLF insect in its major life stages. Note that the insect always has spots in its various life stages.

Be aware that there are harmless native bugs that can resemble the later nymph stage of SLF. The photo below shows native Milkweed bugs feeding on a Milkweed plant. These insects are harmless to trees and should be left alone.

A good article on the threats posed by SLF can be found in a *Time* magazine article from two years ago titled "Why Scientists Want You to Kill Spotted Lanternflies." That article can be read at the link: https://time.com/6207401/why-kill-spotted-lanternfly.

Community Awareness— Gas Update

By Alonzo Alexander Director of Operations PCFM, FMP, A+, IAQ

It's very important to our mission that Parkfairfax residents are aware of emergency gas issues property wide and how to respond. The natural gas supplied to your units is provided by a distribution system owned and maintained by Parkfairfax UOA. The system is continually maintained as required by law to ensure continued safety.

However, it is possible, through misuse or an accident, for natural gas leaks to occur. Gas could leak from a pipe inside the building, or an underground leak may cause gas to enter through building opening such as the foundation wall.

Recognizing and Responding to Natural Gas Pipeline Emergencies

If You Smell Gas:

 NO FLAMES OR SPARKS! Immediately put out all smoking materials and pre-existing open flames. DO NOT operate lights, appliances, telephones, or cell phones. Flames or sparks from these sources can trigger an explosion or a fire.

- LEAVE THE AREA IMMEDIATELY! Get everyone out of the building or area where you suspect gas is leaking.
- REPORT THE LEAK: From a neighbor's home or other nearby building away from the gas leak, call your Management Company right away. If you are unable to reach your Management Company, call 911 or your local fire department.
- DO NOT RETURN TO THE BUILDING OR AREA: Until your Management Company advises that it is safe to do so.
- **GET YOUR SYSTEM CHECKED:** Before you attempt to use any of your natural gas appliances, your natural gas supplier or a qualified service technician must check your entire system to ensure that it is leak free.

Call the following numbers to report any suspected leaks or problems:

On Site Personnel

Normal business hours: 7 am-5 pm, 703-998-6315

After hours: 866-370-2977 Emergency number: 911

Gas supply company: Washington Gas, 703-750-1400

Join the Meetings Virtually

Architectural & Planning Board Meeting

Web access: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87615605296

Phone Dial-In: 301-715-8592

Meeting ID: 876 1560 5296 **Passcode:** 586277

Buildings & Utilities Committee Meeting

Web access: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82057874372

Phone Dial-in: 888-788-0099 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 820 5787 4372

Board of Directors Meeting

Web access: https://zoom.us/j/95236782815

Phone Dial-In: 877-853-5247

Meeting ID: 952 3678 2815 **Passcode:** 389608

Communications Committee Meeting

Web access: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88203254521

Phone Dial-in: 301-715-8592

Covenants Committee Meeting

Web access: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89947324303

Phone Dial-In: 833-548-0276

Meeting ID: 899 4732 4303 **Passcode:** 336001

Election Committee Meeting

Web access: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88456498117

Phone Dial-in: 301-715-8592

Finance Committee Meeting

Web access: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/96204170334

Phone Dial-in: 888-788-0099 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 962 0417 0334 **Passcode:** 586277

Landscape Committee Meeting

Web access: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86074068749

Phone Dial-In: 888-788-0099

Meeting ID: 860 7406 8749 **Passcode:** 484695

Find your local number:

https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kesSVslfLD

Recreation Committee Meeting

Web access: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81198276690

Phone Dial-in: 301-715-8592

Meeting ID: 811 9827 6690 **Passcode:** 336001

Transportation & Land Use Meeting

Web access: https://zoom.us/j/91204298577

Phone Dial-in: 877-853-5247 Meeting ID: 912 0429 8577

New EV Charging Stations

We are excited to announce our new Blink electric vehicle charging stations! Be sure to stop by the management office if you have any questions.

Sign Up with Blink Charging

1 Visit the App Store and download the Blink Charging Mobile App.



Scan Here to Download

2 Log in or sign up For a Blink Charging account.

- 3 There are two ways to Request Private Access at our location.
 - Search for our Location using the Search Bar. Select our location, then tap the Request Private Access.
 - **b** Or begin with your Account. Select Account > Membership > Private Access Organization. Tap the Invitation Code button, then enter the Invitation Code below.
- 4 Once you click Submit, on email will be sent to management requesting access.

 Once management approves, you will be able to charge with your Blink account.

You will need this Invitation Code to charge: PARKF3360



blink

Blink FAQs

Do users have to pay to use the EV chargers?

Yes. Charge rates are indicated on the machines. For more information, please review the "EV Driver Communication" document.

How do users start a charge?

To operate a Blink EV charger, simply plug in the electric vehicle and touch the screen to follow the prompts. Users will have the option to use their Blink membership account or charge as a guest. For more information on the membership, please refer the driver to Blink Customer Service at (888) 998-2546 or www.BlinkCharging.com.

How do I know if the charger is working?

The charger's port will display blue if it is plugged into an EV and charging. When the light displays green the charge has been completed, and the station is available to be used by another EV driver.

What happens if the power goes out?

When the power turns back on, the unit will go through its reboot and test cycles. Upon successful completion, it will automatically return to its waiting to charge state. If a vehicle was charging at the time the power went out, the driver would need to restart their charge.

What if the station won't turn on?

Typically, if the station won't turn on or the screen does not display, the breaker feeding the unit has been tripped or is turned off. Please check the breaker. If the breaker is on and the unit still does not work, please contact Blink Network Operations Center (NOC) at (888) 998-2546, x2.

Are Blink charging stations weatherproof?

Yes, Blink equipment is weatherproof, capable of withstanding normal wear and tear due to daily exposure to environmental elements and are stable in extreme weather conditions.

Who do I contact if I have a problem with the Blink Charging station?

If there is an issue with the EV charging station, please contact Blink Customer Service at (888) 998-2546 anytime, day or night.

Resident Reminders

Election Signs

Election signs denoting a preference for a candidate, issue or question in a City of Alexandria, state-wide Commonwealth of Virginia, Parkfairfax Board of Director election or locally voted upon Federal election, are permitted, without prior approval, provided such signs are tastefully



displayed and are placed inside of a closed storm or screen door or behind a window within a unit.

To accommodate such signs from inside a storm or screen door, no more than one half of the interior space of a full view storm door may be used and when displayed from behind a window the sign may be of no more than a square of 26 inches.

Election preference signs may be installed not earlier than thirty (30) days prior to the day voting is scheduled and must be removed within seventy-two (72) hours after that day.

Party Room Rental

Any resident of Parkfairfax may reserve the Party Room. Requests for reservations must be submitted for approval to the General Manager and will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

HOURS

The Party Room is available to rent during the day. The lessee may begin entertainment preparation after 8:00 a.m. The room may be used until midnight, Sunday through Thursday; and until 1:00 a.m. on Saturdays. The Party Room may be used until 2:00 a.m. for New Year's Eve functions.

FEES

A prepaid security deposit of \$200.00 and a rental fee of \$150.00 are required to rent the Party Room, along with a copy of insurance coverage of \$100,000 at the time of reservation. The deposit will be returned within three weeks of the date of the function, provided that there was no damage done and no clean-up was required.

For more information call 703-998-6315 or stop by the office. Applications are available at the front office or on the Parkfairfax website, www.Parkfairfax.info, under resources.



Many residents will be using the exercise facility during the fall and winter. There will be times when it gets very crowded.

- Please be patient and show respect to all other residents using and sharing the facility with you.
- Please limit your use of any cardiovascular machine to 30 minutes.
- Remember that physical trainers and classes are no longer allowed in the room. (The room is just too small for this kind of activity.)
- Remember those children 18 and under aren't allowed in, either. (The equipment is for adults. Dangerous for children.)

If you witness an incident in the facility—someone not following the rules or anyone behaving badly, please contact 703-998-6315, and give the information about the incident, the date, and the time so that they can contact those involved.

Enjoy the fitness center, stay fit and healthy.

Help Us Serve You Better

When submitting a request for work to be done inside your unit, trying to get it scheduled often takes additional time. If you would be willing for us to come in and complete the requested work at our earliest convenience, please ask the service provider to type 'Okay to enter' on the work order. This will allow us to do the work without going through a scheduling process which often results in delays.

This applies to any residence without an active alarm or loose dog. When submitting a work request please also ask that other pertinent information be included, such as 'top lock only', or 'loose cat', 'keep door closed' and etc. The information you provide, helps us get your work request completed more efficiently. Of course if you have a dog or any other reason requiring the work to be scheduled we will be happy to schedule it with you.

CLASSIFIEDS

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Electrical Services, Allegro LLC: Virginia Class A electrical contractor. Electric panels, fans, baseboard heaters, recessed lights. Licensed and insured. ALLEGRO LLC 703-314-1287. info@allegrollc.net.

Mario's Home Improvement:

Licensed Class A. Interior painting. Drywall and plaster repairs. Wallpaper removal, carpentry, electrical panel. Ceramic tile, complete kitchen and bath remodeling, granite countertops. Free estimates. References available. Over 20 years of experience. Mario Zambrana 703-501-7506 or MZambrana60@yahoo.com.

Home Remodeling and Repairs:

From floor to ceiling, we update and remodel kitchens, bathrooms, or any room. Also provide handyman services to include plaster, paint, plumbing, tile and more. More than 20 years of Parkfairfax experience. Great rates! Morning-Star Plumbing Plus, plumbinghopeplus2@gmail.com, 703-869-7552. Licensed and insured. 10% discount for Veterans and Elderly.

Home Improvement: Kitchen and Bath remodel. Joel Riggs Home Repair LLC. Class A Lic. And Insured. All types of interior repairs. Paint, drywall, tile, and more. Call Joel 703-929-4676.

B & A Housecleaning: Cleaning homes in Fairlington and all areas for 40 years. Excellent references and prices, we provide our own equipment and supplies. For special jobs hourly rates are available. Window cleaning services are provided with an appointment. Call us for a free estimate (703) 501-9007 or email us using bc42happy@gmail.com.

PET & PLANT SERVICES:

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MISCELLANEOUS

Meditation—Virtual Group and Individual Sessions: Experienced meditation teacher with 16 years of Tibetan training. Teaching meditation for 11 years at George Washington University, Milken Institute, School of Public Health. For more information, email Mimi at mmmalfitano@comcast.net or call or text 703 201 3923.

Private English Tutoring Services:

College Essay, AP Prep, Reading Comprehension, Writing, Grammar. In-Person or Virtual. Retired FCPS English/Journalism Teacher (TJHSST, Falls Church HS). Former journalist, published in *The Washington Post, LA Times, Salon, Billboard,* among others. Parkfairfax Resident. Rochelle L Levy, 703-945-7735. rllevytutoring@gmail.com.

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

1204 Martha Custis Dr.: Sunny upper 1-bedroom, granite counters, updated floors, treetop views, stainless steel appliances, washer/dryer in unit. Attic storage. The johnANDjohnTEAM of RE/MAX Allegiance: 703-820-9723.

3470 Gunston Rd.: Beautifully renovated, end-unit Madison model. Surrounded by greenery, updated kitchen and bath. Inlet parking. Attic storage. The johnANDjohnTEAM of RE/MAX Allegiance: 703-820-9723.



- ► Air Force Veteran
- ► Parkfairfax Resident
- ▶ 5 Star Zillow Rating

"Marlene was very helpful from day one. She's responsive and quick and even felt like a friend during the process. She showed us the house we ended up getting on such short notice because we saw the listing and was curious. Highly recommend Marlene!" — Zillow client review







SOLD

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- Represented the buver
- Sold for Cash

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Marlene W. Hall Real Estate Professional | eXp Realty Licensed in Virginia and DC 703.963.4505 | Marlene.hall@gmail.com MarleneHallHomes.com 2000 Duke St, Ste 300 Alexandria, VA 22314

Ashley H Smith

VP, Mortgage Loan Originator | Truist NMLSR #529694 703.629.7020 | ashley.smith@truist.com 46175 Westlake Drive, Ste 350 Potomac Falls, VA 20165















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When it comes time to buy or sell, having the RIGHT knowledge can mean thousands of dollars more in your pocket. We have the inside "scoop", we live here. Our insider knowledge can MAKE or SAVE you a BUNDLE! We look forward to working with you.



John Welch Associate Broker

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Call The johnANDjohn TEAM Parkfairfax.com johnANDjohnTEAM@Parkfairfax.com



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Penny Spinney 703-548-1882

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Interested in placing an ad?

Interested in placing an ad? Real estate and personal business ads are \$11/month for Parkfairfax Residents and \$20/month for all other persons. Ads for items for sale or lost and found are free to Parkfairfax residents and \$11 for all other persons.

Display Ads are also available with discounts for long-term placement.

Email Lora Reynaud at CovenantsDirector@parkfairfax.org for prices and any questions you may have!

Are you ready to move towards a pain-free life?

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Bradlee Office Building (Behind the Safeway) 3543 W. Braddock Rd Suite 200 Alexandria, VA 22302 Parkfairfax Condominium Unit Owners Association 3360 Gunston Road Alexandria, VA 22302

October 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		Activities Committee Meeting, 6:30pm Landscape Committee Meeting, 7 pm Communications Committee Meeting 7 pm	2	3 Finance Committee Meeting, 7 pm	4	5
6	7 TLUC Committee Meeting, 7 pm	Covenants Committee Meeting, 7 pm	9 A&PB Committee Meeting, 7 pm Building and Utility Committee Meeting 7 pm	Large Item Pick-Up Newsletter Submission Deadline	11	Office open, Walk-Ins Only 9 am – Noon
13	14 Recreation Committee Meeting 7 pm	Book Club 7 pm	Board Meeting 7 pm	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	Communications Committee Meeting 7 pm Large Item Pick-Up	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

Please see "Join the Meeting" section inside for Zoom and call-in details. Please call office if you have any questions, (703) 998-6315.