

The Forest Hill Neighborhood
Association Newsletter

Spring 2017

Forest Hill Neighborhood Association meetings are held the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Forest Hill Presbyterian Church. See you there!

We are always looking for stories about our neighborhood and the people who live here. Please send ideas and comments to Linda Mills, foresthillflyer@gmail.com.

Published by the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association

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Forest Hill **Flyer**

2017 Forest Hill Neighborhood Association Community Service Scholarship

Are you a graduating high school senior who has put your mark on the neighborhood with your volunteer efforts? Perhaps you worked to clean up Reedy Creek, judged the annual Halloween Howl, or delivered the Forest Hill Flyer on your street. Maybe you volunteered at the Westover Hills Library, set up bluebird boxes, or helped your elderly neighbor by taking his supercan to the curb each week.

If you have been serving your community in those ways, or in any others, your efforts have made you eligible for the annual Forest Hill Neighborhood Association Community Service Scholarship.

"This neighborhood has a long history of residents who are committed to scholarship and volunteering," says FHNA President Whit Clements. "Those two traits help to make this such a wonderful place to live. The goal of the scholarship is to reward and encourage these traits in the young people of the neighborhood, allowing them to spread the enjoyment of education and helping others to different areas of the world or wherever their educational adventures may lead them."

The annual scholarship is an award of \$500 presented to a graduating senior who lives in the Forest Hill neighborhood and who plans to attend college or a post-secondary institution. The selection process is based on an application; original answers to essay questions, including details and documentation of service to the community; a letter of recommendation from a non-relative who knows the applicant and is familiar with his or her service to the community; and a copy of a letter of acceptance from the college the applicant plans to attend. Once awarded, the scholarship may be used for any college-related necessities.

The scholarship deadline is July 1 each year. All materials must be postmarked by that date. The money will be awarded to the scholarship recipient by the FHNA during the August membership meeting. The selection committee will be determined every year and will consist of between three and five members of the FHNA executive board. The decision of the selection committee is final.

If you are interested in the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association Community Service Scholarship, the application can be printed from the FHNA website at foresthillneighborhood.com. If you would like to receive a printed copy of the application in the mail,

please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to **FHNA Community Service Scholarship Committee, P.O. Box 13201, 1021 Hioaks Road, Richmond, VA 23225**. We will send an application back to you. For any other questions, contact foresthillflyer@gmail.com.

9th Annual
5K
Save the date! **SATURDAY: 9AM
MARCH 18**
Sign up early and get a cool shirt!
Run for the Hills!
For more information visit www.foresthillneighborhood.com

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The President's Message



By Whit Clements

Welcome to another new year in Forest Hill! We have already had one pleasant surprise...snow plows. I for one never thought that we would ever see a snowplow on the secondary roads the day after a snow, but this year we did. Now it feels like anything is possible!

There is new leadership in City Hall, City Council, and the School Board.

Residents of Richmond who are dedicated to making this city a wonderful place to live. Much in the same way, the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association is a collection of people who want to keep Forest Hill such a great neighborhood to live in. That's where we residents come in—as a group there are a lot of neighborhood (even city-wide) issues that can be tackled.

Recently the neighbors along Dunston Avenue between West 43rd Street and Roanoke Street worked with Clean Sweep RVA to organize a trash clean up. They worked along Dunston Avenue and the area where Reedy Creek crosses under the street. Numerous bags of trash were collected, and it helped to resolve an issue with litter that all the folks there had to deal with. Participation is the key to realizing some of the solutions to issues in the neighborhood.

The FHNA is a great forum to meet with other neighbors and city leaders to address issues impacting us all. To better realize this, we as an organization need to hear from you at our monthly meetings, by reaching out to a board member, or sending us an email (letters via USPS work too @). The necessary component is YOU.

Participation by members helps to make our upcoming events even more of a great success. This year we will see the return of neighborhood favorites:

- **The Forest Hill 5K is on Saturday March 18. Register at foresthillneighborhood.com. See more information on page 4 of this issue.**
- **The Music in the Park concert series begins Sunday May 14. More info is on page 12.**
- **Forest Hill neighborhood Yard Sale is Saturday June 3. See page 3 for more.**

Together we can make things happen!

Whit is looking forward to taking back control of his yard this spring.... volunteers are always welcome to help!

Forest Hill Neighborhood Association 2016-2017

foresthillneighborhood.com

P.O. Box 13201, Richmond, VA 23225-9998

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Saturday, September 16, 2017 • 10am–5pm

Grant Money Available for Homeowners to Help Restore Reedy Creek

By Bill Shanabruch

Property owners in the Forest Hill neighborhood can now receive financial assistance to install best management practices (BMPs) to reduce stormwater pollution entering our local waters. Funding is provided through the RiverWise Communities program run by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. Examples of eligible BMPs are rain barrels, tree planting, rain gardens, and other conservation landscapes using native plants.

Members of the Reedy Creek Coalition (RCC) were trained at a workshop on January 21, 2017 to assist with the program locally. Participation involves filling out a questionnaire about current practices impacting water quality at your home, followed by a visit from a team of trained volunteers. The RCC team evaluates potential stormwater problems on your property and explains possible solutions. You then receive a detailed report with specific recommendations for BMPs that could be installed to reduce polluted runoff.

Financial assistance from RiverWise Communities will pay for up to 75 percent of the cost of BMPs installation. Only projects recommended in the assessment report are eligible for cost-share funding. This is a grant-funded program and the money is limited, so apply now!

To fill out the questionnaire and sign up for an assessment, visit the RiverWise Communities link at secure.jotform.us/form/40995551174158. If you have comments or questions, contact Liz Chudoba at **804-793-8785** or lichudoba@allianceforthebay.org. For more information go to allianceforthebay.org. Learn how to reduce your stormwater impact at stormwater.allianceforthebay.org.

Members of the Reedy Creek Coalition hope to see you soon for a RiverWise assessment.

Bill Shanabruch has lived in Forest Hill for 17 years, and is a member of the RCC Steering Committee.

Turn Your Trash Into Cash!

Forest Hill Neighborhood Yard Sale

Saturday • June 3rd • 8am-Noon

Everyone who signs up will be listed on the official map, plus we'll run an ad in the Saturday *Richmond Times-Dispatch* and notice on Hills & Heights along with Craigslist showing our map and listing your address.

For Forest Hill Association members it's **FREE**. For Non-Members the cost is just \$15 per household for the membership, but the deadline to sign up is May 22nd.

For sign up or questions contact Dorna Braswell
at foresthillassoc@gmail.com

Visit www.foresthillneighborhood.com for more information.



Register Now for the 2017 Forest Hill 5K!

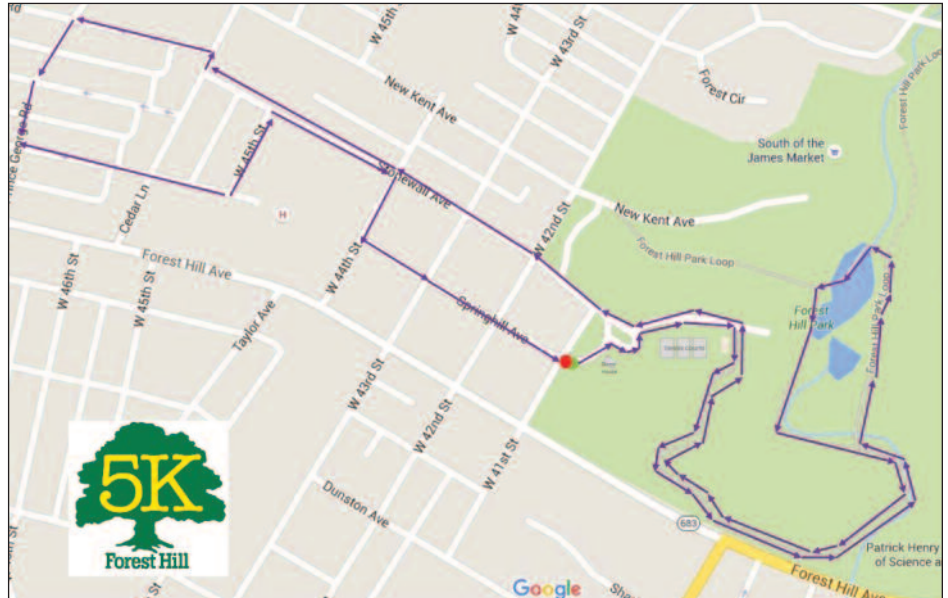
Registration is open for the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association's 2017 Forest Hill Run for the Hills 5K. The fun run (not timed) will take place on Saturday, March 18 beginning at 9 a.m. Proceeds will support neighborhood projects.

This is our ninth annual 5K and it is a fabulous day throughout the neighborhood. The race begins and ends at the Stone House in Forest Hill Park and travels through the park and the surrounding neighborhood. Registration for the race is \$25. The entry fee includes a race tee shirt if you sign up online until midnight on March 15. You can register in person on Friday, March 17 from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Stone House or on Saturday from 8-8:45 a.m. The cost is \$28 for "walk-up" registration. Prizes will be awarded for the fastest woman, man, kiddo and doggy.

Don't miss this great opportunity to be a part of a fun run (or walk or stroll). We enthusiastically welcome volunteers to help with jobs such as finish line assistant, trail monitor, and cheering voice. Volunteers will be rewarded with a 5K tee shirt and good karma. Please contact foresthillassoc@gmail.com for more

information.

As with the 2016 run, we are using a trusted partner, Racelt! to handle our online registration. Go to the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association website to register at foresthillneighborhood.com for details and payment information.



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A Message from Our Council Representative

Friends of the 4th District,

It is my great honor and privilege to serve as your Richmond City Council representative for the next four years. I thank you for your support, and I am excited to get to work on behalf of our wonderful district. I have enjoyed the pleasure of meeting many Forest Hill residents over the last four years as I served as your School Board member, but for those of you that I have not met yet please allow me to introduce myself.

I moved to Richmond in 2005 after a decade of working in communications in Washington, D.C. I got my start in public service on the board of the Patrick Henry School of Science and Arts, which opened in 2010. From there my passion for serving all Richmond families grew and I was successfully elected as your school board member from 2013-2016. I have two children who both attend Richmond Public Schools. My youngest is at Patrick Henry School and my oldest attends Binford Middle School.

My first month as your City Council representative has been a whirlwind and I'm so glad to be settling into my new office. As a council, we have already resolved to collaborate with our new mayor and School Board on an education compact that will guide our unified vision for schools, allowing us to avoid the division and animosity that has characterized recent budget deliberations. We are preparing for the upcoming budget season and exploring ways to improve our constituent services.

I've already heard from many of you on various issues. I'm delighted to hear that many in our district were pleased with our first snow removal of the year. I apologize for the less than efficient leaf pick-up that we experienced again this year. I will be working hard to improve communication and make our city more efficient.

I recently hired Bryce Lyle as my liaison, and he started work at the beginning of February. Bryce is a lifelong resident of the 4th District, having grown up in Forest Hill and currently residing with his wife and kids in Westover Hills. He has been an active participant in local civic associations and he is a great addition to my team.

We look forward to meeting and getting to know you at upcoming neighborhood meetings and events. Bryce and I will be regular participants at your Forest Hill Neighborhood Association meetings and are available to talk or meet at any time.

Please contact us with any issues. You can reach me at

Kristen.Larson@richmondgov.com or on my cell phone at **804-339-8393**. Bryce is available at **Bryce.Lyle@richmondgov.com** or **804-646-5646**. We currently have offices on the third floor of City Hall and we plan to open a district office soon so stay tuned, but we are happy to come to you. Our first district meeting will be on Wednesday, March 29, 2017 at 7 p.m. at Huguenot Community Center (located on the side of Huguenot High School). Thank you for the opportunity to serve. Please let me know what I can do for you.



*The Honorable Kristen Larson represents the Southwest 4th District in Richmond. You can reach her at **Kristen.Larson@richmondgov.com** or **804-339-8393**.*

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From our School Board Representative



In six months on the campaign trail in 2016, I had an opportunity to share with most of your neighbors what prompted me to run for School Board. Now in office and entrusted by you to transform our schools for the 21st century, I would be remiss if I neglected to convey my gratitude. I can never adequately convey my appreciation to all of the thousands

of persons that in those six months took time to talk to me at their doors, the hundreds that placed a sign in their yards, and the thousands who voted for me. Irrespective of if you supported yours truly or not, I am in your debt, and I promise to do everything in my power to honor our agreement to transform our schools.

Achieving the goal of transformation will not be easy. It will arguably be the most difficult thing that we have done in Richmond in a long time. To that end, I need your help. For one, please help me always honor our agreement and hold me accountable. I have no interest in being a bump on a log just to fill a seat, nor am I afraid to point out that the emperor has no clothes.

Regarding the latter, everyone who knows my work for a decade in education can tell you that I am a cheerleader. I love to celebrate my students' accomplishments and I fully intend on

cheerleading our schools when they merit it. But the truth is, and at the risk of pointing out that the emperor has no clothes, our schools are in a bad place. I recognize that you are probably reading this and saying, "Well, duh." Perhaps you would be surprised, however, at how many people are unwilling to point out that our schools are not performing in a big way and because of it need a wholesale transformation.

It's why I will not rubber stamp the proposed budget. This budget, minus a few new items, constitutes a continuation of the same old approach. What's worse, it's not a balanced budget. This budget assumes receipt of tens of millions of dollars that are unlikely to realize.

Our students, all of our students, deserve an education that will allow them to be successful. It is why, between now and when we fully adopt a budget, I will fight to reduce bureaucracy and instead leverage the budget to empower principals and teachers. I will support innovation in the classroom and will oppose any budget items that empower administrators/supervisors downtown. For a long time, Richmond Public Schools has tried the one-size-fits-all top-down approach to no avail. Instead, it's time to trust our teachers. That begins with the budget.

Jonathan Young represents the 4th District on the School Board for the City of Richmond. You can reach him at 804-929-7006 or jyoung7@rvaschools.net.



Sit, Stay...Move?

By Alexis Thompson

Selling your house and moving is hard on us humans... but consider for a moment how it also affects our furry friends. When suddenly the water bowl is moved, the carpets are rolled up, and favorite chew-toys are shoved under the bed for showings, the stress that we feel can quickly spread to the pups and cats in our lives. Here are a few tips to keep your lives sane while listing, showing, selling, and moving with your four-legged family members.

1. Keep the change in smells to a minimum. It's common to go overboard with cleaners, sprays and candles when getting ready to sell. Try to use naturally-derived or scent-free cleaners since our pets have such a sensitive sense of smell. If you're trying to cover up pet odors, it often doesn't work. Instead, consider an odor remediation specialist if a good cleaning doesn't take care of any unpleasant smells.
2. If you want to move a litter box from a spare room to the basement or less prominent location, instead of moving it altogether, add a second litter box in the new location for as long as you can. That way Fluffy will realize she just had a brand-new bathroom installed! Then it won't be as much of a shock when you take away the original litter.
3. Schedules are so important to our pets. Notify your Realtor® ahead of time that you would prefer showings to either not start until a certain time in the morning or to be completed by a

certain time at night. That way they can schedule accordingly and you can keep breakfast and dinner kibble time intact.

4. Showings are hard when you have a pet! You often get little notice that people want to see your house, and requests can come in the middle of the day while you're stuck in the office. Have a pet sitting plan in place that your dog will tolerate. Leaving your pet in a crate for an inappropriate amount of time never solves the problem.
5. If you have purchased your next home, take the opportunity to bring your pet over to the house for a "preview." Allow them to sniff, explore, and have a favorite blanket, bed or toy tucked in one of the rooms as a reward. A few practice runs in a new place will curb the midnight whining when they can't find their favorite corner to curl up in.
6. The day of the move can be crazy with movers, friends, boxes, and trucks. The activity, along with open doors and open gates can be a big risk. Consider a daycare option for moving day rather than have your pet whipped into a frenzy with all the activity and upheaval.
7. Make sure to order new tags with your updated address, notify your vet and microchip company.


Alexis Thompson is a Forest Hill resident, renovator, and Realtor® with One South Realty Group. She offers pet sitters to her sellers and considers dogs and cats as some of her best clients.

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The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program at University of Richmond Downtown

The IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) offers free tax help to qualified individuals who need assistance preparing their tax returns. Trained community volunteers may help with special credits, such as Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, and Credit for the Elderly or the Disabled. In addition to free tax return preparation assistance, most sites also offer free electronic filing (e-filing). Certified volunteers receive training to help prepare basic tax returns in communities across the country.

University of Richmond Downtown (URD) is one of 13 sites throughout the greater Richmond area serving as a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site with the United Way of Greater Richmond and Petersburg's metroCASH coalition. For

more than a decade, metroCASH has coordinated free tax-preparation services throughout the greater Richmond region as part of the IRS-sponsored VITA program.

Individuals and families who earned less than \$54,000 in 2016 are invited to visit URD through April 18 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:45–7 p.m. (except March 7 and March 9), and the following Saturdays from 9:45 a.m.–1 p.m. Taxpayers may use My Free Taxes to enter and e-file their own taxes with guidance from a trained coach or have their taxes prepared by a certified volunteer.

For more information, go to downtown.richmond.edu/programs/VITA.

Little Free Library in Forest Hill Park

The Little Free Library in Forest Hill Park is a well-used and well-loved community resource! The FFHP Junior have been able to completely fill the box once a week. We ask our community to consider adding books if you notice the stock in our library is low. If you would prefer, contact Laura Dysart at lauradysart@verizon.net. Laura is happy to pick books up from you or you can drop books off. Laura will use this stash of books to restock at least once a week.

If you borrow books from the library, please consider returning the borrowed books, or adding a book when you take one. All books that leave the library are going to a good home. We are promoting childhood literacy and it's a fun option for our children who visit the playground.

The Importance of Licensing Your Dog or Cat

All cats and dogs living in the City of Richmond are required to be licensed and have a current rabies vaccination. This legally-required form of identification is your best friend's most valuable asset in getting home safely. Attach the license tag to your pet's collar. This simple step ensures that in the case of a lost pet, the person who finds your pet, whether a citizen or animal control officer, knows immediately that the animal is lost and belongs to you. Each year, Richmond Animal Care and Control (RACC) receives more than 4,400 animals, yet the majority of them have no form of identification to assist in reuniting them with their families.

At a time when emergency preparedness is a top priority in our lives, licensing your pet may result in the safe return of your pet during life-threatening emergencies that may affect our entire community. The act of licensing your pet helps community officials know how many pets may need emergency care in the event of a disaster.

The cost of a pet license is \$10 for each cat or dog. Licenses are renewed annually in January and may be purchased at RACC, many local veterinary hospitals, City of Richmond offices, and online. You must have a rabies certificate to purchase a license. Go to richmondgov.com/AnimalControl/PetLicense.aspx for more information on locations.

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At the Westover Hills Library

Mark Your Calendar for these Bright Spring Events!

Yuri's Night!

Saturday, April 1, 7-9 p.m.

Join us to celebrate Yuri Gagarin's success as the first human to orbit the earth. He accomplished this feat on April 12, 1961—55 years ago! This annual Westover Hills Library event is a favorite of the neighborhood. The family-friendly activities include space-related crafts, documentaries, and light snacks. Call **804-646-8333** for more information.

Richmond Origami

Join Richmond's beginning-to-advanced paper-folding club! All levels of folders are welcome. Children younger than 10 should be accompanied by an adult. Saturdays, March 11, April 22, and May 27 from 1-4 p.m.

LEGO Club

What could you build if you just had the right Legos? We provide the Legos—you provide the imagination! For grades kindergarten through sixth with a parent. Lego Club meets Tuesdays, March 21, April 18, and May 16 from 4-5:30 p.m.

Richmond Story League

Part workshop, part listening, and part learning from other tellers. Everyone is welcome. No previous storytelling experience is needed! For more information, call Deborah Alsko at 804-232-3542. Saturdays, March 4, April 1, and May 6 from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

In Stitches!

Enjoy conversation and project ideas while completing your knit, crochet, cross-stitch, smocking, or other hand craft works. Open to older teens and adults, the meetings are every Thursday from 2-4 p.m.

English as a Second Language (ESOL)

For speakers of other languages who wish to learn English in an American cultural context. Contact the Department of Adult and Continuing Education office at **804-780-8311** for information on registration and class fees. Mondays and Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. No classes April 10 and 12. The last class is May 24.

Westover Hills Library Advisory Group—NEW MEETING VENUE

Interested in libraries, reading, and your community? We welcome your input! Join us at Café Zata, 5047 Forest Hill Avenue, to help make a difference at Westover Hills Library. Join us on Tuesdays, March 14, April 13, and May 11 from 7-8 p.m.

Fiction Focus

Come join our senior book club! We meet the third Friday of each month February through October. Books and discussion questions are provided. This group is sponsored by Richmond Public Library and the City of Richmond Office on Aging and Disabilities. We want your insights into the books we read, so please join us on March 17, April 21, and May 19 from 10 a.m. to noon.

Book Babies

Interactive story, music, and play time for babies up to 18 months and their parents/caregivers. Thursdays at 10 a.m.

Toddler Story Time

Early literacy story time features books, music, and rhymes for 18-36-month-olds and their parents/caregivers. Tuesdays at 11 a.m.

Family

Early literacy story time with music, books and rhymes for children ages three to eight years old accompanied by an adult. Thursdays at 11 a.m.

There will be no Storytimes during the weeks of April 10 and 17, or the week of May 29.

All public libraries will be closed Friday, April 14 and Memorial Day, Monday, May 29, 2017



Take a Stroll Through the Past

By Patricia H. Wood

During 2016, Friends of Forest Hill Park began sponsoring walking history tours of the Forest Hill neighborhood. Matt Zipperer, armed with substantial historic data and lots of old photos, leads the tours beginning in Forest Hill Park and winding through the neighborhood both north and south of Forest Hill Avenue. The next walking tour is April 8.

Some intriguing folks have lived in Forest Hill since the late 1700s. For example, Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell's boyhood home is on Forest Hill Avenue, and one of General A. P. Hill's daughters lived in the house that stands on the southwest corner of Forest Hill and West 41st Street. Our neighborhood's rich history, even in summary form, is captivating. Friends of Forest Hill Park is considering adding a second tour which would include even more of the neighborhood.

The next walking history tour will be on April 8, 2017. The cost is \$15 per person. There is no charge for members of Friends of Forest Hill Park, and the annual membership fee is \$15. (All funds paid to FFHP are tax deductible.) The group will meet our guide Matt at the Stone House in the park at 9:30 a.m. and step off at 10 a.m. for a two-hour tour. Come walk with us as we encounter the past. For more information, contact Carolyn Paulette, cmp4312@yahoo.com.

Patricia H. Wood is president of Friends of Forest Hill Park.



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FOREST HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT PLAQUE ORDER FORM

PLEASE PRINT

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

BRONZE PLAQUES: _____ cost is \$200.00 including delivery and the construction date for the individual house.

MOUNTING TYPE: _____

(Screw mount is recommended for wood or siding over wood.
Invisible Mount is recommended for brick and stucco.)

- Make checks payable to the Forest Hill Historic Designation Committee and deliver/mail to Carolyn Paulette, 4312 Forest Hill Ave., Richmond, VA 23225.
- Turnaround should be 4 to 6 weeks depending on meeting minimum orders. Contact Carolyn at **232-6644** with questions.
- We would like to verify the construction date for your property with you before we have it engraved on your plaque. We will use the date that the city tax records provide or the date our research provides unless you have other documentation.
- **The next order for plaques will be sent in on March 15, 2016. Get your order in today!**



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Save the Dates for Music in the Park

The dates for this year's Music in the Park have been chosen, but we are still negotiating with the bands. More info on the fabulous music will be forthcoming. But for now, put these musical dates on your calendar: May 14, June 11, July 9, August 6, September 10, and October 8. Dust off your picnic baskets and let's make Music in the Park 2017 a hit!

Contacting Your Elected Representatives

By Robley Jones

It is hard to keep track of who represents us at the various levels of government, especially when there have been recent elections and court-ordered changes in the Congressional districts. That is all behind us, however, and until the next election (November 2017) our representation is determined.

So, from local to national, as local government is often most important to our daily lives, here are the our representatives:

Richmond City School Board
Jonathan Young, **804-929-7006**, jyoung7@rvaschools.net

Richmond City Council
*Kristen Larson, **804-646-5646**,
Kristin.larson@richmondgov.com

Mayor of Richmond
Levar Stoney, **804-646-7000**, RVAMayor@richmondgov.com

Virginia House of Delegates
Betsy Carr (House District 69), **804-698-1069**,
DelBCarr@house.virginia.gov

Senate of Virginia
Glen Sturtevant, Jr. (Senate District 10), **804-698-7510**,
district10@senate.virginia.gov

Governor of Virginia
Terry McAuliffe, **804-786-2211**, email contact form:

governor.virginia.gov/constituent-services/communicating-with-the-governors-office/

Lieutenant Governor
Ralph Northam, **804-786-2078**, ltgov@ltgov.virginia.gov

Attorney General
Mark Herring, **804-786-2071**, email contact form:
ag.virginia.gov/ContactUsForm/ContactForm.aspx

U.S. House of Representatives
Donald McEachin, **202-225-6365**, email contact form:
mceachin.house.gov/contact/email

U.S. Senate
Mark Warner, **202-224-2023**, email contact form:
warner.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact

Tim Kaine, **202-224-4024**, email contact form:
kaine.senate.gov/contact

President
Donald Trump, contact form: whitehouse.gov/contact#page

*Most Forest Hill Neighborhood Association members live in the 4th District. A few houses along Reedy Creek and on 44th, however, are in the 5th District. These few homes are represented by Patrick Sapini on the school board, and Parker Agelasto on city council. If you have questions regarding this, check your voter card from the registrar or the Richmond Parcel Map at map.richmondgov.com/parcel/.

Robley Jones is vice president of the FHNA.

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Say Hello to Your New Neighbors, the Coyotes

By Judith C. Warrington

When most people think of coyotes they may picture the howling silhouette on a souvenir mug from Arizona, or scrawny and desperate Wile E. Coyote plotting to catch the Roadrunner. What people don't picture is a coyote loping down the streets of an eastern city, much less a street in Forest Hill. Yet that's the new reality.

Since the 1970s, this highly adaptable canine has been making itself at home across North America. The scourge of ranchers in the desert Southwest, the western coyote, has a cousin living in the east that is now right at home in an urban setting, even one as crowded as New York City. A coyote made national news in April 2015 when it was spotted on a rooftop in Queens. The reality hit home on a sad note in our neighborhood recently when two coyotes attacked and killed a small pet dog in July 2016.

But the fact that coyotes are showing themselves in our neighborhood indicates a healthy river environment. Coyotes like living in the Forest Hill and James River Park System for the same reasons humans do—large open spaces, a great place to raise a family, a short walk to the river, and lots of wildlife. Coyotes mostly eat rabbits, mice, and other rodents. They average about 30-45 pounds. As far as we know, because of the absence of bears, wolves, and cougars, the coyote is the apex predator in the James River Park System.

Even though they are not native to Virginia, it seems the coyote is here to stay and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) has advice for getting along with our new wild neighbors:

- First and foremost, do not intentionally (or unintentionally) feed wildlife! Keep trash in closed containers. Don't leave pet dishes or pet food outside.
- Clean up around birdfeeders. Spilled seed could attract rodents—a coyote's main diet.
- Clean up under fruit trees and use an enclosed composter for kitchen waste. Coyotes are omnivores and will be attracted to any scraps.
- Eliminate potential habitation sites in your yard such as brushy areas or fallen trees. Block access under sheds and outbuildings that could provide a cozy den.

Keep yourself and your pets safe:

- Like any wild animal, the coyote is wary of humans. Let's keep it that way! Don't give them a reason to lose their natural fear of humans.
- A habituated animal puts itself and you in danger. If you see a coyote, wave your arms, make noise, and scare it away.
- Don't run from coyotes—you could trigger their prey instinct. Because of the size ratio, attacks on adult humans are rare. It is a



The photo above was taken by a game camera in the James River Park System, credit A. Wright, Science in the Park, James River Park System. The game cameras are catching park wildlife so often that JRPS has created a Facebook page so that you can see the latest candid photos and videos. Check out facebook.com/UrbanWildlifeJRPS/.

good idea, however, to monitor small children when they are outdoors.

- One of the biggest concerns about urban coyotes is their attacks on pet dogs and cats. To be safe, keep an eye on small pets when they are in the yard, especially after dark.
- Make sure all rabies shots for your pet are up-to-date. This is essential for the safety of your pet, your family, and the community.
- Keep in mind that while electric fences keep pets in, they do not keep coyotes out!

VDGIF advises that even "larger dogs can be viewed as a threat (to coyotes) particularly from January to June while mating and birthing pups." While publicized attacks on pets are making coyotes unpopular in some areas, a long-term study of urban coyotes by the University of Wisconsin-Madison found that coyotes do not often prey upon pets. Their scat studies show that urban coyotes prefer to eat mice and other rodents, rather than garbage or pets.

So, add coyotes to the list of native species who share our community. If a coyote is frequenting your property make sure you're not inviting him to hang around. The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries recommends that you contact the Virginia Wildlife Conflict Helpline at **855-571-9003** to report a nuisance animal.

Judith Warrington has only encountered coyotes in eastern New Mexico.

Know Your Neighbor: Coyote, *Canis lastrans*

Description: Resembles a medium-sized dog. Its coloration can be buff, reddish, or darker mottled brown. It has pointy ears, a pointy snout, and a bushy tail. It weighs 25 to 45 pounds. (Larger than the western coyote.) The coyotes in our area are the perfect size to fill a predator niche in an urban environment.

Habits: Coyotes live in small related groups. They are monogamous and mate for life. Primarily nocturnal, coyotes can be active at any time of the day. According to the VDGIF, seeing a coyote in the daytime in an urban setting is not unusual or a sign of rabies. While coyotes are primarily nocturnal, urban coyotes have easier access to a range of food 24/7. If, however, you see an animal stumbling, foaming at the mouth, or acting aggressively immediately get to a safe spot then contact Richmond Animal Care and Control at **804-646-5573 or 911**.

Favorite foods: Coyotes mostly eat mice and voles. But since they are omnivores, they will also eat fruits and vegetables.

Facebook profile: Considered a nuisance animal in all 48 contiguous U.S. states, with a continuous open season.

More Info: For information on urban coyotes, go to the websites of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries at dgif.virginia.gov, or the James River Park System at jamesriverpark.org. Want to see videos of coyotes, otters, and deer in the James River Park System? Go to the Science in the Park website at jamesriverpark.org/science-in-the-park/animals.php.

Tell us about your Celebrity Pets!

Or let them speak for themselves. At the Forest Hill Flyer, we love hearing about the neighborhood's nonhuman residents. Spotlight your furry, scaly, or feathered friends by contacting foresthilflyer@gmail.com.



Friends of Forest Hill Park Junior

All Students in Middle School and High School Welcome!

Are you a middle school or high school student who loves Forest Hill Park and loves to be outside? Maybe you need some community service hours for school as well? Friends of Forest Hill Park Junior works on park beautification and providing activities that promote greater use of this wonderful resource, our neighborhood park. Come find out if this is the group for you!

FFHP Junior leads many park clean ups, but that's not all they do for the park! FFHP Junior maintains the Little Free Library next to the playground; helps maintain the Bluebird Trail in the park; plans and runs the beloved Halloween Howl event for dogs and their humans; and supports the children's activities at both the Victorian Christmas and Sunday in the Park with Friends.

The group meets approximately six times a year and typically participates in three annual events. Please contact Laura Dysart at lauradysart@verizon.net if you know a student interested in joining the group.



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FHNA Calendar of Events

Thursday, March 16
Saturday, March 18

Tuesday, March 21
Saturday, March 25

Wednesday, March 29

Tuesday, April 18
Saturday, April 29

Monday, May 1
Tuesday, May 16
Thursday, May 18
Saturday, May 27

Saturday, June 3

Friends of Forest Hill Park Meeting, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Stone House

Run for the Hills 5K, 9 a.m. at Forest Hill Park

FHNA Membership Meeting, 7 p.m. at Forest Hill Presbyterian Church

Friends of Forest Hill Park invasive species removal in the park, 9 a.m.-noon.
Meet in the park near the stone pyramid across from Brookside Road.

4th District meeting, 7 p.m. at Huguenot Community Center
(located at the side of Huguenot High School).

FHNA membership meeting at 7 p.m., Forest Hill Presbyterian Church

Friends of Forest Hill Park invasive species removal in the park, 9 a.m.- noon.
Meet in the park near the stone pyramid across from Brookside Road.

Deadline for articles and advertisements for the Forest Hill Flyer Summer issue.

FHNA membership meeting at 7 p.m., Forest Hill Presbyterian Church

Friends of Forest Hill Park Meeting, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Stone House

Friends of Forest Hill Park invasive species removal in the park, 9 a.m.- noon.
Meet in the park near the stone pyramid across from Brookside Road.

Neighborhood Yard Sale, 8 a.m.-noon

Your Neighborhood Wants You!

Please join the FHNA and become part of a friendly and active group that works for the good of the neighborhood.

Forest Hill Neighborhood Association Membership Form

Date: _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

☐ Household Membership \$15

☐ 2 Years \$25

☐ Corporate Annual Membership \$30

☐ Yes, I want to join the Neighborhood Watch and receive e-mail updates about crime and safety in our neighborhood.

☐ Yes, please send me email updates on current neighborhood events.

☐ No emails please.

☐ Yes, I'm interested in volunteering with FHNA!

Pay online at www.foresthillneighborhood.com

or by check made payable to Forest Hill Neighborhood Association

ATTN: FHNA Treasurer

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For more information visit www.foresthillneighborhood.com

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