



The Reflection Homes Association Community Newsletter

December 2023



RHA Board & Committee News:

Upcoming Meetings:

Board	Dec 11
ACC	Dec 4
Recreation	Dec 13
SA	Dec 6

Until further notice, all meetings will be **online** at 7 p.m. & are subject to change.

The RHA website has instructions on attending online meetings.

www.rha-homes.org

Important Dates:

Dec 3	Advent begins
Dec 7	Pearl Harbor Day 
Dec 7	Hanukkah begins (<i>sundown</i>)
Dec 16	Wreaths Across America
Dec 18-Jan1	fcps Winter Break
Dec 21	1st Day of Winter
Dec 24	Christmas Eve
Dec 25	Christmas Day
Dec 26	Boxing Day
Dec 26	Kwanzaa begins
Dec 31	New Year's Eve
Jan 1, 2024	New Year's Day
Jan 2	fcps back to school

RHA Board

President:

Charles Marts

Vice President:

Nicholas Viau

Treasurer:

John Hanchulak

Secretary:

Don Nuss

At Large:

Mike Olson

FirstService Residential:

703-385-1133

800-927-4599 (24 hour)

Board of Directors: by Charlie Marts, Board President

It has been my pleasure to be a part of Reflection Homes Association Board of Directors through the years. I am proud of what the board has accomplished in the past year, and I have no doubt the board will have continued success in the future. I look forward to my continued participation as a homeowner.

I am thrilled that the new board members **Mathew Knepper** and **Michael H:** as town-home owners are now part of the RHA Board and look forward to the new milestones they will help the board achieve with their contributions.

As the board moves forward, the community will be facing some unique and exciting challenges.

The assurance that the board will overcome these challenges has only been strengthened by your decision to join the RHA Board. I know your experience and education will provide the community with the kind of valuable leadership qualities that will propel our community into the future.

Notes from the Nov Annual Meeting:

22 homeowners attended (16 in person, 6 via Zoom)

While waiting for the proxy ballots to be counted, the floor was open for homeowner comments. Some individual problems were referred to the Property Manager to handle, and current actions on others were described by various board members; Town house parking was described not as a not enough "stickers" problem, since there are 776 stickers issued, and RHA has 809 parking spots, but as too many homes with more than two cars, which then compete for parking on Saunders,



Springer & Parcher; A fallen tree that had been roughly cut up but not picked up was a concern (note: a neighbor with a truck & one with a chain saw took care of it a week later).

The Board President awarded the RHA **"Good Neighbor of the Year Award"** to Eugene Harper for his many years of service on the Recreation Committee, his support of the monthly newsletter, and his cheerful, volunteer participation in many community events, from Easter Egg Hunts to National Night Out.



The Property Manager commented on how impressed he was with the community involvement in the annual elections. **There were over 300 proxies cast!!** He said he had never seen that high a percentage of residents voting. Well Done, RHA!

We say Thank You and Job Well Done to Charlie and Don, and welcome Mathew and Michael to the RHA Board for 2024.

New Board positions (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and At Large) will be decided at the December 11 Board Meeting.

Architectural Control Committee:

by Leron Culbreath, ACC Chair

At the November ACC Meeting, 8 applications were reviewed: four approved (roof, roof & siding, vinyl siding, roof & gutter) and four rejected),

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DECEMBER 16, 2023
FROM 10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM

SANTA CLAUS WILL BE AT THE POOL CLUBHOUSE TO HEAR YOUR CHILDREN'S WISHES.
THIS IS A SWIM TEAM FUNDRAISER! DONATIONS ARE APPRECIATED



A Holiday Meet and Greet with Santa Claus Himself!

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(rear fence, solar panels, French door, driveway extension) pending additional information. Of the two rejected, the rear fence and solar panel applications were later clarified and approved via email.

The next two ACC meetings will occur at 7pm on December 4th, 2023 and January 3rd, 2024 at the following link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88050150929?pwd=ODdXaFhGRXFyK3g5YXA5bnhhMWh4dz09>

Did You Know: Heavy snow is currently forecast for this winter. Please be prompt with sidewalk snow removal and ice melt application for the safety of all. Snow removal must be done within 24 hours of snowfall finish.

Did You Know: Holiday decorations are allowed up for 30 days before and after the holiday they are posted for.

If you decide to celebrate New Year's with fireworks, please be safe and make sure to cleanup the resultant debris afterwards.

Recreation Committee, Inc. (RCI): by Gene Harper, RCI Member

The committee met on Nov. 8 and 15 to work on the property management contract proposal and the 2024 budget. The budget was approved and slated for mailing, and a new property management contractor remains on track to be in place by Jan 1, 2024.

Committee members also put finishing touches on the revised Poolhouse Rental Agreement. The new rules and procedures will feature easier key access for renters and a new fee structure.

RCI membership is comprised of representatives from Reflection Homes Association (six) and Lake Homes Association (two) for a total of eight. Each association appoints members for a one-year term; the committee in turn votes on its officer positions. The distribution ratio of committee representation is weighted according to the number of homeowners in each association. Appointments were made earlier this fall, and the committee has voted on a slate of new office holders as follows:

- Ginny Rodgers (LHA), Chair
- Colleen Ward (RHA), Secretary
- Janine Greenberg (LHA), Treasurer
- Earl Blaes (RHA), Member
- Cara Fortner (RHA), Member
- Eugene Harper Jr. (RHA), Member
- Georgette Nuss (RHA), Member
- Lourdes Umana (RHA), Member

Holiday Safety Toolbox Tips:

by Jonathan Stamps, FirstService Res.

(expanded tips were sent out in an email to homeowners Nov 29)

The holiday season is upon us once again. This is a time when many people decorate their home for the holidays. Some families start decorating at Halloween and change their decorations for every holiday through New Year's Eve. The key is to be safety conscious when decorating your home because no one wants the holidays to end in a disastrous accident. The following 10 holiday electrical safety tips will help you keep your family safe through the holiday season:

The committee is responsible for the management of all properties adjacent to our associations, running the entire length of the creek from the Town of Herndon limits on the north side to the Dulles Toll Road barriers at the southern end. This includes the grounds, the tot lots, the basketball court, and the pool and its parking lot.

Riptides Swim Team Update: by Michael Gueltig, Jr., Riptides Parent

As many know, the Reflection Riptides have been a staple of our community for over 40 years—with some founding members still living here in the neighborhood. Every year, we have over 80 children representing nearly every street waking up early—during summer vacation even!--to learn valuable skills like teamwork, dedication, persistence, and, of course, the core swim strokes.



Sadly, at the latest RCI budget meeting, nearly the entire Swim Team budget was cut—by 75%--leaving the team with very little funding for the upcoming season. What's the funding needed for? Great question! Funding covers important things like lane lines, paper & ink for printing meet sheets twice each week, celebratory snacks for after great meets, and to hire coaches. We are proud to have some of the lowest entry fees for our swimmers, which allows for nearly everyone in the neighborhood who wants to join the team to be a Reflection Riptide with pride. These fees are not enough to cover all expenses, however.

The Riptides will have fundraisers throughout the year, beginning with a free **Photos with Santa** on December 16 from 10am-2pm (donations accepted) . We are also accepting donations via our Paypal link at ReflectionRiptides@gmail.com. Our goal is to replace the \$7500 that has been cut over the last two budget cycles so that we can continue to offer a strong program that benefits the community. We appreciate the support!

Street Ambassadors:

Last year's popular "Winter Decorations Event" will not be held this December. But don't let that stop you from having fun decorating your homes, and it



A 2022 decorations winner

certainly shouldn't stop you from driving and walking our RHA neighborhood and admiring the efforts of your neighbors!

1. Inspect Everything (decorations, extension cords, etc)
2. Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets
3. Incandescent Lights (don't connect more than 3 strings together)
4. Live Christmas Trees (don't let dry out)
5. Candles (don't burn unattended)
6. Keep Clearances Around Heat Sources (fireplace, electric or kerosene space heaters, etc)

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- 7. Protect Cords from Damage (don't leave outdoor cords lying across walkways or driveways, check outdoor connections are watertight)
- 8. Check all Decorations for Certification (look for Underwriters Laboratories tags)
- 9. Stay in the Kitchen While Cooking (applies year-round! But holiday meals are bigger & need more equipment operating at the same time = more opportunities for malfunctions to happen)
- 10. Bedtime (last person going to bed makes sure all decorations are off)

YOU Are The Greatest Asset In Our Community!
by Charlie Marts, Board President

The most important duty of any association is to protect the value of our property, but the most important asset within our community is not the property itself, but the members who make up the association.

Without you, the homeowner/resident, our community is nothing more than a collection of buildings, landscape and asphalt.

As members of the community, homeowners bring their own individual tastes, likes, dislikes and preferences into the community. It is that diversity that makes our community interesting and full of life.

It is also that diversity that creates the need for commonly accepted guidelines in order to help everyone get along and pursue a collective goal: peaceful and harmonious community living that benefits the investment we have in the community.

By recognizing the diverse makeup of our most valuable assets, the homeowner members, each of us can begin to understand the need for commonly accepted rules and regulations, architectural guidelines and the need for a Board of Directors made up of a cross-section of homeowners in order to represent the full spectrum of individual tastes and concerns. Without that understanding it is easy to become distracted and concern ourselves



Champion Services Waste & Recycling, RHA's Townhome trash collection contractor, has announced its **Holiday Schedule:**

- Christmas Eve (12/24/2023)
Offices closed, normal collection
- Christmas Day (12/25/2023)
Offices closed, NO collection
- New Year's Eve (12/31/2023)
Offices closed, normal collection
- New Year's Day (1/1/2024)
Offices closed, NO collection

Festive Tree Collection Days 1/3/2024 and 1/10/2024

Be advised, yard waste collection 2023 ends Dec 15

Email: customerservice@cswwaste.com

Web: www.cswwaste.com



with the loss of individual freedoms and distaste of conformity that some associate with association living.

The key to successful association living is to recognize the benefits provided by living within an association and accept that certain behaviors enhance our quality of life, while other actions detract from it. By doing so, we are able to contribute to the success of our association, our community and ultimately your own investment made in your property.

Following community guidelines, active participation in association activities such as committees and choosing to attend board meetings in order to understand the issues that face our association are perfect examples of how each and everyone of us can contribute to a better community.

Without cooperation, support and involvement, our association cannot succeed. The investment each of us has in our property demands mutual cooperation, support and involvement. To neglect that responsibility is to neglect our investment, and few of us can afford to do that!

Good Neighbors & Good Deeds

by Michaela Hamiary Janotova, RHA Resident

Thank you to the neighbor (an older gentleman, anonymous to me) who picks up trash while walking his dog (mid-size, white-black). I see him in the common area behind my house on Christy Place once in a while, therefore I assume he walks different parts of the neighborhood as well. The point is, he picks up trash that he sees along the way.



Sir, your neighborly, considerate, and good-hearted acts are appreciated.

Your neighbor, Michaela.

To other neighbors: Please don't leave your trash behind at playgrounds and other common areas, and secure your trash bins against the wind blowing away the trash.

****NOTES****

Free Covid Tests: Every U.S. household is eligible to order **four free at-home** tests beginning Monday, Nov. 20. Every home is entitled to at least four, but those who did not receive the last round made available in Sept. are able to place two orders and get up to eight. To order online, visit www.COVIDtests.gov and fill out the form which asks for your full name and mailing address. The tests will then be shipped free via USPS to the provided location, including P.O. boxes. You will receive an order number and updates via email if you choose to input your email address.

Toys For Tots: **Donate** new, unused, unwrapped toys. (*note: cannot be toys considered to be weapons*) **Request** a toy for a deserving youngster. Drop boxes for donations are at all Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department Fire Stations through Dec 17. **The Marine Corps Toys For Tots** website <http://www.toysfortots.org> has info on both donating & requesting toys. Requests are made through local sponsor organizations (*not to the Marines!!*).





National Wreaths Across America Ceremony. 12 noon, rain or shine, Saturday, December 16, at Chestnut Grove Cemetery, 831 Dranesville Rd, Herndon. Come attend the ceremony and then place a wreath on one of the **920 identified veteran gravesites** at the cemetery. This is the 10th year Herndon has participated in the National ceremony whose mission is to: **Remember** our fallen US veterans. **Honor** those who serve. **Teach** our children the value of Freedom.

Fairfax County Real Estate Taxes: are due Dec 5, 2023. If your real estate tax is not included in your mortgage payment, you must mail your payment directly to the county. Other payment methods include credit cards, electronic checks, automatic installments and more. For details, see your bill or go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/taxes

Gift Cards for Hutchison ES: Dranesville Supervisor Foust and Arts Herndon are collecting donations to benefit children in need at **Hutchison ES**. Gift cards in \$10 increments are preferred (Kohls, Giant, Target, Safeway, H-Mart, etc) Bring gift cards through Dec 12 to: ArtSpace Herndon at 750 Center St.



RHA Newsletter submissions: Inputs/comments/suggestions for the January 2024 RHA newsletter are due by December 20. Send inputs to newsletter@rha-homes.org



December 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26 (November)	27 CYBER MONDAY	28 Giving Tuesday	29	30	1 World AIDS Day	2
3 Advent begins	4 7:00-9:00pm ★ ACC online meeting	5 NATIONAL COOKIE DAY	6 7:00-9:00pm ★ SA online meeting	7 SAINT NICHOLAS	8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception	9
10 Second Sunday of Advent	11 7:00-9:00 ★ Board ★ online meeting	12 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NEUTRALITY	13 7:00-9:00pm ★ RCI online meeting (tentative)	14 NATIONAL COCOA DAY	15 Bill of Rights Day	16 12 Noon, Chestnut Grove Cemetery WREATHS across AMERICA
17 Third Sunday of Advent	18 Wright Brothers' Day ← feps Winter Break Dec 18 - Jan 1	19 Arabic Language Day	20	21 1st Day of Winter	22	23
24 Fourth Sunday of Advent	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day	27	28 GOOD RIDDANCE DAY SHRED-IT AND FORGET IT	29	30
31 New Year's Eve	1 (January) New Year's Day	2 feps back to school	3	4 National Spaghetti Day	5	6 12th Day of Christmas Epiphany

This newsletter is created by the Board of Directors of Reflection Homes Association in order to inform you about its work, and to keep you updated on things important to our neighborhood. If you have any questions, suggestions, or contributions to this newsletter, please email them to: board@RHA-Homes.org and/or newsletter@RHA-Homes.org Visit: <http://rha-homes.org> to read past newsletters, or to request email newsletter delivery.