

CAHH
MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
APRIL 3

HOLLIN HILLS BULLETIN

APRIL 2019



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Stormwater Drainage Committee Forming

Based upon the strong interest shown at the Friends of Hollin Hills event on stormwater drainage and erosion in February, the CAHH Board has voted to form a Stormwater Drainage Committee. The committee will conduct research and find potential solutions for drainage and erosion challenges within the community. Alan Barak, CAHH Director At-Large, will head up this committee, which will begin their work in the coming weeks. If you are interested in participating on this committee, please contact the Civic Association at CAHH@hollin-hills.org.

Historic Overlay District Meeting

On March 11, the Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning presented information to the community about the proposed Historic Overlay District (HOD) for Hollin Hills. Laura Arseneau and Nicole Brannan, historic preservation planners, explained the purpose and significance of an HOD designation. They also described the survey that they are conducting of the homes in our community in order to update the extensive work that was completed in 2013 to gain listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The meeting was kicked off by Mt. Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck, who explained that the HOD study is an open-ended process with plenty of opportunities for residents to contribute feedback and, ultimately, to decide whether to proceed with an HOD or not. The county planners answered questions from residents and asked interested homeowners to apply to join the HOD study committee. This committee will meet throughout the summer to create an HOD plan for Hollin Hills. The plan will be presented to the Hollin Hills community—probably this coming fall—for approval. If approved, the plan would need to go through a process of review and public comment by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors before final approval, which could possibly occur in the spring of 2020.

Spring Meeting Agenda

Our Spring Membership Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 3, at 7:30pm, in the cafeteria of Hollin Meadows Elementary School. Besides the usual business items, we will also have a presentation on stormwater drainage by Asad Rouhi, a Fairfax County urban conservation engineer, who was not able to show the presentation at the recent Friends of Hollin Hills event.

I hope you can join us on April 3. If you cannot attend, please use the absentee ballot/proxy form on page 8.

—Patrick Kelly, CAHH President

JOIN CAHH OR RENEW – IT'S MEMBERSHIP SEASON!

The Civic Association of Hollin Hills (CAHH) membership year is May 1 to April 30, and our 2019 membership drive is now underway. It's time to join or renew your CAHH membership.

JOIN/RENEW ONLINE

Go to www.hollin-hills.org/civicasociation our official website. Once there, scroll down to "Membership," complete the online membership form, and pay your dues online. A \$5 convenience fee applies for processing an online payment.

JOIN/RENEW BY MAIL

Membership forms are being mailed to every Hollin Hills household. A printable form can also be found at www.hollin-hills.org/civicasociation (scroll down to "Membership.") Complete the form and mail it in with your dues payment.

WHY YOUR DUES ARE IMPORTANT

- Membership dues support the administration of our architectural covenants, provide funds for the maintenance of Hollin Hills' 30+ acres of parks and common areas, and pay for insurance and other business expenses of the CAHH.
- Benefits of membership also include receiving the Hollin Hills Bulletin (emailed to you monthly), and the Directory (published every two years, with periodic electronic updates).
- In addition, our membership dues allow residents to enjoy popular CAHH community social events such as the Winter Potluck, the 4th of July Parade and Picnic, and the Oktoberfest.

Please contact me with any questions at
703-401-9736 or tellim@hotmail.com.

—Marinka Tellier, Membership Chair

CIVIC ASSOCIATION OF HOLLIN HILLS (CAHH)

CAHH OFFICERS

President Patrick Kelly	405-1763
Vice-President Chris McNamara	660-9536
Treasurer Scott Weidenfeller	725-7894
Secretary Mohra Gavankar	815-919-3513
Membership Marinka Tellier	401-9736

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

Alan Barak	240-888-5735
Gino Madrid (Social)	202-549-6723
Tony Morris (MVCCA)	571-431-9711
Sally Watkins (Parks)	837-9654

CAHH COMMITTEES

ARCHIVIST Judy Riffin	765-3025
Historian Scott Wilson	765-4471

(Also see Hollin Hills Archives below)

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC)

Chair Andy Hight	869-2639
Members John Burns	660-9763
John Nolan	231-2229
Ginny Wallace	765-7116
Ken Wilson	768-5838

CAHH-DRC Liaison Chris McNamara 660-9536

HOLLIN HILLS POOL COMMITTEE

Chair Barbara Bogue	571-257-9313
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PARKS COMMITTEE

Chair Elisabeth Lardner	765-3023
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HOLLIN HILLS BULLETIN

Published monthly since 1951 by the CAHH. Material in this publication does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the CAHH Board or the editor.

Editor Barbara Shear	660-6543
Editorial Assistance Andrew Keegan	660-1004

Deadline is the 15th of the preceding month.

Articles generally should not exceed 500 words.

Send your submission in the body of an email or as an attachment to barbshear@verizon.net.

If you cannot produce computerized copy, please find someone to submit it for you.

No material will be accepted over the telephone.

Bulletin Distribution problems:

• To add/correct/change your mail or email address, or if you have not received your digital Bulletin, contact Marinka Tellier, 703-768-8709 or tellim@hotmail.com.

• To replace a missing paper Bulletin, contact Ellen Rydell at 703-768-3442.

HOLLIN HILLS ARCHIVES

The Hollin Hills Archives are part of the Special Collections and Archives of George Mason University. To contact the SC&A staff with research questions, use the following:

- For general description of HH Archives contents, go to http://sca.gmu.edu/finding_aids/hollinhills.html.
- For questions about collections, hours, usage, duplications, or directions go to http://sca.gmu.edu/using_sc&a.html.
- Other contacts: phone 703-993-2220, fax inquiries 703-993-8911, email speccoll@gmu.edu.

www.hollin-hills.org

Calendar of community events and information about our parks, the Design Review Committee, the National Register of Historic Places, and more.

Quick Takes

HAPPY NINETIETH, BOB!

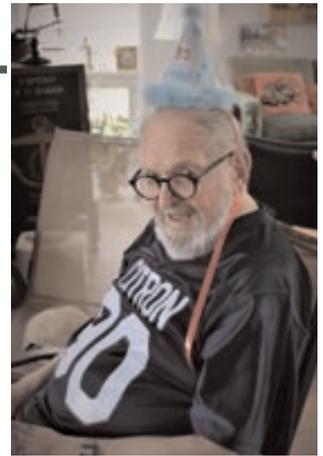
A 90th birthday party was given for Bob Citron on March 10 by his Bedford Lane neighbors and hosted by Mary Tracy. Bob, an architect, has lived in Hollin Hills since 1964, which he is quick to tell you is over 60% of his life. He was sporting a large 90 on his football jersey for the occasion.

Bob had traveled to London for an earlier celebration on his actual birthday (March 3) hosted by his two children. More than 40 well wishers

were there, including two former Hollin Hills couples, the Garbows and the Bernankes.

Joining in the local festivities were longtime Bedford Lane residents Gail and Robert Weigl, Ron Ullrich, and new resident Becky McCarthy (who now has Mary-Carroll Potter's house), with nearby residents Hannah Hunt, Rudolf and Susana Unger, Sophie Crooks, and Michelle Rogers.

Above: A very good time was had by all, including Bob Citron himself. Left: Everyone signed the birthday card that Mary Tracy's Rudy helped deliver to Bob's door.



OUR YOUNGEST NEWCOMER

A warm welcome to Jasper Dennig, born on February 22 to Louis and Stephanie Dennig of 7218 Beechwood Road. Jasper is three-year-old Everly's new baby brother.

GATHER UP YOUR TREASURES, THE YARD SALE IS COMING

This year's Hollin Hills Community Yard Sale will be held on Saturday, May 4, 9am-12noon. It is a great way to clean stuff out of your overflowing closets, meet your neighbors, then fill your just emptied closets with *their* stuff—and everyone has a good time doing it.

This yearly event takes place on the parking lot of the Hollin Hills Pool. All Hollin Hillers are welcome to set up shop and sell their items. It's free of charge, and you keep all your proceeds. All that is required is that you bring your own tables, chairs, and anything else you need for set-up and also help with making and placing posters in the area.

To participate, please sign up by sending an email to Friederike Ahrens at friederikemh@hotmail.com. Details about set-up procedures will be sent to participants closer to the date.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLLIN MEADOWS?

Hollin Meadows Earth Day, will be celebrated on Saturday, April 27, 9am-2pm. HMS neighbors are invited to participate in this festive gathering and community work day. There will be fun for everyone, and projects for all ages and abilities.

HOLLIN HILLS POOL OPENING MAY 25

• If you are interested in joining the pool, all current residents of Hollin Hills who are paid up members of the Civic Association of Hollin Hills are eligible to join for the 2019 season. Residents who are not CAHH members join the waiting list, currently 2 to 3 years long.

• If you are already a member, please renew as soon as possible so that we know

Quick Takes

how many applicants from the waiting list we can allocate this year.

- **For more information**, contact Barbara Wade, membership director, at Admin@hhpool.org. Send other questions or comments, to me, Barbara Bogue, at HHPool.president@gmail.com
- **Watch for our 2019 calendar** and opening day information in the next CAHH newsletter.

—Barbara Bogue

IN MEMORIAM - MOLLY COOK

Molly Kim Cook passed away on February 9, at the age of 87. She was a long-time resident of Hollin Hills and moved to Glasgow Road in the late 1950s after her marriage to Paul Kearney Cook, who passed away in 1987.

In 1952, Molly enlisted in the US Air Force. After receiving her history degree from the University of Hawaii, she became a USAF intelligence officer, and retired from the Air Force Reserves in 1964.

During the late 1950s, Molly moved to Washington DC to work at the Library of Congress/Foreign Research Division where she met Paul. She also served as a volunteer during the mid-1970s for then-Congressman Spark Matsunaga (D-Hawaii).

Molly loved music and the arts and for many years enrolled in classes at the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria and attended opera performances at the Kennedy Center. From 1967 to 1969, she lived with her family in Russia, when Paul was assigned to the US Embassy in Moscow. An avid reader, she immersed herself in multiple works, particularly about Russia, its ballet, culture, history, and literature.

Since late 2015, she lived nearby in the Paul Spring Retirement Community. Molly is survived by her daughter Patricia Kearney Cook Iwasevic of Loganville, Georgia (husband Joseph Iwasevic), daughter Tracy Katherine Cook King of Harwood, Maryland (hus-

band Christopher King), son Wilson Kim Cook of South Riding, VA (wife Sally Cook), five grandchildren, four sisters, and a brother. Her stepdaughter, Liese Kristian Cook, preceded her in death. Per Molly's wishes, her remains will be spread in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of her native Hawaii.



Letter to the Bulletin

Four years ago I turned in my first set of petitions to run to be the first delegate from Hollin Hills representing the 44th District. Yesterday, I once again filed the necessary signatures from constituents on petitions of qualified voters. This means I'll be back on the ballot for a third time, and will work very hard to get re-elected and to earn your vote once again. Over the next eight months I will continue to knock on doors throughout the 44th District, organize events, listen to constituents, and advocate for our community.

The first campaign event will take place on April 6. My wife Tracey and I will host my "Opening Day Campaign Kickoff" at our home, at 2201 Whiteoaks Drive, from 1-3:30 pm, for an afternoon of politics, BBQ, and a baseball theme! I will continue to work hard to create an economy that works for all Virginians, promote renewable energy to protect our planet, and grow our investment in our children through quality public education.

—Paul Krizek

PRISONER OF TREBEKISTAN – A DECADE IN JEOPARDY!

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED TO MEMOIR FANS AND "JEOPARDY!" FANATICS ALIKE

In what happened to be an example of perfect timing, I happened to read *Prisoner of Trebekistan – A Decade in Jeopardy!*, by Bob Harris, during the recent, first-ever "Jeopardy! Team Tournament of Champions."

Harris, a former stand-up comic, worked hard and long to become a "Jeopardy!" contestant and finally succeeded. He knew his own mind, and, rather than memorize thousands of facts, he developed a chain of mnemonic associations: "Chickasaw Indians - Mississippi River - Memphis - Dr. King - Tom Cruise movie with Gene Hackman - Graceland - Elvis..." (Read the book, and this thought process will become clear.)

He also invented his Eightfold Path, steps reminiscent of a self-improvement program. Example #1: "Obvious things might be worth noticing." That is, as you "Jeopardy!" fans would know, that there is always a hint within the whole answer.

Bob's prose, a thought process in itself, is riveting, wittily entertaining, and full of facts about Jeopardy! (Its working title, incidentally was, "What's the Question?")

During the ten years of his life that revolved around "Jeopardy!" Bob became humbled by his own thought devices and mantra steps, as he applied them to his relationships with his family and friends. At every success, he memorializes his father, who always had 'high hopes' for Bob (an association from the Sinatra song). Best of all, Bob Harris gains lasting friendships with the other contestants.

Spoiler alert: he wins, wins, wins, wins, wins, loses, is asked back to the Tournament of Champions, wins, loses, and is now a writer for the CSI series.

Prisoner of Trebekistan is in the Fairfax County Public Library system. Look in the Biography section: B Harris 2006.

—Wendy Montanari

OK, folks, that's how it's done. A big thanks to Wendy who, always dependable, answered last month's call for Bulletin book reviews with this intriguing selection. Please continue our winning streak! Write your own book recommendation/review and send it in to the Bulletin at barbshear@verizon.net.

in Our Parks

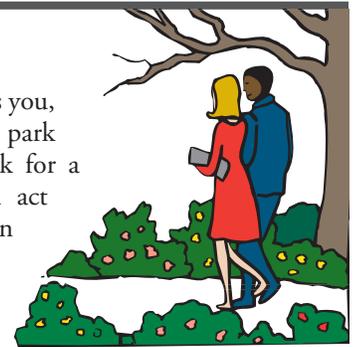
Sutton Potter Update (It's Looking Good!)

With the removal of the bush honeysuckle from the hillside of Sutton Potter Park, other park improvements at this park now seem doable. Thanks to Warden Mary Ellen Gilman and her able volunteers, new stepping stones will lead you into the park from the concrete sidewalk off of Range Road. They were hauled from Mary Ellen's fish pond which, as a result, is now being transformed into a frog pond. Rony Deloza and Christian Aquino are owed a big thank you from all of us.

Work Funded Through Your CAHH Dues

Our ground is wet (duh) and our trees are aging. Two trees in our park have recently been taken down per adopted Park policies. In each case, a neighbor contacted their Park Warden, and an ISA-certified arborist was asked to evaluate the condition of the tree of concern. If the arborist considers a tree to be hazardous, the CAHH will pay to take that tree down, leaving the brush and trunk on the ground in the park. If possible, the trunk will be preserved up to about 15 feet in height as a snag and wildlife habitat. As you all know, taking trees down is expensive, these two trees cost the CAHH approximately \$3500 to address.

If you see a tree that concerns you, please contact the appropriate park warden or me, and we will ask for a professional opinion and then act per the advice received. Given our deer population, it is hard for a healthy understory to develop, and for new trees to take off, thrive, and successfully replace our existing overstory. Therefore, preserving and maintaining our existing forested land and its overstory is a critical responsibility of your Parks Committee.



Any Woodworkers Who Want to Help the Parks?

Our wooden 'park-styled' routed wood signs are weathering, some not so graciously. We are looking for a volunteer—preferably one who can make some new signs for our park entrances, similar to those in place today. And if not a volunteer, a source to contact to purchase same would be appreciated.

—*Elisabeth Lardner, CAHH Parks Chair*
703-765-3023, ebhollinbills@yahoo.com



SPRING 2019 WORK PARTIES IN THE PARKS

April 4, Thursday, 10am - 2 pm

April 6, Saturday, 12 noon - 2pm

April 11, Thursday, 10am - 2pm

April 13, Saturday, 10am - 2pm

Sutton Potter Park with
Warden Mary Ellen Gilman

Ongoing ivy removal work parties. Bring gloves, clippers, and a keen interest in cutting ivy necklaces off the trees. Also bring admiration for the park's new look sans honeysuckle bushes.

April 13, Saturday, 10am-noon,

Paul Spring Park with Wardens
Lee Ann Kinzer & Barbara Liggett

Remove ivy from trees, pick up trash

delivered downstream from Beacon Hill Mall, shovel/sweep asphalt path between Stafford and Paul Spring Road to remove the slippery lens of marine clay, and renew drainage slots with a shovel along the path's edge. Bring clippers, gloves, shovels and brooms. Meet at the foot of Stafford Road at its intersection with Paul Spring Road.

May 4, Saturday, 10am - 12 noon

McCalley Park with
Warden Jamie Agnew

Remove ivy from an large old tree, plant plugs (tiny versions) of desired plants in the park, and help the ongoing bamboo removal process in the park's southwestern corner. Bring shovels, trowels, gloves and clippers. Meet at the park, at the corner of Paul Spring Road and Rippon Lane.

June (date TBD), 10am-noon

Voigt Park with Warden Peter Martz

Get ready for the picnic! For new and old to the neighborhood, this is *the* event of the year: a parade, ponies, games, a live band, cold beer and soft drinks, ice cream, grilled hot dogs and veggie burgers—and it all depends on park volunteers to get the grounds in shape ahead of time. Come fill holes, rake sweet gum balls, pull poison ivy (only very special people get this task), clean playground equipment, picnic tables and benches, and help make sure the park is ready to host hundreds of neighbors. Bring rakes, clippers, newspaper bags (poison ivy capturing), and gloves. Meet at the park on the corner of Rippon Lane and Paul Spring Road.

Design Review



ABOUT THE DRC

The Civic Association of Hollin Hills Design Review Committee (DRC)

meets monthly to offer homeowners guidance about potential exterior property renovations and to determine whether those desired renovations are in harmony and conformity with the association's Design Review Guidelines.

Emails regarding all DRC activities should be sent to drc@hollin-hills.org.

All DRC-approved projects are subject to and must comply with Fairfax County building regulations, policies, and codes.

Homeowners should complete appropriate County permit processes prior to the start of any renovations.

Please Note:

DRC Chair Andy Hight's Design Review Committee email address is incorrect in the new 2019 directory. All mails regarding all DRC activities should be sent to drc@hollin-hills.org.

Report of March Actions

The Design Review Committee (DRC) met on Wednesday, March 13, 2019, at the Sherwood Regional Library, Sherwood Conference Room. Members present included Andy Hight (Chair), John Burns, John Nolan and Virginia Wallace. The DRC addressed the following homeowner projects during the meeting:

2114 Whiteoaks Drive, Barak Residence

Project: Cable railing on top of a new retaining wall

Purpose: Safety feature required by Fairfax County

Action: Unanimous approval of design presented by architect.

The committee reviewed a drawing provided by the architect and discussed installing a cable railing on top of a new retaining wall that was previously approved. The DRC also discussed replacing an existing railing on top of a screened porch with a similar design at a later time.

2103 Popkins Lane, Young/Miller Residence

Projects: 1) Mudroom addition 2) screened porch addition, 3) window/siding replacements/changes, and 4) a carport.

Purpose: To create more room for daily living and entertaining, car protection, an area for storage, and cleaner transition into the home.

Action: Unanimous approval of a full-height front door replacement with the Hollin Hills horizontal cross bar. Conceptual approval of the screened porch plan with the materials and design details discussed.

The homeowner and her architect presented architectural drawings and photos of the various projects, still in the design phase. Most of the discussion was focused on getting feedback and recommendations from the DRC prior to finalizing the plans.

The DRC asked several questions about each of the projects and proposed materials. The committee had concerns about the location of the carport and design of the adjacent mudroom. The DRC discussed several other options for both with the homeowner. Based on the discussion, the homeowner determined she would not move ahead with the carport/mudroom project at this time and would revisit the design.

The committee also discussed maintaining the existing tongue-and-groove paneling on the outside of the house versus replacing with T1-11 siding and offered suggestions about how to replace windows with insulated glass while maintaining the existing framing. The DRC said it would send information about how to install 5/8" glass versus 1" glass in the existing framing—a solution frequently used in Hollin Hills houses—to the homeowner.

7210 Rebecca Drive, Wilson Residence

Project: Landscaping and privacy screen replacement.

Purposes: 1) improve deteriorating front walkway and 2) create privacy barrier to car headlights shining into the bedroom.

Action: Conceptual approval of privacy screens pending delivery of information about building materials.

The homeowner presented preliminary plans and images of proposed changes and asked for counsel on several aspects, particularly construction materials. DRC recommended several solutions for the walkway, discussed how to construct privacy screens and recommended integrating a mailbox with a proposed house number design.

The committee thanked the homeowner for seeking its counsel on the landscaping and hardscaping projects—projects not under the DRC's purview—to ensure they would be appropriate for Hollin Hills – a service open to all homeowners.

7102 Rebecca Drive, Roberts/Gordon Residence

Project: installation of black weld-wire fence in part of the backyard.

Purpose: To create enclosed recreational area for homeowner's dog.

Action: None.

The committee reviewed the homeowners' plans for a proposed fence and the rationale for needing one, given all of the traffic on Rebecca Drive. The committee also heard objections to the project from the homeowners' adjacent neighbor who is concerned about the fence eliminating the open sightlines she has enjoyed. The DRC suggested the homeowner proposing the fence consider a smaller area of the backyard to be fenced, which the homeowner agreed to consider. He asked that the DRC conduct a site visit to help determine how such a smaller area could be sited in the backyard. The DRC promised to schedule a time convenient to both the homeowners and the neighbor.

DRC Meeting Schedule

The next DRC meeting will be on Wednesday, April 10, 2019, 7:30pm, at the Sherwood Regional Library, Sherwood Meeting Room, (2501 Sherwood Hall Ln, Alexandria, Virginia 22306).

—Chris McNamara

THE HH FRIENDS 2019 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The first two installments of the four free educational programs that the Friends of Hollin Hills are presenting this year attracted large and responsive audiences.

Wetlands of Hollin Hills

Chapter 1 in an ongoing attempt to address our community's drainage challenges was opened at this Friends panel on February 24. The discussion mostly focused on the world of and responsibilities of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the state agency that maintains our road network and ultimately catches all the water we want removed from the puddles (or ponds) in our yards and on our roads. Pawan Sarang, the VDOT drainage engineer responsible for our district, shared a series of slides that took us deep into the subject of why we may flood and what potentially can be done to address that problem. Terry Yates, VDOT, suggested ways that we could reach out and communicate our concerns to VDOT. Most importantly, Mr. Yates made us aware of a relatively new program with some funding that is designed to specifically address these types of concerns. Of course, the funds are limited, and VDOT will address concerns in an order of priority; the example that was given of a high priority was the actual crumbling of a road due to flooding.

Chapter 2, how to address the ponds and puddles in our own yards, received a light touch due to time constraints. But good news! **Asad Rouhi, of the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District (NVSWCD) will return with his slides that were not shown at the Friends panel and will share them with us at the Civic Association's Annual Meeting on April 3.** Mr. Rouhi's work focuses on homeowner needs. NVSWCD can do on-site inspections (and has for some of our neighbors) and then make suggestions on how to treat the concern. There are also several grant programs that may be worth exploring which will fund a portion of the drainage improvements in exchange for an agreement to maintain the improvements for a set time period.



The stream restoration project will correct severe erosion such as shown here in Goodman Park.

*From left:
Christine Hooks,
Friends chair,
and Asad Rouhi, guest
speaker at the first
program of this series.*



If you would like copies of the presentations, or other references noted during the presentation, please contact Elisabeth Lardner at eblardner@aol.com.

Also, Paul Phelps's article, "Water on the Landscape" on page 7 describes some useful homeowner tips on preventing water runoff from damaging your yard and, all too often, your neighbor's yard as well.

The Natural History of Hollin Hills

On March 10, Dr. Ted Shear, professor at NC State and restoration ecologist, led us on an illustrated tour from the boreal forests of 20,000 years ago to the suburban forests we know today. He described the human practices that have contributed to this transformation. Long before the urbanization of the 1950s, hundreds of years of human disturbance had drastically altered local forests and streams. Poor farming practices created great amounts of sediment that ran into and polluted the waterways into the Chesapeake Bay. In the 1950s, increasing urbanization and improved farming techniques meant less sedimentation but high rates of water flow continued, cutting narrower, deeper channels into the soft sedimentary riverbeds and changing the surrounding terrain. This eventually has led to the need for restoration projects such as the ones planned for the streams in Hollin Hills' Goodman and Bricklemaier Parks.

Meghan Fellows, CERP, and Ecological Restoration Specialist with the Watershed Projects Implementation Branch-Central for Fairfax County (short hand: Meghan is the County's project manager for both of our stream restoration projects) spoke briefly of the local stream restoration, and Paul Phelps expanded on the suggestions for homeowner actions to control drainage problems and erosion that he had offered earlier at the February 24 program.

Next: DRC and Hollin Hills Covenants

- "Working with the DRC," was held on March 31, too late for inclusion in this issue. It will be covered in the May Bulletin
- The final offering of this season, "Understanding and Strengthening Our Covenants," is scheduled for Sunday, April 28, in the manse at Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church. A social hour, with drinks and snacks at 4pm, will precede the presentation/discussion from 5-6pm

WATER ON THE LANDSCAPE

It rained a lot last year—over 66 inches at National Airport, a solid two feet above normal and by far the wettest year on record, going back to the Civil War. This extra water was a severe test both for our landscape (how much water can our gardens and forests absorb?) and for our infrastructure (how effectively can our downspouts and gutters and storm drains deal with the excess runoff?). Hollin Hills failed both tests, and as a result many of us experienced lakes in our lawns, sudden springs and streams in places that used to be dry, and an overwhelmed stormwater system. Houses on slabs found water in their ducts, and those with basements heard their sump pumps running 24/7.

Some of this disruption was caused by the record-breaking precipitation and is unlikely to recur unless there is another extremely wet year. That could happen—the long-range forecast calls for above-average precipitation through August 2019. But much of it is the result of the geology and history of the land we live on, as was explained on March 10 by Ted Shear, a conservation ecologist from North Carolina State University. The defining feature of Hollin Hills is the long ridgeline that runs from the end of Martha's Loop back to the top of Rebecca Drive and on toward Beacon Hill to the northwest. This “marine terrace” now sits well above sea level, but it is composed of unconsolidated silt and other fine sediments, including marine clay, that shed water (instead of absorbing it) and erode easily. The lower “meadows” to the south, what some of us still call New Hollin Hills, consist of sediments washed off this and other prominences, but the soil has the same ingredients and the same behaviors.

During the 12,000 years since the end of the last Ice Age, the tree community on this ridgeline evolved from arctic taiga (stunted pine, spruce and larch) to temperate deciduous forest, dominated by white oak, American beech, red maple, and native holly. Native Americans lived lightly on this landscape for thousands of years, but in the 500 years since Europeans arrived, most of the native forest has been cut down at least once, for agriculture or lumber or firewood and other uses, causing massive erosion and sedimentation of streams. By 1949, when Hollin Hills came to be, the ridgeline was covered by orchards and the meadows were pastures for dairy cows, and the landscape could absorb a sudden rainstorm.

Fast forward seventy years, and the biggest stormwater impacts of residential development have come not from our houses but from our roads, which cover a greater area than all the rooftops and patios and driveways combined. Unfortunately, those roads are the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Transportation, which views water as a nuisance, something to be channeled as quickly as possible off the pavement and into the nearest stream. The resulting “firehose effect” has already blown out Paul Spring Branch and its tributaries. A lot of the

Dealing with Drainage and Runoff

- If there's standing water all over your yard, or the grass can't compete with the moss, perhaps your soil is compacted. You may want to core-aerate the lawn and put down a few hundred pounds of pelletized limestone or gypsum (I call Oscar Chavez).
- A green roof might not be a good idea in a shady neighborhood, but any of us could install a rain barrel.
- A rain garden accomplishes the same thing by creating a designated wet place for excess runoff and then populating it with shrubs and perennials that like wet feet.
- If there's water in your ducts, you may need to repair your foundation or install a French drain to lead the water away from the house. (Robert Fina's company and others can do this.)
- And above all we need to plant new trees. Our landscape is now mature, which means that we can expect to lose one-third of our shade trees every ten years. The only way to restore and maintain our temperate deciduous forest is to start planting the oaks, beeches, maples, and hollies that will replace them. Those trees will absorb a lot of water.



runoff from our yards and gardens also winds up in roadside ditches or underground storm drains. But with the record rainfall come new routes for runoff, down the slopes between the roads and directly onto our neighbor's property.

Since I live on top of that “marine terrace” ridgeline, my runoff will become my neighbor's problem unless I do something about it. Fortunately, there are lots of things—several of them listed above—that we all can do to help the landscape absorb more of the rain that falls on it.

It may not be possible to get back to a pristine forest landscape, but we can take steps to achieve a better balance with the water in that landscape.

—Paul B. Phelps

ABSENTEE BALLOT / PROXY

Civic Association of Hollin Hills
General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, April 3, 2019

CAHH members who cannot attend this meeting may mark this absentee ballot (one ballot per member household), sign, and print name, address, and date. Ballots must be received by the recording secretary prior to the meeting.

Send ballot to:

Mohra Gavankar, CAHH Secretary
7702 Elba Road
Alexandria, VA 22306

If you decide to attend, having submitted this ballot, you are obliged to retrieve it prior to voting at the meeting. This ballot counts as a presence in reckoning a meeting quorum.

Your Signature

Print Name

Print Address

Date

Check here if you are giving your proxy to another CAHH member and indicate that member's name below.

I give my proxy to:

Proxy holder's name (print)

Proxy holder's address (print)