

# Farmington Civic Association

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## *The President's Letter*

Hello, Farmington Neighbors!

The holidays are behind us and we are starting our new year. I am looking forward to finding out what this year has to bring.

As usual, the Farmington Civic Association (FCA) remains busy. New cameras were installed at the entrance, and the entrance (along with the first median) was decorated for the holidays with assistance from the Garden Club. The Garden Club also held their annual holiday decorating contest: congratulations to Mrs. Helen Allen for being this year's winner. The FCA has also coordinated with the city regarding the bushes on the front median. If it has not happened already, you may notice the bushes being trimmed and shaped as recommended by a master gardener with the Virginia Cooperative Extension (thanks to the Garden Club for arranging for that consultation).

If you have overlooked paying your 2024 membership dues, it is not too late. We appreciate your support. Payments can be mailed to the P.O. Box or sent electronically via Paypal from our website. Membership is only \$50/year, a low ask for the myriad benefits of the FCA, including the lovely landscaping on the medians, events, this newsletter, and many other things. Thank you to all who have paid your dues and are doing the work of continuing to make this neighborhood a wonderful place to live.

Stay safe and see you around the neighborhood,

**Connie Vatsa, President**

# Hampton PD, Farmington Residents Turn Out For National Night out

National Night Out is community-building event that promotes cooperation between local law enforcement and neighborhood communities. In recent years, Farmington has been lucky enough to have a good showing from the Hampton PD and neighborhood residents to discuss public safety issues, and this year was no different.

Office Birdsong of the Hampton PD gave most of the advice, but a few other notable attendees spoke briefly and/or took questions following the primary presentation: these attendees included Mayor Tuck, Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, and Police Chief Jimmie Wideman. It turns out Wideman is a Farmington resident. If you didn't know, now you do!

The officers present gave a number of tips on keeping yourself and your valuables safe. One of the easiest ways to keep petty crimes down is by locking your cars and putting any valuables out of sight, preferably in the trunk of your vehicle. Do not store your weapons in your vehicle, as they're frequent targets of theft. If you're going to be out of town, you can call the non-emergency line (757-727-6111) and arrange for the police to check in on your property occasionally until you come back. As well, the Hampton PD urged people to get to know their neighbors and ask them to pick up your mail while you're out of town, as piled-up mail is a surefire sign to crooks that you aren't home. And if you're mailing payments, it's better to drop them off at the post office, or an official USPS mailbox, than your residential mailbox, as it's much easier to steal checks and cash out of your home mailbox.

Residents had a few questions and concerns. Numerous residents brought up issues of speeding. The police responded that the more calls they get about speeding in a particular area, the more likely they are to devote resources there, so please call the non-emergency line if you witness a lot of speeding somewhere in Hampton. When a resident asked about the increased speeding fine in Farmington, the officers clarified that the increased fine is only for Farmington Blvd, not for the entire neighborhood. Snacks and beverages were provided to residents and the police officers by the FCA (Farmington Civic Association). We hope you turn out next year for this important, community-building event.



*Vice Mayor Gray (left) and Mayor Tuck (center) traveled to Farmington for National Night Out*



*Chief Wideman (right) with members of the FCA*



## NEW SECURITY CAMERAS



The FCA has paid for the purchase/installation of new digital cameras in the front of the neighborhood. The old analog cameras had a hard time identifying the make/model of vehicles in low-lighting conditions. The new cameras are better able to identify vehicles in situations where the Hampton PD requests help in investigating criminal activity in Farmington. For information re: the security camera use policy, please visit <https://farmingtonva.com/> and select "Community Information".

## *FCA Members Cleaning Up!*



*Civic-minded members of the FCA Board turned out to clean the median on Farmington Blvd.*

On Saturday, October 7th, a group from our Farmington neighborhood gathered at the corner of Whetstone and Farmington Boulevard to clean and beautify the area. Those present, with the exception of Mr. Alves, were all members of the Farmington Civic Association Executive Board: Mike Chapman, Bobby Whitted, Ray Alves, Pam Kelly, and Alex Norwood. The group worked diligently from 9:00 to 11:00 AM, sweeping, raking and bagging debris for the city to pick up. The participants had fun while working and greeting FCA members who were either out for their morning walk or driving past. Participants pledged to periodically monitor the area to ascertain community needs. Should there be others that desire to participate, we welcome you. Our neighborhood is one that we are extremely proud of, and we want to do our fair share to keep it that way. For more information on neighborhood cleanup activities, please contact any of the participants, or contact the FCA board at [farmingtonhptva@gmail.com](mailto:farmingtonhptva@gmail.com)

**Alex Norwood**

## *Holiday Decorations Winner*

Congratulations to the winner of the annual Farmington Holiday Decorations Contest, sponsored by the Farmington Garden Club! This year's winner is Mrs. Helen Allen of 6 Lansdown Circle, whose home showed some true blue holiday spirit. If you see Mrs. Allen around the neighborhood, please congratulate her and thank her for helping to keep Farmington a beautiful place to live.

**Vik Vatsa, Editor**



*Holiday winner, Mrs. Helen Allen*

## **STORM DRAIN WARNING**

Please sweep up and bag any leaves on the curb of your property adjacent to storm drains. When leaves enter the drains, they intensify neighborhood flooding during heavy rains, making it more likely that vehicles owned by you and your neighbors could be severely damaged by driving through standing water. If, through hardship or disability, you are unable to rake these leaves yourself, please contact the FCA Board at [farmingtonhptva@gmail.com](mailto:farmingtonhptva@gmail.com) for assistance.

**Vik Vatsa, Editor**



## General Membership Meeting: Marcus Alert

The FCA hosted a General Membership meeting on Nov 27th, 2023. The topic was 988, and Hampton's implementation of the crisis system known as Marcus Alert that is being rolled out statewide. Speaking to these issues was our own FCA President Connie Vatsa, who is Marcus Alert Coordinator of the Hampton-Newport News CSB (Community Services Board). 988 is the new, national, 3-digit number for the Suicide and Crisis Prevention Lifeline. The lifeline provides confidential support for people in distress or their loved ones 24/7. The Marcus Alert system is new to Virginia and began operating as of April 4th, 2023. The Marcus Alert system involves both 988 call takers and 911 call takers triaging behavioral health crises into 4 levels and coordinating with both call centers and local resources to provide an appropriate response based on the level.

Level 1 involves individuals with increased anxiety, depression, or other types of emotional distress; 988 call takers will provide Level 1 individuals with support and information regarding local services and resources. Level 2 involves individuals who are experiencing suicidal ideation without a plan or means for engaging in minor self-injuries; the 988-call center will arrange for a regional team of behavioral health clinicians to respond in person to these individuals. The regional teams that respond in Hampton are based out of the Western Tidewater CSB in Suffolk. Level 3 involves individuals who are experiencing suicidal ideation with a plan and means, individuals who are verbally aggressive and making threats, or individuals experiencing significant hallucinations or delusions; the 911 call center will dispatch a police officer and request a Hampton-Newport News CSB clinician to meet officers on scene for these individuals. Level 4 involves individuals who have or are attempting suicide as well as individuals who are actively assaulting others. Any situation where a firearm is present and accessible on the scene is also a Level 4. For all Level 4 scenarios, the 911 call center will dispatch first responders who can contact CSB clinicians once the immediate safety concerns have been addressed. The system is designed so there is no wrong way for someone to contact the proper authorities, whether a citizen calls 988 or 911. The idea is that the call centers can coordinate and transfer with each other so that law and enforcement and mental health professionals are dispatched appropriately.

After Ms. Vatsa's summary of these mental health issues, Police Chief Wideman briefly addressed the crowd to discuss the role of the police in the Marcus Alert system.



*Chief Wideman (far right), and other members of the Hampton PD discussed Marcus Alert issues with Hampton citizens after the formal meeting ended.*

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Staff: Vik Vatsa, Editor. We appreciate articles, ideas for articles, as well as general feedback.

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