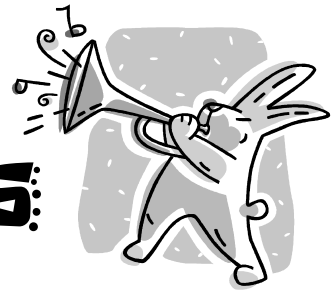




February 2020

## *Almadale Farms News*

Join us at the Clubhouse on  
Saturday, April 4th  
from 2:00 to 3:30



# Almadale Farms

# Easter Egg-stravaganza

**Easter Egg Hunt begins at 2:15.  
Easter Bunny will be available  
for pictures and hugs!**



If raining, we will  
have photos inside  
the Clubhouse.  
Children can pick  
their dozen eggs  
from a basket.

## **Our Neighborhood Needs You!**

**Christy Abney**

When I was house hunting several years ago, one of my top priorities was a neighborhood with an active HOA and fun activities so my family would have an opportunity to hang out and get to know our neighbors. Many families I've spoken to want the same thing. Fun neighborhood activities make a neighborhood more attractive to buyers and more enjoyable to live in. After speaking with some members of Halle Plantation's Activity Committee, we thought we could try something a little new. Each of their neighborhood activities has a lead, and they are responsible for being sure that event happens. It doesn't mean you have to do it all yourself. Just volunteer to be the leader of that event for 2020, get a date scheduled on the calendar, enlist volunteers (I already have a list of some neighbors who are willing to help), and coordinate it. We have many new families too, so please get involved, and let's make sure these fun events continue to happen. Many of these activities have been done before so the flyers, contacts, games, refreshments, and locations have already been figured out for you.

Here is a list of all our recent neighborhood activities, and if you have ideas for more and are willing to be the coordinator, please email me at [christyswanzy@hotmail.com](mailto:christyswanzy@hotmail.com) and we can add it to the calendar. If you have any questions about what an event usually entails, I'll be glad to talk with you about that as well. Thanks neighbors! Christy Abney at 1806 Hartwell Manor N

- **Easter Egg Hunt at the Clubhouse**
- **National Night Out and Back to School Party** (new event) – lead, Christy Abney on Tuesday evening Aug. 4
- **July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade**
- **Fall Fest**
- **Fall Movie Night at the Clubhouse**
- **Santa at the Clubhouse**
- **Pet Party or Parade** (new event and I know we have lots of animal lovers)

**Annual Meeting February 20**

# What's Happening to Our Songbirds?

Will Stafford



After you start erecting bird feeders in your back yard, sooner or later you will likely attract more than you've bargained for, wild bird predators, both two and four legged.

Of the four-legged variety, the National Audubon Society has identified domestic and feral cats as the most significant contributor to the decline of songbird populations in the United States. It is estimated that there are approximately 55 million domestic cats and 45 million feral cats in the United States. That's a lot of cats.

Most are proficient hunters and kill millions of songbirds yearly. There is a solution to this problem--responsible cat owners.

What about winged songbird predators? While cats are a serious problem, songbirds also face real dangers from the air. Crows can be a serious predator but the Cooper's hawk is by far the most dangerous. Back when I was growing up in a rural area in West Tennessee, the Cooper's hawk was referred to as the chicken hawk and was greatly feared by farmers in the poultry business or those with just a few layers. A favorite prey was medium sized pullets--in addition to almost any bird smaller than the hawk. It also would prey on small mammals and reptiles when birds were scarce or elusive. There was a concentrated effort to eradicate all hawks, both by farmers and hunters who resorted to shotguns, poison and traps. They were almost successful. Thankfully, with due consideration for our songbirds and poultry, hawks have made a dramatic comeback with an amazing increase in numbers.



How do you recognize a Cooper's hawk? The Cooper's hawk approximates the size of an average crow, is 14-20 inches long, weighs approximately 12-14 ounces and has a wingspan of approximately 2 1/2 to 3 feet. It has a dark head, piercing black surrounded by yellow ringed eyes, a light breast heavily crossed with narrow horizontal reddish brown stripes and a tail whose underparts are marked by dark gray and white stripes.

zontal reddish brown stripes and a tail whose underparts are marked by dark gray and white stripes.

Are feeders just smorgasbords for hawks.... and occasionally other predators? Since moving to Almadale Farms in 1997, I have maintained songbird feeders in my back yard. For the first several years the birds were unmolested. I have continued to maintain three feeders with varying menus which attract numerous songbirds including jays, cardinals, chickadees, juncos, titmice, finches, doves, thrashers, siskins, woodpeckers and many other varieties. A few years back my son and I were viewing the bird feeders through our kitchen window and he inquired about the very large bird sitting in what is now our 25' crepe myrtle. It was a Cooper's hawk seemingly unafraid and staring directly at us through the

window. Finally, it flew away. Later, as I walked around my back yard, I found the telltale presence of the hawk's recent visit. After its meal, the hawk had flown to a favorite niche to devour its feast, leaving only feathers and skull. Hawks waste nothing and gobble down their victims completely--feathers, bones and other body parts. The indigestible parts are compressed into hard pellets and regurgitated. This drama will be repeated over and over. If you ever see a small pile of feathers in your yard, it's not difficult to guess what has been coming to dinner. In my back yard, the Cooper's hawk favorite target is the dove. The Eurasian dove, the largest of the dove family, seems to have disappeared.

Hawks have to eat. I was once very resentful about having the Cooper's hawk in my back yard until fully understanding and appreciating that hawks only do what they have been programmed by nature to do--eating song birds on which their survival depends. My primary concern has always been for the purple martins that migrate annually in March from Brazil to the 20 or more homes--mine included--of Almadale Farms residents who provide man made housing. Young martins become easy marks for the hawks. Hawks were once just incidental visitors to Almadale Farms but not any more. They have become permanent residents and no longer migrate when the weather changes. Recently, for the first time I even received a visit from a pair of hawks. With amazement I have watched the skill and speed of a hawk attack while regretting the loss of songbirds. If you wish to discourage a hawk from visiting your yard, you might try closing down your feeding station for a week or so in hopes that the hawks will spend more time with your neighbors. However, when the songbirds discover that you've reopened your feeding station, they will return and so will the hawks.



*Will Stafford is a Master Gardener and has been an organic gardener for over 40 years and a resident of Almadale Farms since 1997. Will's articles appear bi-monthly in the Almadale Farms Newsletter. He also writes for Nature Society News, a national publication dedicated to purple martins, and has also written for Wolf River Currents, a publication of the Wolf River Conservancy and Diggin' It!, the Shelby County*

*Master Gardeners' newsletter. Will has spoken about the culture of and having success with purple martins as well as organic gardening and has done extensive volunteer work for local horticultural organizations. Will holds B. S. and M. A. degrees from the University of Memphis with an emphasis on European History and English. He has done post graduate work at the University of Arizona. Before retirement in 1998, Will was a Regional Sales and Pension Manager for the Principal Financial Group.*

*If you have any questions about anything that grows, flies or crawls, send an email to Will (tigerwill1@aol.com).*



Congratulate your graduating Seniors in the Spring Newsletter!  
Send a picture and short bio to [mj.almadalefarms@gmail.com](mailto:mj.almadalefarms@gmail.com)

**Annual Meeting February 20**



So you think you’ve found that “special furry someone” that matches your soul, and you bring them home for the first time... but the magic fizzles when your new feline roommate seems aloof and indifferent to your affections in their new environment. Don’t fret – we’ve compiled a

list of all of our tricks of the trade when it comes to winning over the hearts of these complex creatures.

**Play it cool** – cats need space to explore their new digs. They use all five senses to explore new spaces, and they need time and space to map it out. Our tendency as humans is to want to cuddle and hold them right away, but the best approach is to let them come to you when they are ready to interact. Be sure to designate a nice little cozy “hideaway” for them to retreat to when they are feeling anxious or overwhelmed. A cardboard box with a cutout serves as a great spot for cats to decompress and process their new environment. After a few moments to collect themselves, they will often rejoin the household for interaction with their new human roommate. They should also have a safe, quiet place for their litterbox and dishes. A clean litterbox is very important to cats, as they are quite fastidious creatures and, much like us, refuse to use a dirty restroom.

**Get on their level** – cats are intimidated when people stoop over them. They are prey animals by nature, and are easily frightened when introduced to a new environment. Spending some time on the floor with your new compadre will ease their anxiety, and make you seem more like a playmate than a threat. Speak in a soft voice, and make slow, deliberate movements. Using toys, especially the toys attached to wands, can entice your cat to engage in play, at what they consider to be a safe distance. Laser pointers are also a great way to engage shy kitties in playtime, without hovering too closely.

**Let them come to you** – some cats will warm up to you right off the bat, others will take a bit more time to read you and decide if you’re worthy of their affections. Not all cats are cuddly by nature... some would prefer to bond with their humans from afar, and initiate contact on their own time. When the cat is ready to bond, they will commonly exhibit certain bonding behaviors, such as kneading or bunting. “Bunting” is a typical behavior of a cat

that is attempting to say hello and initiate contact with their human. Cats have scent glands located on the top of their head, and sides of their face, and when they initiate contact using these areas of their body, they are “marking” you as their human. This is quite a privilege, and indicates that they have accepted you.

**Food is love** – once your new feline sidekick has decided that you’re an okay dude, it’s time to offer them a yummy morsel as a token of appreciation for their affections. Cats love crunchy treats that have points, so star- or triangle-shaped treats are always a winner. Tuna or chicken are typically acceptable flavors for most kitties.

**Know when to back off** – nobody likes a clinger. All cats have a time limit on their window of affection, some longer than others. Be sure to read your kitty’s body language, pick up on their cues, and respect their personal space. Flattened ears, an aggressively switching tail, and dilated pupils are typically a good indication that your cat is ready to disengage. Back away slowly, and pick up your bruised, trampled ego. After some time apart, your new best friend will be ready to bond again.

Adding a feline companion to your home can be a very rewarding experience, but it is most certainly not the same experience as bringing home a dog. Cat ownership isn’t for everyone, and it helps to manage your expectations of cat ownership and cat behaviors prior to obtaining a cat. By respecting the boundaries of a new cat, and allowing them the opportunity to settle into their new home at their own pace, you will earn their trust, which they will reward with a lifelong friendship.



the pet  
hospitals

we know pets | [thepethospitals.com](http://thepethospitals.com)

Wolf River Boulevard @ Houston Levee

Main: (901) 850-7330  
Grooming: (901) 457-2905  
[staff@thepethospitals.com](mailto:staff@thepethospitals.com)

Monday - Friday  
7:00am - 6:00pm

Every other Saturday  
7:30am - 12:00pm



## Slow Down In The Neighborhood

Remember that the speed limit in our neighborhood, and all Collierville neighborhoods, is 20 miles per hour.

When driving in neighborhoods and especially in school zones, and near bus stops, watch out for

young people who may be thinking about getting to school, but may not be thinking about getting there safely or the traffic around them.



Every driver should remember the following about elementary school children:

- They become easily distracted and may start across the street without warning.
- They don’t understand the dangers of moving vehicles.
- They can’t judge vehicle speeds or distances.
- They may be blocked from your view by the bus or other objects, shrubs, trees, or parked vehicles.
- Most importantly, children EXPECT vehicles to stop for them at the bus stop.



1851 Hartwell Manor N.  
Collierville, TN 38017  
Phone: 861-1028  
[www.almadalefarms.org](http://www.almadalefarms.org)

## Board of Directors

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[renee.almadalefarms@gmail.com](mailto:renee.almadalefarms@gmail.com)

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Secretary

**Mary Jane Doran**

Text: 491-4687  
[mj.almadalefarms@gmail.com](mailto:mj.almadalefarms@gmail.com)

**John Erickson**



## Spring Garage Sale April 24th & 25th



[daphneinoffice@almadalefarms.org](mailto:daphneinoffice@almadalefarms.org)

Daphne's Office Hours  
Tuesday 9:00-3:00 &  
Thursday 9:00-12:00

## Almadale Farms Notes

- Visit [almadalefarms.org](http://almadalefarms.org) to sign up for Neighborhood emails & to register as a resident for the FLOCK cameras.
- On our website you can also find all the resources needed for Architectural Changes, Clubhouse Rentals, Calendar of Events, etc.
- **Almadale Farms Annual Homeowners' Meeting will be Thursday, February 20th.** Mark your calendars to attend and learn what's happening in the neighborhood! 7:00 pm at the Clubhouse. Check-in begins at 6:30.
- The **Spring Garage Sale** is set for Friday & Saturday, April 24th & 25th. Daphne will be placing ads in the newspapers. Feel free to place your own ad as well. There will be balloons for your mailbox in a basket on her office door at the clubhouse.
- **Grass, leaves, dirt, etc should not be swept or blown into the street gutters & drains.** After mowing, please sweep & clean the street gutter in front of you home. Leaves should be raked & properly disposed of on a regular basis. TOC Leaf Collection continues until the last Friday in March.
- Please place your trash carts and bags at the curb **no earlier than Sunday evening**. Also, **store your cart out of sight from the street** once the pick-up has been made.
- **Page Robbins Adult Day Care Center** is in need of Paper Towels & Toilet Paper. Contact [joyce@pagerobbins.org](mailto:joyce@pagerobbins.org)
- Housekeeper seeking homes to clean weekly, bi-weekly and monthly. Over 10 years experience. Excellent current references.  
**Ernestine Bell 901-607-0736**
- **Homeowners are responsible for the working order of their lamp post sensors.** Email Daphne if you need a light bulb or glass panel replaced. The HOA is making its way around the neighborhood for painting all mailbox and lamp posts.
- As per our CC&Rs, **political signs are not allowed.**



## Welcome To The Neighborhood!!!

**Sharon & Kevin Hekman**  
1965 Almadale Farms Parkway

**Emerson & Angelica Wohlenberg**  
1843 Hartwell Manor W