

# Tollgate Fare

Mar 2013

[www.tollgateway.org](http://www.tollgateway.org)

## Social

Thank you to Edie and Tom for opening their home for the December 2012 Tollgate Christmas party. It was a beautiful setting and their warmth and hospitality enriched our holiday season.

Just a reminder from the Tollgate Calendar that the Spring Social will be on Sunday, May 5th from 2-5 PM, in the parking area at the end of the cul-de-sac. Please come and bring an appetizer or a dessert to share. Tollgate will take care of the rest.

## Landscape Tour

Prior to the Spring Social, Marie Murray (Landscape Chairperson) and Bob Donaldson (Trees Chairperson) will be leading a tour of the Tollgate grounds to highlight recent and planned improvements. The tour will begin at 1 PM from the front of #118.

## Easter Egg Hunt

Caitlyn and Hannah Knittig are organizing an Easter Egg Hunt. Egg hunting activities will begin at 1 PM on Easter Sunday, March 31st. Participants should gather in the lawn between 117 and 119 at that time. Children of all ages are welcome to participate.

## Trash and Recycling

Homeowners who do not use garbage cans are kindly requested to use extra strong/thick garbage bags. Spring is bringing increased activity by Raccoons, Rabbits and Rats who are chewing and scattering the garbage. Consider spraying the bags with ammonia or putting them out early in the morning, rather than the night before. Even if you use garbage cans, make sure the lids are TIGHT. Raccoons are very clever and adept at opening them! Finally please remember to remove trash and recycling containers from the curb on Wednesday evening.

## Rodent Control

The City of Falls Church is home to a large population of Norway rats. These rats generally stay within an area of 150 feet in diameter when searching for food and water. Homeowners are encouraged to keep in mind the following factors that contribute to rat activity:

**Food and Water:** Rats must have food and water to survive. Food sources are found in yards and garages and can lead to a rodent problem. They include garbage, bird seed, peanuts, pet food, dog waste, and fruit and nuts that have fallen to the ground from trees. In addition, locations with standing water or property near bodies of water are more likely to support rat activity. Eliminating food and water sources is the best way to prevent rodent activity.

**Hiding Places:** Rats like to build their nests in hidden areas under structures and trash piles where they feel safe. A rat will look for a hiding place after it has found a food source nearby.

Homeowners are encouraged to report any suspected rat activity around the common areas to the Board immediately.

## Gaining Architecture Approvals

Homeowners are reminded to obtain Architecture Committee approval before making exterior modifications to their property. Exterior painting and staining; replacements involving roofs, gutters, shutters, porches, decks, siding, doors (front/storm and garage), light fixtures, fences/walls; re-pointing of brick steps, chimneys, walkways; and driveway/parking pad repair are examples of items requiring approval. When planning exterior work, please review the Association guidelines on our website and then contact Garry Sauner at (703) 614-8051 before submitting an exterior work request. The Architecture Committee usually renders a decision in less than 7-10 days and very often is able to assist homeowners with choices.

## Landscape/Tree Committee Update

It is almost that time of year when we ask that you please start watering your young trees and shrubs! Once the growing season begins, if it hasn't rained 1" in the last week, get out the hose weekly and let it run for a several minutes around the young trees -- or fill up the green gator bag if one has been placed on your tree by the Tree Committee. Young trees need 1" of rain a week for the first 3 years of life. New bushes need similar water amounts.

## Your Tollgate Way Website

<http://www.tollgateway.org> has information including the Tollgate asset management plan, the budget, tree inventory, Board meeting minutes, the Association Covenants and other documents important for residents. Board meetings are held at 9:00 a.m. on the first Saturday of the month from September through May and are open to all residents. If you plan to attend, please let a board member know so that we have enough coffee, juice and other goodies.