



## 2025 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Your HOA Board members for 2025:

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Treasurer: Tom Gilliom [tgilliomconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:tgilliomconsulting@gmail.com)

Secretary: Dedra Markovich [markovich.dedra@gmail.com](mailto:markovich.dedra@gmail.com)

ARB Chair: Chris Kerlin [chrismkerlin@yahoo.com](mailto:chrismkerlin@yahoo.com)

Members: Mark Gildersleeve [mark.gildersleeve@gmail.com](mailto:mark.gildersleeve@gmail.com)

Barbara Sayward [bahs53@aol.com](mailto:bahs53@aol.com)

**CHECK OUT THE \*NEW\* BLACKBIRD FARMS WEBSITE:** <https://blackbirdfarmshoa.org/>

**HOA BOARD NEWS AND UPDATES:** We've been hard at work on a number of neighborhood projects!

Lindberg Entrance Flower Beds - The flower beds at the entrance continue to be meticulously maintained and improved by the dedicated homeowners Beth and Mike Faith. The neighborhood is very grateful for their many hours of volunteer service to keep the entrance looking beautiful!



Common area tree upkeep – This spring and summer have seen incredible growth in the neighborhood trees, requiring a great deal of pruning and upkeep. The City of West Lafayette has specific requirements for clearance over sidewalks (8 feet clearance), streets (15 feet clearance) and signs must be clearly visible. The Board has engaged an arborist to assist with trees in the common area and public rights-of-way (space between sidewalk and street) to ensure compliance with the requirements. If you have trees that are overhang the sidewalks or streets (that are not in public right of way), please ensure that they are trimmed to the required clearance. If you need assistance with trimming, please reach out to the Board for assistance or referrals: [blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com](mailto:blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com)

Meadow-Morphosis – The pocket park on Kestral Drive is coming along nicely! After removal of the turf grass last year, Board members sowed native prairie seeds through the area in January, and then planted over 400 native plant plugs along the park edge and pathway in May. In August, 4 cubic yards of mulch were spread along the pathway, which will lead to a bench nestled among the pollinator garden; additionally, many invasive weeds were removed to make way for the intentional planting. The park is already proving fruitful as many species of butterflies were enjoying the garden during Board work days. We appreciate everyone's patience as we endure the 'ugly duckling' phase, and trust you all enjoy the 'glow up' to continue through this summer and especially next year as the garden becomes well-established and the pollinators take full advantage of it!



## **BLACKBIRD FARMS HOA ANNUAL NEIGHBORHOOD GARAGE SALE**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 23– 8:00am – 2:00pm**

Clean out your garage and closets and send those long-past treasures out for new adventures! The annual garage sale is ***THIS SATURDAY***—the weekend before Purdue classes start. The Board thanks Beth Faith and Erin Gildersleeve for their organizing efforts! Please contact [blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com](mailto:blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com) to learn more.



### **YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS YOU!**

The volunteer Board of Directors are elected each year to conduct neighborhood business and care for common areas. Whether you have served on our board over the years or are new to Blackbird Farms, we hope you will consider volunteering some time to serve your neighborhood.

We are always seeking volunteers to serve on the Board, ARB and subcommittees. The Board meets the second Wednesday each month at the Blackbird Farms Apartments Clubhouse. Responsibilities are shared among members, according to interest and expertise, making it manageable for everyone. Board candidates are established in September, with elections held in November. Please consider joining us to serve and shape the neighborhood, and reach out to one of us with any questions or thoughts you may have about serving as a neighborhood volunteer.

### **ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD -- FENCE, SHED AND EXTERNAL HOME IMPROVEMENTS**

The HOA Board of Directors would like to remind all homeowners of the Architectural Review Board *PROCEDURES, STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES* <http://www.blackbirdfarmshoa.org/architectural-review-board.html>

These Guidelines (revised by the HOA Board in 2025) describe the process for submitting and reviewing proposals for alterations and improvements to **lot exteriors**, including:

- Structural improvements (room additions, porch/patio additions, **decks**)
- Alterations to home exterior (changes in siding, garage doors, **sheds**)
- Exterior lot changes (**fences and sheds**, awnings/canopies, retaining walls, landscaping adjacent to common areas or that may change views of neighbors)
- Excavations (drainage tiles, ditches, leveling or adding fill that could change drainage)

The ARB's primary mission is to ensure harmony among all homes, structures, and improvements, to facilitate cooperation and good will among neighbors, and to assist in maintaining high real estate values. To be fair to all homeowners, any project undertaken without the express approval of the ARB will be required to stop until approved (if appropriate). Failure to do so will require a homeowner to modify the project at their own cost to bring it into compliance with the Guidelines, as requested by the ARB.

**NEW FOR 2025:** Submit your ARB proposal via the Blackbird Farms website! <https://blackbirdfarmshoa.org/submit-project-proposal/>

### **FALL TREE PLANTING**

West Lafayette Tree Friends and the City of West Lafayette are again providing trees to our neighborhood this fall. Homeowners identified by the City for a street tree planted in your easement/right of way will receive a notice and application link. If you are identified and need assistance completing this application, contact the Board at [blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com](mailto:blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com).



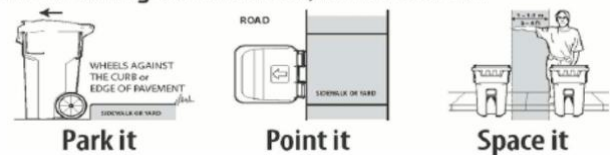


### **TRASH PICK UP, PLACEMENT AND STORAGE**

**RISE AND SHINE, HOMEOWNERS!** Blackbird Farms is first on West Lafayette's Thursday trash pickup routes, arriving **shortly after 7:00am**. If your trash and recycling is contained in rigid cans or totes, you may place them out on Wednesdays evening; if your items are in bags and easily accessed by wildlife, please place them out on Thursday before 7:00am. The city has cameras on their trucks and will charge for a special trip to pick up late trash!

The City has asked us to remind homeowners to place all toters **at least three feet from any other object**, so that the truck can pick them up without tipping over other cans, hitting mailboxes or vehicles!

**When taking out the trash, remember to:**



Please note that the neighborhood Covenants (Article V, Sect. 21) require that **trash cans (and recycle/lawn waste bins) must be stored out of view of other homes and the street**, except when placed at the street for collection. Please do not leave your trash/recycling containers in front of your garage or around the side or back of the house.

### **LAWN AND PROPERTY UPKEEP**

The beauty of the neighborhood is dependent upon each homeowner caring for the external appearance of their property. Residents are expected to comply with the City of West Lafayette standards regarding lawn height and areas of uncontrolled overgrowth (max height of 10"). Please notify the HOA Board [blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com](mailto:blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com) of concerns about the appearance of any areas that you think may need attention. If you are unable to care for your own yard, please contact the Board for help understanding the requirements or where you can find assistance. Mowed yards, trimmed trees and bushes, and trash cans out of sight are the **minimum expectations**, and all contribute to a well-maintained appearance of all of our homes in Blackbird Farms. Thank you for doing your part to keep our neighborhood beautiful!



### **NEIGHBORHOOD DOG WALKERS**

**WE CONTINUE TO SEE BAGS OF DOG WASTE BEING LEFT ON AND ALONG SIDEWALKS!** West Lafayette City Ordinance (4-4 and 4-11) includes a fine for dog walkers who do not clean up after their dog in others' yards and common areas. **Dog walkers MUST pick up after your dog, and take the waste with you for disposal—do not leave the bag in the common area walkways or in others' yards!** The bags end up in storm drains and find their way into Blackbird Farms Pond, which is harmful to the environment, fish and wildlife. Increasing numbers of neighbors have video doorbells and cameras—Anyone identified violating City ordinance and/or neighborhood covenants will be held responsible!



### **POND RULES**

Blackbird Farms Pond is private and for use by Blackbird Farms Residents and their accompanied guests only.

- No public fishing
- Fishing is catch and release—no fish may be taken away from the pond
- Ice fishing is not allowed
- No swimming, boats, canoes or kayaks are allowed on the pond

When enjoying the pond or surrounding area, please ensure that you clean up your area and take any trash or refuse with you when you leave. If you observe any issues occurring at the pond area, ***do not address them yourself***—please contact the WLPD to enforce the **Trespassing Order** on file with their department.

### **NO SOLICITING NEIGHBORHOOD**

Last summer, representatives of a pest control company from Indianapolis were soliciting door-to-door in the neighborhood and was asked to leave by a couple of board members. In following days, the Tippecanoe County Sheriff's Department posted concerns regarding aggressive sales tactics noted by several county residents, along with a reminder that **soliciting of any kind** requires a county permit—even with a permit, ***door-to-door soliciting of any kind is prohibited in BBF***. If you experience solicitors in the neighborhood, please contact the WLPD or Sheriff's Office.

### **NO AIR BnBs IN BLACKBIRD FARMS**

As a reminder, the operation of an AirBnB/VRBO violates neighborhood **COVENANTS AND RESTRICTIONS, Article V, Section 20: No Owner may rent or lease his Dwelling Unit for transient or hotel purposes**. All identified AirBnB/VRBO operations have been and will continue to be ordered to stop operation immediately, cancel all future bookings, and immediately remove postings from all online sites. Failure to do so will result in escalation to legal remedies.

### **ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BLACKBIRD FARMS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION**

Mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting of the Blackbird Farms Homeowners Association. This year's meeting is **Wednesday, November 12, at 7:00pm** at the Blackbird Farms Apartments Clubhouse. The meeting is for all homeowners, during which a report of 2025 HOA business and finances will be discussed, as well as the 2026 proposed budget and election of Board members. Prior to the meeting, homeowners will receive the 2025 financial report, and a ballot for approval of the 2024 Annual Meeting minutes, projected budget for 2026 and slate of candidates to serve on the Board. *We are always interested in more participation on the Board—if you are interested, please reach out to a current Board member to learn more!*

