

2026 FALL NEWSLETTER

Your HOA Board members for 2026 - blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com

President: Jeff Brown

Treasurer: Tom Gilliom

Secretary: Dedra Markovich

ARB Chair: Chris Kerlin

Members: Barbara Sayward, Tony Ku

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

HOA BOARD PROJECT UPDATES:

Meadow-Morphosis – The pocket park on Kestral Drive is in year two of its three-year development plan. After removal of turf grass, sowing native prairie seeds in January 2025, and planting over 400 native plants in May 2025, we let everything take hold in 2026. We appreciate your patience through the process. The mulched pathway leads to a bench that is perfect for enjoying the colorful show this summer, as pollinators and birds take full advantage of the blooms and food sources growing there.

Branching Out – Blackbird Farms is grateful to again be included in “Operation ReLeaf,” receiving 19 free trees (fall 2025-spring 2026) for common areas and parkways/rights-of-way (area between sidewalk and street) from the City and WL Tree Friends. Additionally, we received 5 trees through Robert Suseland, of the Tippecanoe County Soil and Water Conservation District. These trees require mulching to protect them from lawn care equipment, and frequent watering to ensure good root establishment. We have also been kept quite busy with pruning, upkeep and removal, thanks to the numerous storms experienced this summer. The Board thanks neighbors John Haller of Eden Tree Service and Jack O’Grady for their assistance in keeping up with these demands!



Cheers to our Volunteers!

The Board of Directors would like to thank the many volunteers who have generously provided time and expertise to the neighborhood throughout the year. Whether pulling weeds, planting trees, trimming and cleanup of storm-damaged trees, edging and power washing sidewalks, or providing water, a hose or trailer, many neighbors have stepped in to lend a hand. Their help has saved time and the expenses that would have been required to contract out for these services. Please join us in giving a hearty thanks to Beth and Mike Faith, Mark and Erin Gildersleeve, John Haller and family, Jack O’Grady, Dan Dawson, David Ayers, Steve Kovic and Larry Rayburn.

We would also like to thank the City of West Lafayette; Robert Suseland, Tippecanoe County Soil and Water Conservation District; and West Lafayette Tree Friends for their continued support and assistance in the neighborhood beautification efforts!



Welcome Sight – As you come and go each day to school, work and social obligations, we hope that you take a moment to appreciate the beauty of the Lindberg Road entrance gardens and monument walls. The gardens are the work of our very own dedicated neighbors, Beth and Mike Faith. For several years now, they have volunteered their time and worked tirelessly to maintain these areas with loving care. Please take a moment to appreciate these areas, and if you see Beth and Mike out working, say thanks or give them a wave! The board is very grateful for their commitment.

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 alterations 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 directed by the ARB.

Find the application/proposal process on our website: <https://blackbirdfarmshoa.org/submit-project-proposal/>



MCCORMICK ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

The Board welcomed WL Councilor Stacey Burr (District 6) to a meeting earlier this year, where she shared an exciting project coming in mid-2027. The \$7 million project will extend the sidewalk and bike trail and add lighting, along McCormick Road between Cherry Lane and Lindberg Road. This will be a great addition for those who travel McCormick Road, providing increased safety and completing the loop from Lindberg to Cherry Lane, along McCormick, and returning on the trail (behind the eastern border of BBF) from Cherry back to Lindberg. The Board will continue to provide updates as provided by Councilor Burr and the City of West Lafayette.

NEIGHBORHOOD DOG WALKERS

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!*** These bags end up in storm drains and find their way into our 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!

Remember: By City law and neighborhood Covenants—
ALL DOGS MUST BE ON A LEASH AT ALL TIMES!



TRASH PICK UP, PLACEMENT AND STORAGE

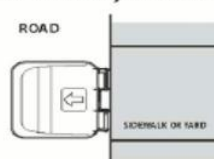
Recently, the City of West Lafayette combined all pickups (trash, recycling and yard waste) to a single day, which is Thursdays for Blackbird Farms. If your trash and recycling is contained in rigid cans or totes, you may place them out on Wednesday evening; if your items are in bags, please wait until Thursday morning, as they are easily accessed and destroyed by wildlife. The city has cameras on their trucks and will charge for a special trip to pick up late trash!

Remember to place all totes ***at least three feet from any other object***, so that trucks can pick them up without tipping over other cans, hitting mailboxes or vehicles!

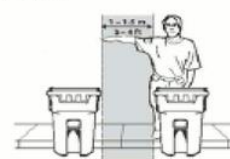
When taking out the trash, remember to:



Park it



Point it



Space it

PLEASE NOTE: 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 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 every homeowner keeping up 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"). If you are unable to care for your yard, please contact the Board for help understanding requirements or where you can find assistance. Mowed yards, trimmed trees and bushes, and trash cans out of sight are the ***minimum expectations!***

Additionally, lawn clutter such as stacks of wood, lawn mowers, wheelbarrows, bicycles, grills and other items should not be persistently left in front yards. Please move such items inside or elsewhere out of sight from streets or sidewalks. Thank you for helping to keep our neighborhood beautiful! Please notify blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com about any areas that you think may need attention.

NO AIR BnBs IN BLACKBIRD FARMS

As a reminder, the operation of an Air BnB or VRBO violates the Blackbird Farms neighborhood **COVENANTS AND RESTRICTIONS**, Article V, Section 20: ***No Owner may rent or lease his Dwelling Unit for transient or hotel purposes.*** All identified Air BnB and 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.

If you believe an Air BnB or VRBO is operating in the neighborhood, please notify the HOA Board as soon as possible.



POND RULES

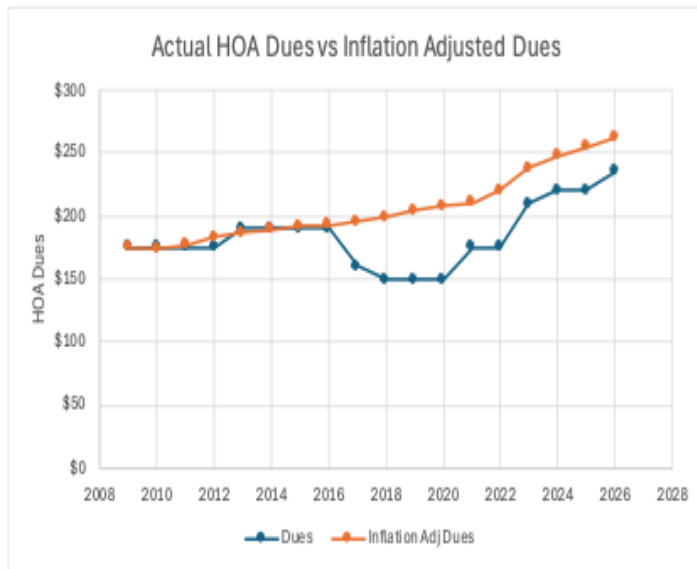
Blackbird Farms Pond is a private pond, for use by Blackbird Farms homeowners, their families, guests or invitees, and all occupants of the home. All users of the pond must adhere to the following rules:

- No public fishing
- Fishing is catch and release only—no fish may be taken away from the pond
- No swimming, boating or skating
- No after dark use
- Ice fishing is not allowed

When enjoying the pond or surrounding area, please ensure that you clean up your area and take all trash and refuse with you when you leave. If you observe any issues or concerns 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

It is the time of year when we seem to experience representatives of pest control companies soliciting door-to-door in the neighborhood. In years past, the Tippecanoe County Sheriff's Department has posted concerns regarding aggressive sales tactics noted by several county residents, along with a reminder that **soliciting of any kind** requires a permit from the Sheriff's Department. **Even with a permit, door-to-door soliciting of any kind is prohibited in BBF.** If you experience solicitors in the neighborhood, we have been directed to contact the WLPD or Sheriff's Office at 311.



BLACKBIRD FARMS ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS

As discussed at last year's Annual Meeting, our Annual Assessments continue to trend below the market-adjusted inflation rate over the last 10 years. The 2026 Board-approved assessment of \$240 remained below the inflation-adjusted rate of \$262. Blackbird Farms Fees also trend far below other neighborhoods of similar size in the area.

A key factor in keeping costs low is the significant number of volunteer hours and services provided by Board members and neighbors—without this help, we would be required to pay for these services. Additionally, the relationships built with the City, granting agencies and other organizations have resulted in major savings in our beautification efforts. A hearty thank you to all of those who donate their time for all of us!

SNOW AND ICE ARE COMING! Just a reminder that West Lafayette City code requires that the owner/occupant of a **property adjacent to a sidewalk must remove snow and ice within six hours after daylight and after snow fall has ceased**. If you have a sidewalk section within your property, please ensure that the snow is cleared according to this code. Blackbird Farms HOA has a contracted snow removal service that is responsible for snow removal on all common drives and sidewalks—please understand that we are not their only client, and they determine when we will be serviced according to their own priorities and staffing. When possible, we ask that residents please refrain from walking before daylight under snowy and icy conditions, as drifts and black ice can be very deceiving in the dark. If you do choose to walk in the dark under these conditions, please understand that you do so at your own risk.

BOARD MEMBER CALL OUT AND RECRUITMENT UNDERWAY!

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

We are always seeking volunteers to serve on the Board of Directors, the Architectural Review Board, and our subcommittees. The Board meets the second Wednesday evening of each month at the Blackbird Farms Apartments Clubhouse. Responsibilities are shared among members, according to member interest and expertise, making it a manageable activity for everyone. Board candidates are established in late September/early October, with elections held in November, as part of the Annual Meeting. Please consider joining us to serve and shape the neighborhood; reach out via email to blackbirdfarmshoa@gmail.com, or contact any of the current Board members with any questions or thoughts you may have about serving as a neighborhood volunteer.

BLACKBIRD FARMS HOA ANNUAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11 – 7:00pm

Blackbird Farms Clubhouse

Guest: WL Councilor Stacey Burr, District 6

