

Notes on handling FHIA email

1. foresthomenews@gmail.com One recommended approach is to use a browser that you don't use for your personal email and to log in once and not log out. That way you don't need to keep the password handy.
2. **Incoming mail:**
Check the incoming mail at least every couple of days. If you miss a message that was a last-minute announcement of an event of interest, respond to the sender, encouraging them to allow more time.

Many incoming messages from residents are not written to be distributed as is, but simply point to information that they think might be of interest to the community. Others may be unclear or ungrammatical. Feel free to get back to the sender for clarification or send the information out using your own words. Think twice before responding to an incoming message as if it were a personal communication. If you don't recognize the sender by name or find them in the contacts list, the message may well be spam; we get plenty of messages from people who want to redesign our website!

Be conservative about what you forward to the list, avoiding messages that are political or promotional. On occasion, a resident may send a message that expresses anger or an extreme point of view. A message that goes out from the foresthomenews account should be courteous and respectful of others even if it reflects a personal viewpoint. If in doubt, check with at least one other board member.

[Special: Messages from GMass or Ajay Goel are to do with the application Caroline Arms used as a temporary fix when Gmail blocked messages in March 2020 – apparently because the FHIA account had been reported by someone as sending spam. Mark them as read and file them in the GMass Account folder.]

If you read a message that you don't deal with but suspect that it should be dealt with, choose the option to Mark as Unread. This option appears as an envelope icon above the message as you read it in Gmail. That way, you and other board members will know the mail has not been dealt with.

Check automatic replies and delete if they are just about being away or that a mailbox is full. If a mail address seems to be invalid, we (the board) do some detective work to see if we should simply delete it or get a new address for the individual.

3. Sending mail:

Messages should be sent **To:** foresthomenews@gmail.com
and **Bcc:** `forest_home_news_mail_list`

If you start typing "for..." these addresses should show up ready to be selected without typing the rest. The correct list for the Bcc: has about 180 entries.

Important: Because a free Gmail account has a limit of 500 outgoing messages per 24 hours, we cannot send more than two messages a day to the entire list. Consider covering more than one topic in a message. If you do this, be sure to have the Subject line mention both topics or indicate that there are several.

Forwarding messages: To forward a message that came into the list, there are two general options. Which is more convenient may depend on the layout of the incoming message. Either approach can result in awkward spacing or font changes and benefit from some manual tweaking.

- Use the Forward function but remove the "Forwarded message" header that shows in the draft message and provide an introduction. Edit the Subject to remove the "Fwd:". Make other adjustments to the Subject as appropriate.
- Compose a new message and copy and paste content from the original – either directly or via a text editor.

Suggestion for convenience: Leave the message that you have sent as "unread" in the Inbox. This was a convention earlier board members had used and provides convenient additional visual highlighting of messages from "Me".

4. Managing contacts and the mail list

Do not add anyone to the list unless they are a Forest Home resident or property owner or unless there is a good reason. We do have some representatives of the Chapel on the list, and we allow former residents to stay on the list if they want.

To add someone to the list, use the Contacts feature and Create Contact. **Also,** give the contact the label *forest_home_news_mail_list* -- this should show up as an option in the More Actions menu (icon with three vertical dots). More detailed instructions on adding someone to the list are in a separate document: https://fhia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/AddPersonToFHIAlist_2021-10-07.docx

Notify the rest of the board by email of the person's contact details, so that they can be contacted about being added to the directory. **IMPORTANT:** FHIA tries (preferably through the relevant street captain) to contact a new resident about being added to the directory and check how much of the information they want included in the next edition of the printed directory. Some people prefer not to have email and/or phone included. Often, although both partners of a couple may want to be on the mailing list, they only want one email address or phone number to be in the directory.

[Note: As of 2021, Caroline Arms and Jeff Holden are both able to update the directory database.]

To drop someone from the list, simply remove the *forest_home_news_mail_list* label. Add a note to the contact record about the removal but do not delete the contact record right away. More detailed instructions are in a separate document: https://fhia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/RemovePersonFromFHIAlist_2021-10-31.docx

Retaining information about previous residents this way proved very useful as we worked on the update to the printed directory. When Montana Petersen was president, she sometimes saved a message with notes about changes or deletions as a log that would be accessible to others later.

Caroline Arms. November 12, 2021