

NEWSLETTER

HOA Officers Elected

The homeowners association Board of Directors have elected the following officers for the 2019 calendar year:

President: David Sager

Secretary: Randy Sands

Treasurer: Phil Craig ♦♦

HOA Board Members

In addition to the officers listed above, the following neighbors are At-Large members of the Board of Directors:

Shane Hickey

Chris Milke

John O'Loughlin

Bret Stine

Chrysa Thear

Mark Wesolowski ♦♦

HOA Board Meetings

Regular Board of Directors meetings are held from 7:00PM to 9:00PM on the following dates: Thursday, June 13 (Sager residence); Thursday, September 17 (Sager residence); and Tuesday, November 14 (Sager residence). All homeowners are welcome to attend. ♦♦

HOA Web Site

The Brookeville Farms HOA web site is located at www.bfmdhoa.info. This site includes information pertaining to the HOA such as Architectural Review forms, minutes from previous board meetings, current and previous newsletters, as well as contact information for board members. ♦♦

Community E-Mail List

The Brookeville Farms community maintains an e-mail distribution list to make it easier to communicate with our neighbors. The e-mail address is "bfneighbors@bfmdhoa.info". This list has been used to find recommendations for service providers, find carpool buddies, and to participate in group purchasing agreements (like, propane and whole-house generators). The Homeowners Association newsletter is also distributed to this list.

To add your e-mail address to the list do the following:

- Using your web browser, go to the HOA web site - www.bfmdhoa.info.
- Select "E-mail List" from the left column.
- Fill in the form at the bottom of the page. ♦♦

Community Cleanup

April 6 was the second annual Community Cleanup Day. The weather held out and a lot of trash was collected from the neighborhood common areas. Eight contractor-size trash bags were filled. Among the items picked up were numerous water bottles, soda cans, beer cans, wine bottles and coffee cups. Also, there were bags of dog poop, two car/truck tires, and a mailbox. Thanks to all of our neighbors who participated. Special thanks to Shane Hickey and Randy Sands for coordinating the event, Randy Sands for hauling the collected trash to the County dump, and Marianne Sands for the photographs. ♦♦



L to R: Chrysa Thear, Shane Hickey, David Sager, Phil Craig, Randy Sands. Not pictured: Marianne Sands, Bret Stine.

Please Care

If you see trash on the common grounds, please pick it up. This could be from someone's overflowing recycle can or from a walker who discarded an empty water bottle. No matter the source of these "eyesores," this is our neighborhood and its condition reflects on all of us. ♦♦

Prep Your Home for Vacation

Completing a few simple tasks before you go away can ensure that you return to your home in the same condition in which you left it.

Foil Burglars

You can easily discourage burglars from staking out your house as a potential target. Making your house look occupied is the number one way to accomplish this.

- Put lights on timers to prevent your house from sitting dark.
- Ensure that doors and windows are locked.
- Put mail and newspapers on hold or ask a trusted neighbor to bring them into the house.
- Park your car inside the garage.
- Don't leave a phone message saying you are out of town.
- Don't announce your plans on social media.
- Leave automatic sprinklers on to create activity at your house and keep your lawn green.
- Continue to run the pump in your pool to prevent algae formation and get a neighbor to check it if you're gone for a long time.
- Trim your lawn before you leave so it doesn't get overgrown in your absence, or schedule a mowing service to come during an extended trip.
- Catch burglars with a motion-sensor light outdoors.

Give Your House a Vacation, Too

- Setting plumbing and electricity to appropriate modes saves money and energy.
- Unplug electronics, small appliances and other cords.
- Put your water heater on vacation mode.
- Set the thermostat to a temperature closer to that of the outdoors (85 degrees in the summer works well) but that still protects your pets, plants and furniture.
- Unplug your refrigerator and leave the door open if you'll be gone for a long time or have no food to keep.

Keep Things Orderly

- Schedule your pet's care, whether they stay with a boarder or have a pet sitter.

- Tell your security companies that you are going away.
- Ask a neighbor to care for your plants or use a self-watering stick.
- Take out the trash.
- Check your smoke detectors to make sure they work.
- Throw out or give away food that will spoil during your trip and seal open packages with plastic bags.
- Run the garbage disposal with half a cup of vinegar and some water.
- Put a half-cup of chlorine in the toilet bowl to prevent bacteria and stains.
- Be sure to dry wet laundry so that it doesn't sit wet while you're gone.
- Give emergency contact information to a neighbor.

Remote system monitoring is another option to ensure that your home will remain in good condition while you're gone. If anything goes wrong, these systems can send you a notification, so that you can address problems while you're away.

Being a homeowner away from home can be stressful, so create peace of mind on your next vacation by setting up your home before you go. ♦♦

Landscaping Ideas to Avoid

Landscaping can take your home's look to the next level, whether for better or for worse. Make sure that you aren't wasting time, money and maintenance in perpetuating a bad landscape. Make sure you avoid these visual disasters to ensure that your home has exceptional curb appeal.

Overdoing It

Landscaping should not overwhelm and overshadow your home. Make sure to choose a variety of shrubs and trees that grow to a particular size that fits your home best. This also means you won't have to spend your time pruning and trimming the plants in your yard – or fighting your way out the front door or to your backyard.

Using One Type of Plant

Don't plant too much of the same type of plant. This makes your house look less than ideal, and it also takes away from the beauty of your home because of monotonous landscaping. If you plant one type of tree in your front yard, what will the landscape offer in the winter when the trees stop flowering?

Landscaping Lawn

A big lawn should not suck up all your resources. A grand area of lush grass is a time, nutrient and water glutton. You can reduce the size of your large lawn by

implementing landscape beds that feature low-maintenance plants like perennials, shrubs and trees. This will distract from a large plot of grass that has no accent flowers or plants. Your home needs some type of greenery other than grass to frame and accent it to give it a unique and colorful touch.

Overgrown Ivy

Ivy creates a beautiful addition of greenery to your home, but don't let ivy climb your house unless you are prepared to do annual pruning. Ivy vines may look nice, but once they are established, they can cover gutters, windows and more. They can also serve as bridges and access ramps for pests and termites. Never let vines climb a frame house.

Large Trees

Be careful not to plant trees too close to your home; this avoids damage that may be done as the tree grows. You also want to avoid plant species that may overrun your yard or your home's proportions.

Landscaping can add curb appeal and make your home stand apart from others on your street if it's done right. Make sure to avoid these landscaping don'ts to keep your home looking as vivacious as ever and to avoid complications from overgrown plants and trees in your yard. ♦

How Pets Get Lost: Fact vs. Fiction

We do everything we can to keep our homes safe and secure for our pets. But even when we close doors, double check windows and lock the back fence, accidents can occur, and pets can go missing. That's why it's important to decipher fact from fiction and understand how four-legged friends can get lost.

Fiction: Indoor Pets Can't Go Missing

If you have a pet that prefers to stay indoors, such as an indoor cat, there's still a chance they could go missing. Indoor pets often sit by windows and glass doors and may escape if they are left open. Keep your pets secure by double checking doors and windows on a regular basis.

Fact: Accidents Can Happen Even with Pet Professionals

Pet sitters and dog walkers spend a lot of time with animals and although they are pet professionals, that doesn't mean accidents can't happen. If pets are around the front door when a sitter or walker comes in, they can easily run outside. To avoid this, use a doorway gate to separate your pet from the entryway used by your pet sitter or walker. This will allow your pet to walk around the house but keep them from getting through when the door opens.

Fiction: Guests in Your Home Are Already Aware of Your Pets

From time to time, maintenance workers or guests may come and go from your home. Whether they're the emergency plumber, a gardener or your new neighbors stopping by to introduce themselves, any guest unfamiliar with your home or pet could accidentally prop a window open or linger with the door open for too long. Make sure to notify new people about your pet as soon as they arrive, share any of their habits and ask them to take precautions so your pet does not get lost. You may also consider putting your pets in their crates if they are wary of new people or known to bolt.

Fact: Children Can Be Forgetful

Many children love to spend quality time with their pets outdoors – it's a wonderful way for them to bond and for both to get more exercise. However, a missed latch on a gate or forgetting to close a door can allow a pet to slip into the neighborhood. Be sure to talk to your children about pet safety and show them how to properly close gates and doors so they can help keep their pets safe at home.

Understanding how pets can get lost is a great step towards keeping them safe and sound – but it's only one step. Ensure your pets are further protected by microchipping them and having them wear collars with identifying tags. They will then have a greater chance of returning should they ever go missing. ♦

Those who desire to give up freedom in order to gain security will not have, nor do they deserve, either one. — President Thomas Jefferson

"If the lessons of history teach us anything it is that nobody learns the lessons that history teaches us." — Anon

"Ninety percent of the politicians give the other ten percent a bad reputation." — Henry Kissinger