

HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

September 15, 2007



HOA Board Meetings

* Wednesday, November 7, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., at Longwood Community Center
All homeowners are welcome to attend. ❖

The Old Oak Tree

Have you noticed the large oak tree at the west entrance to the community? It has a circumference of almost 13 feet (diameter of 4 feet) making it a very old tree. The exact age cannot be determined without counting the rings in a cross-section of the trunk. Oak trees can live 200 or more years.

The Wye Oak at Wye Mills in Talbot County was believed to be more than 400 years old, with a circumference of about 32 feet. It succumbed to a violent thunderstorm in 2002. There is an oak tree, named "The Seven Sisters



Oak", in Lewisburg, Mandeville, Louisiana that measures 37 feet and 2 inches in circumference. It is estimated that it is more than 1,000 years old!

Our oak tree is in danger from vines trying to smother it, salt runoff from the nearby landscaping firm, and neglect. David Bartley, our neighbor from Lubar Drive, has led the effort to safeguard the tree by cutting away the climbing vines and seeking County assistance to stop the runoff. The HOA Board will soon contract to clear the area surrounding

the tree and maintain it. This tree is an invaluable asset to the community. Can we come up with a name for it? ❖

Crime in the Neighborhood

Several instances of theft have been reported recently. These include vehicle windows being broken to remove valuables left inside, items stolen from open garages, and sheds being broken into to steal tools. While we like to think of Brookeville Farms as a safe community, simple protective measures should be used, including:
Keep outside house doors and garage doors locked.

For Your Home:

- Keep your doors and windows locked.
- Never hide keys in obvious places such as under the doormat.
- Keep your garage door closed and locked.
- Keep your vehicles locked and do not leave valuable items in plain sight.
- Never leave your car running while unattended.
- Keep your yard neat and your landscaping trimmed.
- Employ outdoor lighting when possible.
- Keep bicycles and lawn equipment locked up or keep stored inside.

Vacation Security:

- Have a trusted neighbor pick up mail and newspaper.
- Make sure a trusted neighbor is checking your house.
- Make arrangements to have the lawn mowed and the garbage put out.
- Set your light timers to your normal schedule so your home will look lived in.
- Put valuables in a safe while you are away.

Remember to:

- Report any suspicious activity that you see in our neighborhood. ❖

How To Keep Deer Away

Tired of being the local Deer Diner? Losing vegetables,

fruits, berries and landscape plants to Deer? Did you know that deer can eat six to ten pounds of arborvitae and rhododendron a day. There is only one guaranteed way to prevent deer – Erect a fence. The fence should be a full eight feet tall. 'Invisible deer fencing' really is—you can't see it from most angles, so you get the protection without feeling like you're living inside a cage. You can try a REALLY invisible fence; one that's flat to the ground! Lay heavy metal fencing or sheets of corrugated metal on the ground completely around the area you wish to protect—like a vegetable garden. It feels very strange under foot and deer are reluctant to cross over it. Other ideas are:

- Your best non-fence bet is a dog. Deer fear dogs, and dogs like to chase deer. Studies have found that dogs kept inside deer-plagued property lines by an invisible fencing system are a very effective deterrent.
- Spray-on deer repellants. Deer begin browsing at 28 to 32 inches off the ground—that's your "Strike Zone"; concentrate the spray at that height and limit the over-spray to about a foot higher and lower. Reapply every four weeks and rotate several different brands over the course of a deer-dining season. Products that work best include:
 - Deer Away: a 37% solution of classically stinky putrescent egg solids.
 - Deer-Off: a combination of stinky egg smell with hot pepper and garlic.
 - Liquid Fence: smells like a combination of eggs gone bad with garlic.
 - Hinder: an ammonia-based repellant.

Don't worry—you won't smell these things after they dry—but the deer will taste them.

- An alternative to spraying plants is clothesline. String a clothesline at browsing height in front of the plants you wish to protect and then soak the rope with repellant.
- Other good devices are the Havahart Electronic Repellent for Deer (<http://www.havahart.com>) and the Wireless Deer Fence (<http://www.wirelessdeerfence.com>). These stakes use scent pellets to attract deer to the electrodes on top, which convey one heck of a shock to deer what lick them via a capacitor powered by AA batteries. As with an electric fence, the shocked deer will remember their bad experience at your place and eat someone else's plants.
- Make your own "Swedish cure" deer repellant. Here's the recipe:
 - Mix 2 ½ pounds of blood-meal (half of a 5 lb. bag) into a normal size bucket that's about half to 2/3 full of water.
 - Stir well.
 - Add 1 cup of ammonia and keep stirring until mixed.

Cut green florist block into big cubes and place each cube on a three-foot tall stake. Dip the staked cubes into the bucket and let sit there until they get really saturated. Then, place the stakes about six feet apart around plants you wish to protect. Re-saturate the cubes every couple of weeks or after a really heavy rain.

- Avoid these repellants because they are toxic and/or ineffective. Do not use mothballs (they are highly toxic to you and your pets); or coyote, fox, or other predator urine (they are harvested in a very cruel manner and are not very

effective either). ❖

Ant Control

by Peter Schmidt

Folks, I don't know about you, but when we moved here we were having a big problem with ants. We had those big carpenter ants, that seemed big enough to eat you alive, all the way down to those teeny weeny little ants that you can barely see. We tried professional pest control services, and every type of ant spray sold at Home Depot, and nothing worked, until we tried this "home" remedy with boric acid. The thing with the boric acid is it acts as a desiccant which the ants are supposed to track back to the nest and theoretically kills the entire nest. So I figured this was a pretty slow process that would take days or weeks and not really work. NOT! Our ants were all gone in less than 24 hours. Amazing! Yes they come back from time to time as new colonies form, but we now keep a pre-mixed jar of the solution described below around, shake it up (because it tends to settle over time), put out a new bottle cap, and zap - they're gone. And even better, it's cheap!

Here's what you need:

- 1) Boric Acid - You can buy it at Home Depot in the ant/roach section. Hint: It may not say "Boric Acid" on the front label, but look at the ingredients. If it's 98% Boric Acid, it's what you want.
- 2) Sugar
- 3) Water
- 4) Cotton balls
- 5) Empty bottle caps

Mix together 1 tablespoon of Boric Acid, 1 teaspoon of sugar and 4 oz of water. Put a cotton ball in a bottle cap and pour the solution onto the cotton-ball, soaking it thoroughly. Put the bottle cap in the path of the ants. I usually make up a bunch of them and put them all over the place to make sure that the ants aren't coming from multiple places and have multiple paths. (This is war.) Within a few hours (sometimes much sooner), you'll see a bunch of ants hanging out at the bottle cap. They stay a while and then stagger back to the nest. Within a couple of days, they're usually gone. If they persist long enough for the cotton-balls to dry out, pour more solution onto the cotton-balls and keep them moist until the buggers get the hint.

Note: Boric Acid is poisonous if taken internally or inhaled.

Note: Others have also had success in eradicating ants by spraying Ortho Pest Defense around the perimeter of the house. ❖

HOA Web Site

There is an HOA web site located at <http://www.geocities.com/bfmdhoa/>. This web site includes information pertaining to the HOA such as ARC forms, minutes from previous board meetings, current and previous newsletters, as well as contact information for board members. ❖