

Important Email addresses

webmaster@rwhoa.org

board@hammockshoa.org

To register for the RW Concierge system

To email the Hammocks board

Justin@argusmgmt.com

Justin Gonzales – Argus Property Mgmt

And the Winner is . . .

Robert and Terry Keymer, your neighbors on Maple Ridge, won an iPad at the Verizon Homeowner Information meeting earlier in December. Congratulations to the Keymers.

Holiday Lights

An impressive number of our friends and neighbors in the Hammocks and River Wilderness helped everyone get in the holiday spirit by decorating their homes, inside and out, with seasonal lights. The community really looks great. Mailboxes looked especially festive this year with all sorts of ribbons and bows and ... 'a white sock'?. Let's see, maybe next year we could have a mailbox decorating contest??

Your Neighbors Suggest. . .

The Happenings' food critic has been out with some acid reflux problems so we are relying on our Hammock's neighbors for some restaurant suggestions. From Maple Ridge and The Village of the Arts in Bradenton comes a recommendation for *Arts and Eats*. With an eclectic menu that is revised and updated frequently this 'boutique' restaurant is a Bradenton hidden treasure. Call for reservations.

Website: <http://artsandeatsfl.com/>

Live music, a beer garden and a truly authentic German menu are all just a couple of blocks east of downtown Bradenton on Manatee Avenue. German potato pancakes, spatzel, schnitzel, rouladen, sauerbraten and maybe even a beer are all waiting for you at *Restaurant Edelweiss*. Call for reservations.

Website: <http://edelweissbradenton.com/>

You would expect a restaurant called *Half Shell Oyster House* to have oysters but they also have burgers, Po-boys, steaks, chicken and a plethora of seafood and fish selections. This upscale Bradenton/Sarasota eatery is located off of University Parkway just a 5-iron from Kohl's.

Website: <http://halfshelloysterhouse.com>

(OK, maybe it's more than a 5-iron from Kohl's for me but it's still worth checking out all of these restaurants.)

That's Repellent! (or repellent)

Many of us have migrated to Florida to escape the cold and snow of 'up north', but how many of us considered a reduced mosquito population as a reason to pull up stakes and move south. Before moving to Florida many of us envisioned huge bugs sucking blood from unsuspecting visitors to Florida. But after you have been here awhile you soon realize that mosquitoes are not that much of a problem. Air Conditioning, screened in lanais and an aggressive mosquito control philosophy all contribute to making Florida and Manatee County a vacation and retirement paradise. That certainly has not always been the case. In the 1500's the word 'mosquito' first enters the English language. Spaniards referred to that pesky fly as a 'musketas'. At one time a large part of the state of Florida was called 'Mosquito Country' and when the state established counties, what is now Orange County was originally called Mosquito County. Portions of Florida's east coast were called Barra De Mosquitos by early map makers. Many thought that Florida was undevelopable because of the heat, insects and disease. But in the early 1900's things began to change. In 1922 the Florida Anti-Mosquito Association (later known as the Florida Mosquito Association) was formed and in 1925 the first Mosquito Control District was formed in Indian River. Today there are over 50 similar mosquito control districts in Florida.

The Manatee County Mosquito Control District is headed up by Mark Latham, an entomologist. Mark oversees the activities of 28 employees with such varied titles as helicopter pilot, biologist, entomologist, inspector, administrator and maintenance guru. The goal of all 28 employees is to reduce the mosquito population and to identify and isolate the diseases they carry.

While Mark is an entomologist many of the early pioneers in mosquito mitigation were engineers because the draining of wet lands was a major way to control the mosquito population. In the 1960's and 70's this approach was curtailed significantly to the point it is not used at all today. Chemicals that are specific to the mosquito are the primary tools used today.

But before you can spray the mosquito you have to know where they are.

During the months of April to November Mark and his colleagues use traps baited with dry ice to catch and count mosquitoes. Dry ice is used because it's frozen carbon dioxide and it is CO₂ that attracts the mosquito. In addition to 'traps' the District also conducts daily 'landing rate counts', which involves an employee standing in a field counting the number of insects that land on him or her. And finally the District relies on residents to contact them if the mosquito population seems problematic in a particular neighborhood.

Once they identify problem areas they have three helicopters, five trucks and one Carolina Skiff to help deliver the 'punch' to the pests. There are basically two forms of spraying. The first and most effective, is to 'target' spray the female eggs as they are found on the surface of standing water or in the mud. If you miss them in the larva stage you try to get the adult mosquito as they fly through your neighborhood. Interestingly, while a strong wind will delay plans to do any spraying, a slight breeze is a positive when targeting the adult mosquitoes as it will cause the chemicals to drift under tree canopies, a preferred hiding place for mosquitoes.

For additional information on disease control, spraying schedules and contact information check out the Manatee County Mosquito Control District website:
<http://www.manateemosquito.com/>

(Especially interesting is the history of mosquito control in Florida which can be found on the District's website provided above.)

You can download a digital copy of The Florida Resident's Guide to Mosquito Control at, <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/IN/IN104500.pdf>. This guide has some science, some history and some suggestions on what you can do to keep those annoying 'musketas' at bay.

Thanks to the MCMCD

To Mark Latham and all of the Manatee County Mosquito Control District personnel that took time out of their busy day to talk to the Happenings I want to say 'thanks'. They have a very important job and to say it is 'critical' does not say enough. These folks probably do more to make Florida life 'fun' and 'livable' than any other single organization. Thanks for all you do.

(There is a lot of information in this edition of the Happenings; everything from meeting dates to mosquito control information. And when I start to discuss science I am certainly out of my element and as a result I suspect there will be mistakes. For that let me apologize in advance.)

Have a Happy and safe New Year