

## Personal Message

Greetings from Ocean City, MD. I actually took an extra day here at the beach, armed with my trusty laptop, to write most of this newsletter. So far, it's going pretty well.

I had plenty of fishing time over the weekend, so I don't feel too deprived about working while I'm here. And, let's face it. It's a lot easier to work at the beach than it is in an office. Somehow, you don't feel the pressures of the real world beckoning.

Oops, I got distracted. The cell phone is always there, lurking in the background, waiting to bring those real world pressures to the forefront.

We have our little trailer in Ocean City all set up with Wi-Fi, so I'm able to do a fair amount of work here. Files are sent back and forth between the beach and the office in St. Michaels at the speed of light or faster. It's becoming so efficient, I may never go home!

Remember our ancient cat I've told you about? His name is Mr. Hobson; Hobby for short. He's about 20 years old and still travels back and forth with us.

Hobby is now on medication twice a day, for his overactive thyroid. We wised up early on in the game and now use a tiny mortar and pestle to crush his pill into his food.

He eats like a small horse when he's at the beach. The salt air must stimulate his appetite, just as it does with humans. Melissa can't seem to dish his food out fast enough to suit him. She usually feeds him seven or eight times a day, while we're here.

Our garden hasn't yielded much of anything since the lettuce and spring greens, like collards went out of season. We've got a nice shady spot for container greens in Ocean City, so we're able to keep a small crop of baby lettuce going. However, my tomato and pepper plants are being decidedly difficult this year. Good thing a new batch of produce stands have popped up this season. We've already become good patrons of several of them.

From a gardening perspective, we made a decision to install mostly perennials in the Ocean City gardens this year. They seem to fit in better with our lazier lifestyle here at the beach.

As I reread what I've written, I can tell I'm at the beach. My tone is more relaxed and my style is somewhat different. I've written about gardening and my cat, not the usual landscaping information.

I like this new me and I hope you do too. This month, I've really opened up and written A Very Personal Message. Have a great summer.

## July Garden Tips

- Watering your garden is one of the most important tasks you can do during July. The best way to tell if your plants are receiving enough water is to take a trowel and dig down a few inches. The soil should be moist at least 3 or 4 inches deep to insure that the water is reaching the root zone of the plants. Watering deeply and less frequently is usually your best bet for plant material in a landscape bed. Your plants prefer morning hours for their daily drink, but sometimes, evenings have to do.
- When you keep your garden hydrated, plants will grow and so will weeds. The most cumbersome chore this month is to keep your weeds under control. They seem to grow when nothing else does. In addition to your garden, keep yourself hydrated while you're working.
- If you mulched this spring, you've already won half the battle toward retaining moisture in your garden. However, you can still apply mulch and reap the rewards for the rest of the summer. Mulch helps plants conserve moisture. It also helps to reduce weeds and improve the soil as it breaks down.

## Monthly Maintenance for Your Property

My company offers a really unique program for the care and upkeep of your property. I'm very proud of this service. I've never seen anything like it offered, at least in this area.

We call it our Monthly Maintenance Program. The beautiful part of it is that you receive a full landscaping analysis of your property every month during the warm weather season. And, it doesn't cost you any money, if you choose not to have the work done that month. There is no contract to sign. And, there's no minimum fee for our landscaping products and services either.

One of our managers will visit your property every month to determine if any work needs to be completed. It may be weeding or touching up your edging. You might need debris hauled away or sticks and limbs picked up after a storm. Or, you may not need anything done at all. If that's the case, we'll let you know and visit you again next month. And, there's no charge for our visit.

Either way, we'll let you know what we think may be needed to keep your property looking its best. We'll call or email you with our recommendations. Then, it's up to you to choose if you want us to work for you that month. Over the years, we've seen that it's actually less expensive for people to maintain their property on a monthly basis than it is to schedule the landscaping company for one huge clean-up. Your labor charges are less during the course of the summer. The amount of product, such as pre-emergent or mulch is less too. And, in general, your property will look better all summer.

Remember, there is no contract and no minimum fee. You may choose to have all or part of the work done.

If you're interested, contact us for a no-obligation visit to explain our program.

## Our Tick Repellent Really Works!

Remember the cool, damp weather this past spring? Ticks are generally sluggish when the weather is cool. Once it warms up, they begin their frantic quest for a food source.

That's why we wait until the summer months to spray. You get more bang for your buck this way.

So, we began spraying our barrier tick repellent during May. Ever since we started our spray program this year, we've heard HORROR stories about ticks. Apparently, going from cool dampness to heat and humidity really increases tick activity.

We began to hear about people experiencing high levels of tick activity, even while they waited for us to come apply the barrier spray. One family told us they were finding 2-3 ticks on themselves every day. Another family told us their dog had to go to the vet to have ticks removed. He pulled 17 ticks from their family pet. And, of course, the family had ticks too.

We sprayed the personal living space of a horse farm also. A rider thought she had poison ivy behind her right knee. She applied ointment and thought she had it under control. Eventually, she was diagnosed with Lyme Disease. She's on a heavy duty regime of very strong antibiotics that force her to stay out of the sun. For an active equestrian, that's tantamount to punishment.

I'd like to urge you to consider protecting your family from ticks with our program. I developed this service myself, due to complications I had from a tick bite several years ago. My hospital visit lasted several days and the seeping wound from the bite cleared up. However, complications from the powerful antibiotics I took continue to plague me to this day.

Then, Dad developed Lyme Disease two years ago. He was in the hospital for weeks. I thought we were going to lose him...he was really sick.

So, my crusade against ticks has strengthened. We now offer a barrier tick repellent service. Barrier treatments are the single most effective method of control at this time. The tick repellent is sprayed where ticks thrive - such as brushy areas, woodpiles and even lawns.

But our program doesn't stop there. We use Damminix tubes to kill ticks in rodent nests. Damminix tubes are the ideal compliment for a barrier tick repellent spray. Squirrels and mice take the treated cotton inside the tubes back to their nests. These cardboard tubes contain treated material which is deadly for ticks, but does not harm birds or animals.

Our integrated approach to tick control continues with other avenues of eradication. Natural/organic deer repellent forces deer to move away from your property. They are the main host for deer ticks in this area. Additionally, you may choose to remove piles of debris, brush or woodpiles. Ticks thrive in this environment. We can make sure you're not bothered by ticks this summer.