

## Fosters needed!!!

**Not for dogs, cats, or kids... but how about trees?**



Dear Residents:

Some of you may have wondered what the Camp Meeting Grounds signs swinging in the wind at the 7-11 shopping mall are all about. Well, they refer to the site of a Methodist Church Camp, demolished circa 1969 (or thereabouts). One of the last vestiges of this once vibrant institution are a few old oaks standing as silent sentinels, muttering to themselves in English. They happen to be chestnut oaks, a variety of white oak once common in S. Jersey, now much less so due to habitat loss. That's unfortunate, because oaks are premier wildlife and beneficial insect hosts.

Anyway, it occurred to us that it might be a good idea to propagate those oaks for eventual planting around town, so we gathered up a bunch of acorns and are ready to put them in pots to sleep through the winter, and pop up out of the ground come spring. We collected about 20 very large (15 and 25 gallon) plastic pots from a NJ Tree Foundation planting, which we fill with famous Delanco DPW leaf mulch/humus. It should make excellent growing media for about 6 to 10 acorns. In fact, the acorns are so anxious to grow, that a few tucked into an indoor pot are already putting out leaves.

So are you ready to step up and be a steward for Delanco's past and its future? All you need to do is find a spot in your yard for a pot, keep it watered, shoo away marauding squirrels and blue jays, and the acorns will do the rest! No need to go out for "walkies" on sleeting February mornings, or worry that you've left them out all night. Actually, we'd prefer it if you do just that! (Oaks need about 8 weeks of 40 degree weather to "stratify" properly). The Shade Tree Commission will drop them off, and, hopefully in a few years, pick them up to grow in Delanco's public spaces. And by the way, since trees are having a moment, what with all this talk of climate change, urban heat islands, and such, you'll even be helping to save the planet, tax dollars, and your own utility bills, when they start sucking up all that carbon dioxide. Just let us know if you're interested, and we'll make arrangements to drop off a pre-planted pot of future oaks, to be picked up when the seedlings are sprouted and growing strong.

Thanks in advance,

Bill Matulewicz,

Vice Chairman, DSTC