



The Hills are Alive with Buzzing!

What is all the buzz about? Well, it's about time to think about next years crop of Carpenter Bees (*Xylocopa virginica* and *Xylocopa micans*)! Carpenter bees do serve a purpose besides destroying your siding and possibly causing structural damage to your home or other wood structures. It is estimated they cause \$1.5 billion worth of damage per year! The smaller versions usually bore into dead branches or other dead wood to make their nests and in doing so effectively recycle the dead wood so that it may return to soil whence it came. However the



Bumble Bee Carpenter Bee

larger bees do like to bore into your home. They can create as much as 6 feet of nesting tunnels per year! There they create partitioned nesting cavities where they lay eggs that hatch into larva. The larva feed on a pollen/regurgitated nectar mixture commonly referred to as "bee bread". This food cache is sufficient for the larva to develop into adults. These new adults usually huddle together in the wood tunnels created for them and hibernate there for the winter and emerge in the spring to continue their cycle. So the bees and their larva don't actually eat the wood, they merely bore into it and use it as a shelter for their eggs and larva. Of course while the larva are wiggling around in there that attracts the attention of Pileated Woodpeckers (*Dryocopus pileatus*). They then go to work tearing off hunks of wood to get to the tasty larva. Isn't that special?

"So what can be done to remedy this situation?", you may ask. Well, it just so happens we plan to offer a new service in the Spring to help ya'll out. The service will consist of placing traps at key points under the eaves of your home in order to trick the bees into entering them looking for an old tunnel system they can clean out and re-use. We will check and empty the traps on a regular basis and take the traps down when the "season" is over. As for the sneaky ones that manage to avoid our traps and bore into your siding we have another product that we can inject small amounts of directly into the hole to kill the bees already inside. Once they emerge and fall to the ground we can then caulk and plug the hole so it cannot be re-used by the next bee that comes along. We will list the details in a future issue of this newsletter so you can schedule the service.

Another buzzer that causes no small amount of consternation is the Bald-faced Hornet (*Dolichovespula maculate*). As a cattleman I appreciate their usefulness. Although they eat pollen and some insects, their favorite food is flies! They fly around the cows like small battleship cruisers and snatch the flies right out of the air. The time when they are not appreciated is when we are doing yard service or window washing and disturb a nest. They come pouring out like demon hoards from Hades and make you do the most embarrassing dance which I call the "slap yourself silly" dance. They routinely cause sounds to issue forth from the throats of grown men that sound a lot like screaming little girls.



They also cause you to run faster than you believed you could. I call them bullets 'cause that's what their sting feels like. As I am penning this tome my crew chief called to say that he and the crew, while doing some fence cleaning work along one of my overgrown fences, have run into no less than 3 nests, one of them the size of a basketball! Dang, and I'm stuck inside doing computer work. Ah well. The nests can be large and full of hornets so be sure and use a spray with a good stream and direct it into the opening on the nest. If you are brave enough to try and tackle one of these nests make sure your escape route is planned out and clear of obstructions. It is best to attempt this after nightfall when they have returned to the nest for the night. But remember to use that flashlight sparingly as the ones that over-night on the exterior like to fly directly at the light. So be sure and get that brother-in-law you don't particularly care for to hold the light for you! (That is sooooo wrong!) We routinely destroy nests that interfere with our work at your properties as a courtesy. They seem to be nesting low this year so when you are walking through tall grass and brush, Watch Out!!!!!!!!!!!!



Aunt B's Downhome Desserts!

We would like to introduce an indulgence that's sure to inspire. One of our employees, Bekah Hunter, has her own "old fashioned dessert" business. It's something that she does part time but it has full time appeal! I've personally sampled many of her goodies and MMMMMMMMM BOY!

A small sampling of her offerings include Granny's Banana Puddin' from a 5 generation recipe, Southern Comfort Cheesecake, Old Hippy Bread Puddin', Better Than Butter Brownies, Cow Pattie Turnovers and, my personal favorite, Pig Lickin' Cake. She even makes specialty cakes for weddings, birthdays, showers and more! Her chewy chocolate chip, pecan cookies are to die for!

So when you're planning a trip up and have a special occasion or just a hankerin' for some old fashioned sweet treats give Bekah a call or drop her an email. You'll be glad you did!

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July Mountain Events

3 - Independence Day Lake Nottely Boat Parade, The annual Independence Day Boat Parade on Lake Nottely is sure to delight young and old. Anyone with a boat is welcome to line up at the marina beginning at 11:00a.m. At 11:30a.m. boats will pass in review. There is no charge and boats can be decorated in any theme. Visitors can view the parade from areas around the marina.

3 - Cruise-In on the Square, Classic cars, trucks and motorcycles on display around the Courthouse Square from 1:00-5:00pm. Registration is free to any car enthusiast, no admission charge to public. Raffles, food, music and fun for all.

3 - Independence Day Fireworks Celebration In Blairsville, This year's fireworks display will be held on Saturday evening, July 3rd at Meeks Park at approximately 9:30pm weather permitting.

4 - 4th of July Fireworks in Suches, GA, The Suches Fire Department will again present their annual fireworks display on Sunday, July 4th. The fireworks will begin at dark, but everyone is invited to gather around 7:00pm for fellowship, hot dogs, soft dogs, etc from the concession stand. Seating is limited - you might want to bring lawn chairs.

4 - 4th July Independence Day at Vogel State Park, Celebrate our independence with a flag-raising ceremony, bicycle parade, pedal boat races, sandcastles, watermelon eating, sack races, egg tosses and greased pole climbing.

16 - Free Concert at John C. Campbell Folk School: New England Contra Dance Tunes, This concert will feature lots of lively fiddle music that will have you tapping your toes and itching to get on the dance floor. But this talented quartet of musicians also has two wonderful singers. Naomi Morse plays a mean fiddle but is also a professional singer in New York City, while Peter Siegel is not only master of the mandolin, guitar and banjo, but frequently performs as a solo singer/songwriter and has shared the stage with Paul Stookey (of Peter, Paul and Mary), Pete Seeger and Judy Collins.

24 - 12th Annual Butternut Creek Festival, Arts & Fine Crafts Show, July 24 & 25, 2010, Saturday & Sunday 10AM - 5PM. Located along the shady banks of Butternut Creek at MEEKS PARK (on south side of Hwy 76/515 0.7 mile west of Hwy 19/129 traffic light). FREE Admission & FREE Parking. Wonderful exhibitors. 65-70 of the finest artists and craftsmen will be offering Woodwork, Fabric Art, Stained Glass, Jewelry, Pottery, and more. Live Demonstrations & Entertainment, Good Food & Fun! Sponsored by the High Country Artisans, Inc.

30 - Green Bean Festival Square Dance & Pageant, Join in the fun of a good ole' fashioned Friday night Square Dance beginning outdoors by the Old Courthouse after the Historical Society's Friday Night Concert. Even if you've never squared danced before, learn a few steps and heel, toe, doesy doe your way into a country tradition right here at the Green Bean Festival. Another tradition has been local pageants. Green Bean Festival is proud to present the contests for Little Miss Bean Sprout and Little Mr. Leather Britches. Details and application are at www.GreenBeanFestival.com. Come watch the start of a new tradition.

Say What?!?

A unique colloquialism I thought I would share with you. On You Tube an Alabama man was talking about how far in the country he lived by showing a mountain ridge in the distance. He said, "My mailbox is so far from the house that I have to ride a pregnant horse to check the mail so I'd have one to ride back." That's like a Ted Turner big piece of land!

...a note from Cindy

Guess what? We've got our new website up and running! www.gahomeservices.com You can click around and check us out. Be sure and check out the Blog section as well. While you're there you can listen to our radio ads that Donald and I voiced yesterday. It was a new experience for me.

This new site is fully interactive so while you are there.... interact. You can comment on articles you see and make suggestions on what topics you would like to know about as well. We will update often so be sure and check back occasionally. With Donald you never know what you will read.