



## *On Some Enchanted Evening . . .*

Or morning, afternoon, whenever. The point is over the last three years that I have been with *Complete Home Services* I have met with many of you while performing services. I have even met with some of you at social functions. Patti and I have even formed friendships with some of you that enables us to get together for dinner now and again. Almost makes me feel like I have a normal life instead of work, work, work, work, work.

I said all that to say that my goal is to meet all of our customers *personally* before the end of 2012. While most of you have met Cindy as your initial contact, I usually follow-up with a crew at a later time after you are already gone. I am working to wean myself from the projects that I usually oversee so that I can spend more time actually managing the company. I like working with clients, hammering out quotes and putting together advertising and the newsletter. I would like to spend more time in the office helping Cindy with the paperwork. You know... doing the stuff that an owner of the company is *supposed to do!*

Perhaps we could rent a big building and throw down Mack-Daddy style with a band and all. I doubt that enough of you could get your schedules around that. Perhaps we could all meet up on the lake and fill up a bunch of boats, tie them all together and party until the police show up. Sounds great but boat rental is expensive as is gas. I know, I know... we could meet over at my pasture and have a pie tossin' contest. And them things aren't made with sugar, don't ya know.

I suppose you could just email or call and say you are coming up and you would like to meet. I know that meeting with some people that take care of your house while your friends and/or family are bugging to get out to the lake or see the sights may be the last thing on your mind. On the other hand you may actually want to meet the people that take care of your home-away-from-home.

Think about it and let me know. I really want to hear your opinions, concerns, elations, let-downs and wish lists for your home. It's what keeps us going!

## Eatin' In Season

July is the month for wild blackberries! So far it looks like it will be a good harvest. I know ya'll have had blackberry pie and blackberry cobbler. I have made blackberry pancakes and boy are they good. Just add the blackberries just like you would for blueberry pancakes. Glazed with real maple syrup sure is some good eatin'. Our following recipe is quick, easy and delicious. Hope you enjoy it.....*let me know!*

### Blackberry Salad

- 1 ½ C Spinach
- 1 C Blackberries
- 3 oz Feta Cheese
- 1 C Cherry tomatoes cut in half
- 1 Green onion sliced
- 2 T chopped Walnuts (optional)

Good with or without your favorite dressing or a light balsamic vinaigrette.

*Bon Appétit!*



## Your Opinion Matters!

I know that sometimes it seems as though no one wants to hear what you have to say. From so called "customer service centers" to politicians... they *say* they want to hear from you but then are seemingly indifferent to your concerns. You get some canned response or lip service designed to numb you into complacency.

Here at *Complete Home Services* we actually *want to hear* those things you have to say. Did we do a great job? We want to hear about it. Did we miss a spot on your last window wash? I want to know about it! Are dust bunnies the size of tumbleweeds under one of your beds? Our cleaning crews need to know that. I'm certainly not above cracking the whip if need be but if I don't know about it how can your satisfaction be assured?

For many of you, if you get a call out of the blue from one of us the first thing that pops through your mind, and sometimes out of your mouth, is "What's wrong?" It doesn't always mean that a tree fell on your house in the last storm. Or that your last house guest backed up all of the toilets in your rental cabin and the health department wants it condemned. Many times we are calling just to inform you of the completion of a particular job or to let you know about an inquiry you have previously made. Likewise, we don't *only* want to hear from you when you have a complaint. Not that we get that many, mind you. I'm just sayin'... We Want To Hear From You!!!

## Customer Comments...

From time to time we get letters of thanks for services rendered. Sometimes it is from a client and sometimes it is from someone who was referred to us by an acquaintance, real estate agent, etc. who is in dire need of some fast help.

In an act of shameless self-promotion, we like to occasionally include these as they prove pertinent to our clients. The following is one such story...

Dear Donald and Cindy,

We want you to know how much we appreciate you and your services! As we live in Atlanta, we find ourselves at our house in the North Georgia Mountains on a pretty regular basis, at least twice a month. Last winter when we finally got up there we walked into a freezing cold home. As the panic set in we discovered that there was no gas in the gas tank. Our gas company, whom we have had for years had made an error and forgot to fill the tank! Even though the water was turned off the water in the pipes had frozen and broke several water lines. As a result walls and ceilings had to be ripped out to repair the lines. Thankfully we had found you to bring in the plumber, sheet rocker and painter and orchestrate and handle all the repairs. The house was beautiful when we walked in. Had we used your home monitoring service we would have known the status of the gas and could have avoided the whole situation. I strongly urge your clients to take advantage of your service even if they go to their mountain home on a pretty regular basis. I cannot begin to tell you the peace of mind we now have. Thank you once again.

Christine Lohrey

Why, thank you Christine. And let that be a lesson to all you kiddies out there. When you shut your water off in the winter, **DRAIN THOSE PIPES!** Of course, *Complete Home Services* offers Home Winterization and would be happy to do it for you.

Give us a call, that's all!

## *...a note from Cindy*

The thing called a chigger,  
is really no bigger,  
than the smaller end of a pin,  
but the bump that it raises,  
just itches like blazes,  
and that's where the rub sets in.

H.B. Hungerford  
Entomologist

It's July, the middle of summer, blackberry season and (sigh) **Chigger Season**. So as you wander into that blackberry patch to pick some of the juicy berries – **BE CAREFUL**. Unfortunately you cannot see chiggers only the effect of their bite. The first sign is red bumps and then the itch begins to grow. From your feet upwards, mostly in those tender locations. Folklore tells us they burrow under our skin and that they can be killed by suffocation with nail polish or by bathing in bleach, alcohol, turpentine or salt water. These popular assertions are just plain wrong.

Chiggers are a juvenile form of a type of mite. Mites are arachnids, like spiders and scorpions. Chiggers are almost invisible to the naked eye. However, when several chiggers cluster together near an elastic waistband or wrist watch they can be seen because of their bright red color.



When chiggers bite they prefer thin skin. This is why most bites are around the ankles, back of knees, armpits, under the belt line etc. As they bite they inject digestive saliva and after a few hours your skin reacts by hardening the cells on all sides of the saliva path, creating an intense itch. Itching usually peaks a day or two after the bite occurs. The saliva path is eventually absorbed by your body which takes 7 to 10 days.

Chiggers are most active in the afternoon when the ground temperature is between 77 and 86 degrees. They like long grass, brush and weeds. They generally do not survive in well groomed areas.

So, if you want to go blackberry picking (which I highly recommend) how do you protect yourself from these pesky arachnids? You can begin by wearing the right kind of clothing such as tightly woven socks, long pants, long sleeve shirts, high shoes or boots. Tucking the pant legs inside boots, buttoning cuffs and collars as tight as possible also helps to keep the wandering chiggers on the outside of your clothes. In addition, regular mosquito repellent will help repel chiggers but must be reapplied every 2 – 3 hours.

If you absolutely must call in sick to work because of chigger bites, tell the boss that you have been diagnosed with arachnid papules. That is going to sound much worse than saying you have a bunch of chigger bites.

Now that you are knowledgeable about Chiggers don't be afraid to go out and enjoy the great outdoors. And when you are enjoying that homemade, wild blackberry cobbler it makes braving those Chiggers something you will want to do every blackberry season!

