



Cleaning For A Cause!

As part of Complete Home Services' continuing commitment to give back to the community, we are starting "Cleaning For A Cause." Our goal is to offer a service to those *truly* in need. We were recently contacted by a person interested in getting a quote for cleaning her home. In the course of her conversation with Cindy, she mentions that she had recently been diagnosed with cancer and is now receiving regular chemotherapy treatments. Cindy informed her of our special service and we will be servicing our first "Cleaning For A Cause" client next week.

As our most valued clients, if you are aware of someone in a difficult situation due to a sickness, death, accident (or whatever), contact us and we will see if we can be of service. If we can't, perhaps we can be of assistance in finding the help that is required to provide someone with a little break, peace of mind or just a really great deal on a deep house clean. Who doesn't like to come home to a clean house?

In Memoriam

Last Saturday Cindy was dropping me off at home after visiting a potential new client and received a call informing her that Lisa Skomp, owner of Cozy Cove Realty and Marina, had just passed that morning. It took everyone by surprise, as these things often do.

Lisa was super nice and will be greatly missed by all. Her funeral service was attended by relatives, friends and business persons from all over the area, a testament to her appeal and esteem. She will be deeply missed.

CORRECTION

Gawd, I hate issuing corrections! Departing from my usual fastidious research of the facts before dissemination to clients or the public, I hastily included a photo credited to the recent tornado in Murphy, NC. You probably remember the email. You definitely can't forget the photo! The sender sent a correction the very next morning, saying the photo was actually a storm cloud that resulted from a large volcanic eruption in Chile. See even more dramatic photos [here](#). Here is a cell phone photo from the storm in Murphy.



Apologies for my temporary deficiency of authentication skills. I shall re-double my efforts!

Smoke On The Water

No, I'm not having a flashback. Instead, I'm reporting the passing of a local icon. The Toccoa Riverside Restaurant burned to the ground February 13th. An employee and myself were on our way to a clients property and when turning off Aska Road across from the restaurant, I noticed yellow tape. When I looked over, the rubble was actually still smoking! Turns out that the fire occurred just after 2:00 am that very morning!

18 firefighters and 3 trucks were involved in fighting the fire. As of press time the cause of the fire is yet to be determined. This year was to be the 20 year anniversary of the restaurant's opening.

Smoke On The Mountain

Sunday afternoon February 26th Cindy calls me and says there is smoke everywhere at her house and wants to know if I know anything about it. I didn't and didn't see any at my house... until about 2 hours later. There was light to medium density of smoke with some ash particles falling as well. I called Nema (owner of my cow pasture) and she said someone was burning limbs from a fallen tree and maybe that was it. Hmm... that's a lot of smoke from a limb fire to be spread over the 10 miles from my house to the office.

When I get to work the next day I find out the Forestry Service had conducted a controlled burn in Suches on Sunday. Surprising, considering it was quite windy and had been for quite some time. The burn covered 1550 acres! The Forest Service used 2 brush truck engines, 1 dozer, a helicopter and 15 people. The helicopter flew over and dropped plastic spheres that contained a dry chemical injected with glycol, which causes combustion. By dropping them in a grid pattern the Forestry Service was able to control the spread of the fire in order to facilitate containment.

What a relief, I had my water hose out and everything!

N. Georgia Enters 21st Century!

The North Georgia Network is building and operating a 1000 mile fiber optic network that will benefit an eight-county area of more than 334,000 people in Dawson, Forsyth, Habersham, Lumpkin, Rabun, Towns, Union and White counties. The system, which is 100% fiber optic, boasts speeds as fast as anywhere in the world. With core speeds up to 3.6 terabits (Screamin' fast!), the system will be fully symmetrical - the same speed for uploads or downloads! The system should be operational sometime in April.

Playing in the Dirt!

When I was working on a Biodynamic farm, we used to get interns and apprentices from all over, of all different ages and backgrounds. Most of them didn't know very much about farming but had a willingness to learn. We would have liked to have experienced workers as opposed to interns and apprentices but just try to get someone to work on a farm. Most people think it's the hardest work there is... and it is! But it's not *that* bad. There are certainly worse jobs. Working in a cubicle ranks as about the worst, as far as I'm concerned.

One thing that all these people had in common, once they were at the farm working for a time, was that they all said they felt much better. The work was hard but they felt more relaxed and at ease with themselves and their surroundings. Some of our farm shareholders reported the same thing when only working there for a day or two.

Well, it seems there is a scientific explanation for this phenomenon. It was accidentally discovered about 10 years ago by Dr. Mary O'Brien, an oncologist at the Royal Marsden Hospital in London. She was undertaking an experimental treatment for lung cancer. She inoculated patients with killed *Mycobacterium vaccae*, expecting the bacteria, which is related to ones that cause tuberculosis and leprosy, to boost their immune system. It succeeded, as reported in *The Economist* (2007), but it also improved her patients' "emotional health, vitality and general cognitive function." Later experiments with mice confirmed the bacteria's effects; the study was published in a 2007 edition of the journal *Neuroscience*.

The mouse study's lead author, neuroscientist Dr. Christopher Lowry, commented, "These studies help us understand how the body communicates with the brain and why a healthy immune system is important for maintaining mental health. They also leave us wondering if we shouldn't all be spending more time playing in the dirt. We believe that prolonged exposure to [*M. vaccae*] from childhood could have a beneficial effect."

So, are you afflicted with Seasonal Affective Disorder? Feeling a little out of sorts? Life got you down? Perhaps all you need is a little time playing in the dirt. I know it does me a world of good! Grandma always said that, to be healthy, every child should eat a pound of dirt. When I heard that, I ate 3 pounds, just to be on the safe side.