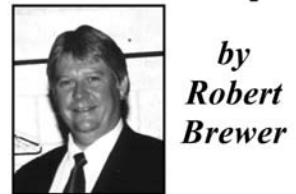


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Extension Tips



by
Robert Brewer

The fire ant death dance

Step one: Wait until the evening when it's cooler. Ants don't forage when it's hot, or when the dew is out. Use a hand-held fertilizer spreader to broadcast bait granules, such as Once and Done or Amdro. This can be done either around a yard or in a 4-foot circle around each mound. Make sure not to disturb the mound. Wear gloves, and spread the bait around. If you smoke and get smoke smell on the bait, the ants won't touch it. Or if you have gasoline on your hands, the ants won't touch it.

Step two: Give the bait a week to 10 days to work. Then, kick the ant mounds – or poke them with a stick – and step back quickly. If there is any ant activity, use a contact insecticide to target the mounds. To do this, mix the powdered insecticide with water following the package's directions. Get a long stick and run it down through the center of the mound. It should push like a hot knife through butter. Pull the stick out quickly and pour in the premixed insecticide.

The insecticide must be poured quickly because the ants will start running away once the mound is disturbed. A premixed gallon or two of insecticide should fill the mound from the bottom up. When the insecticide has been applied, the Texas two-step is done, until next year. Read labels and use pesticides properly. When working with fire ant baits or other insecticides, always read the product's label. Misuse of

pesticides, like fire ant control products, is a violation of federal law. A lot of misuse comes from homeowners who think that what they put out isn't strong enough to kill the ants. The chemicals are pretty much the same as professional chemicals. The professional products are usually better formulated, but in general, the active ingredients are similar." Homeowner misuse of insecticides has resulted in some active ingredients, like bifenthrin, showing up at unacceptable levels in lakes and streams. It's a granular insecticide put on people's yards. With overuse, it's winding up in lakes and streams.

Make them sick, bring in their enemies: Researchers with the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences are exploring the use of natural enemies and viruses to control the stinging pests. Viruses are showing good promise but are still in the research stage.

UGA scientists have released phorid flies, a natural enemy of the fire ant, in various locations across Georgia. Discovered in South America by a USDA-ARS team from Gainesville, FL, the fly lays its eggs in the fire ant. When the larva emerges, it decapitates the ant.

Scientists think fire ants first entered the U.S. from Argentina on cargo ships docked in Alabama in the 1930s.

Every spring, fire ants fly hundreds of feet into the air to mate. They can land several feet, or even miles, from their original location.

Fire ants were first reported in Georgia in the 1950s. Their mating-flights have taken them as far east as North Carolina and as far west to Texas. The ants have also spread through nursery plants to states like Arizona and California.

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Among the few television shows I watch with any regularity is an oddball half hour sitcom occasionally available in the States from the BBC via PBS called "Last of the Summer Wine." It is the longest running series on television anywhere and it will end production this summer after 37 years of following the misadventures of a group of retired but never quite grown up miscreants living in Holmfirth, West Yorkshire.

My wife thinks I'm strange for watching such a sleeper, and I have been known on several occasions to nod off halfway into the show. I think that for me, the appeal of the show is not to be found in the level of excitement it produces, but rather in the glimpse of village life it presents, which has all but disappeared in the land of the free and the home of the Interstate highway.

As someone who has written extensively about the ills of the Interstate, it is only fitting that I confess to the extensive use I have made of concrete and asphalt, especially during the gypsy days of my "early" youth. My generation is probably the most well traveled in the history of humanity and the friends I made growing up explored every corner of North America as well as much of the world. No other civilization has afforded its citizens the luxury of mobility to the extent we have enjoyed in the United States.

A good example of the results of our extreme mobility can be found in the structure of my own virtual village, held together like the villages of so many Americans by oil and electricity. The remains of my nuclear family are separated by over a hundred miles. The closest of my best friends is an hour away by automobile; the others live separated by thousands of miles. We communicate most often over the Internet, which is a poor substitute, let me tell you, for a conversation around a table or a late night out on the deck watching the same piece of sky.

How many of you can relate? If you can, then you may also understand how the ephemeral remains of our social networks are entirely dependent upon fossil fuel, not to mention our livelihoods, our physical comfort and our very sustenance. Bush and Cheney, for all their faults, understood this. President "Oilbama," with his deceptive maneuvering to obscure the extent of the oil spill in the Gulf, seems to understand this. In fact, our leadership for the last twenty years has been willing to spend American blood and treasure halfway around the world because they seem to intuit that we lack the means to end our dependency on oil and we lack the national resolve to discover the means.

Thousands of lives and trillions of dollars have been

spent fighting for oil to buy us a little time to adapt to a world where it is increasingly hard to obtain, but we continue to waste that time. For a growing number of us this is why when we see any form of behavior that equates to waste, whether it is blowing open a mountain for an Interstate, driving a gas guzzler too fast or leaving the floodlights on all night, we are offended. If we can just get this through our soft, fat and coddled heads: When we waste precious resources we disrespect the lives which have been spent to buy us the time we need to change the fundamentals of American life.

Saturday I used four hours and a quarter tank of gas to drive from my home to Hiawasse for breakfast with a stop by the auto parts store, on to Home Depot for a piece of pipe, beyond to Walmart for groceries and back. After all that there is something very appealing about a village where people bicycle to work and walk to the corner pub or to visit their neighbors. There is comfort and more than a little security in being able to visit family and friends without mounting a major expedition.

Our mobile society markets the illusion of freedom in terms of moving vast distances at high speeds, but at the end of this journey a somber reality awaits. If you have ever visited a nursing home, you have seen it: solitary individuals cut off from family and friends who may live half a continent away. It's a common story in our society. We follow the Interstate to where the jobs are and raise our children who then follow the road to somewhere else. Eventually we "retire to" yet another destination and another – until we are too old to keep moving. That's where we "end up," and when the music stops sometimes the only chair available is in the nursing home, where, if we are lucky, our children will come to visit us on the holidays.

It wasn't always like this in America. Yes, we are the descendants of immigrants but many of our forefathers traveled vast distances to escape war, religious persecution, famine, overcrowding... what have we sought to escape in our time? Many of us traveled across the continent to escape a bad economy and find a better one. Whatever the reason, the result has been the same – the nuclear family dispersed and the village stretched into nonexistence. There will always be those who, regardless of the circumstances, choose to abandon the village for whatever is over the next hill. It is a fundamental failure of our economic models if not our civilization itself that for so many, this has not been a choice but a necessity.



"IT'S ON MY MIND..."
Danny H. Parris

Worked up over work

Labor Day weekend is coming up and I have been all worked up trying to come up with a column on work. Sometimes, as most of you have experienced, it is difficult getting down to work. There are other things that we had rather be doing. In fact, if you are in the habit of glean- ing knowledge from bumper stickers you understand that no one is doing what they would rather be doing: "I'd rather be flying," "I'd rather be skiing," "I'd rather be fishing," etc. But this bumper sticker explains the others: "I owe, I owe," "So off to work I go." It is surely true that all work and no play makes us dull and boring. A wife went to run some errands and left her husband planting shrubbery. When she returned she saw a note attached to the shovel handle that read: "Started digging, found worms, gone fishing." Now all of us have met individuals that actually work themselves to death figuring out how not to work. We also know people, as my dad frequently said, "They wouldn't work in a pie factory." I heard about a repairman who pulled up in front of a house and saw the wife outside working in the yard. He said, "I understand you have something here that won't work." "Yes," she said. "He's inside asleep on the sofa!" Lots of folks have ideas about work but the problem with ideas is that they do not work until we do. The beaver and the rabbit were looking up at the massive Boulder Dam. The beaver said to the rabbit, "I didn't actually build it, but it was based upon my idea."

Some folks refuse to work. They say they could work their fingers to the bone and it would profit them nothing because the government would just take it in taxes. Speaking of the government, politicians are busy working both sides of the street. One politician was asked how he stood on a certain issue. He said, "Some of my friends are for it and some of my friends are against it, so I stand with my friends." If politicians worked after they got into office like they did getting elected they would work wonders for our nation. In these difficult economic times they really have their work cut out for them. What's so disappointing with some politicians is they get folks all worked up running for office and then gum up the works after they get in office. Work has drastically changed in our high tech age. Physical labor does not figure in the work for thousands of employees. Their work is mostly mental and involves them sitting in a closed up office for forty plus hours each week. As a result they need physical exercise to work off stress and keep the body in shape. Thousands of folks have a regular schedule of running, jogging or working out in gyms or clubs. One gentleman said his daily workout was jogging to the dinner table and bench-pressing the silverware. As we celebrate this Labor Day weekend we need to thank Almighty God for the blessing of work and for providing a place for us to work. Prayers should be offered for the thousands who are out of work because of the slow-down in our economy. Know this, Jesus said, "My father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17). He is working all things together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).



ASK DR. DON

By Don Jacobsen

Q: My 7th grade daughter won't do her homework at night unless I'm standing over her. It just about ruins every evening at our house. I don't want to force her but she leaves me no choice. What suggestions do you have?
A: Just one: Stop helping her with her homework. Stop. Stop completely. I can hear your answer, something like, "But she wouldn't get it done and then she'd... she'd flunk or something."

Your daughter is probably 13 now and a key lesson in life is that decisions have consequences. (Also remember, we do not build respect in our kids by nagging them.) Here is a great learning event to help her discover that. After dinner, have this little discussion: "Honey, your daddy and I are not going to help you with your homework tonight. In fact, we're not going to help you with it anymore. We have bugged you every night, but from now on you're on your own. We're not even going to ask you if you have any. If

you get it done, fine. If not, it's your choice.

"If you have to take summer school to make up the class, that's your choice, too. You're old enough to assume responsibility for your own decisions. No one can do that for you, so you won't have us looking over your shoulder every evening."

Do not permit her to spread it out on the kitchen table, there are too many distractions, and besides, it's easier to draft mom or dad as they walk by. So when she gets around to it, make sure it's in her room or in some other quiet place.

You'll be amazed at the sense of peace that will fill your home. No badgering, no nagging, no threatening. The problem no longer belongs to you (it wasn't yours anyway) it belongs to her and she is the only one who can solve it. Try it. Be consistent with it. You'll see – and you'll have your evenings back.

Submit your questions to: DrDon@rarekids.net.

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GUEST COLUMNS

From time to time, people in the community have a grand slant on an issue that would make a great guest editorial. Those who feel they have an issue of great importance should call our editor and talk with him about the idea. Others have a strong opinion after reading one of the many columns that appear throughout the paper. If so, please write. Please remember that publication of submitted editorials is not guaranteed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE EMAILED OR MAILED TO:

Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, PO Box 365, Hiawasse, GA 30546. Our email address: tcherald@windstream.net. Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with editorial page policy or refuse to print letters deemed pointless, potentially defamatory or in poor taste. Letters should address issues of general interest, such as politics, the community, environment, school issues, etc.

Letters opposing the views of previous comments are welcomed; however, letters cannot be directed at, nor name or ridicule previous writers. Letters that recognize good deeds of others will be considered for publication.*
Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

Towns County Water Board Meeting 3rd Monday of each month at 6 p.m. in the TC Water Office Building.
Mountain Community Seniors meet the second Thursday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiawasse at 2 p.m.
Towns County Democratic Party meets the 2nd Thursday of every month. Please call Kim Bailey at 706-994-2727 or 706-896-6747 for details.
Towns County Republican Party meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Daniels Steak House. Dinner at 6 p.m., 706-896-7281.
Towns County Planning Commission is held the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Courthouse.
Towns County Commissioners meeting is the 3rd Thursday at 5:30 p.m. in the courthouse.
School Board Meeting, 2nd Monday each month at 7 p.m. in the auditorium.
Hiawasse City Council 1st Tuesday of month 4 p.m., at City Hall.
Young Harris City Council, 1st Tuesday of month at 7 p.m., Young Harris City Hall.
The Hiawasse River Valley Kennel Club meetings are held at 7 p.m. the 1st Monday of each month at Brother's Restaurant on Hwy 64 in Murphy, NC. Call President Kit Miracle: 706-492-5253 or Peggy Moorman: 828-835-1082.
The Unicorn Masonic Lodge #259 meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.
Stephens Lodge #414 F & AM meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in Young Harris.
Board of Voter Registrars meets



Community Calendar

the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m., Courthouse.
Towns County Board of Elections holds its monthly meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m. at the Elections Office (Old Rock Jail).
Towns County Historical Society meets the 2nd Monday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiawasse at 5 p.m. Annual dues \$15, PO Box 1182, Hiawasse, GA 706-896-1060, www.townshistory.org
Bridge Players intermediate level meets at 12:45 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Towns County Health Dept. Call Eden at 706-896-6921.
Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG) meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at ArtWorks Artisan Centre, located at 308 Big Sky Drive (behind the Holiday Inn), Hiawasse. Refreshments at 6 p.m. & the meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Contact us by calling 706-896-0932, mtnregartsandcraftsguild@hotmail.com.
VFW Post #7807 Fish Fry will be 2nd and 4th Friday of the month, 4:30-7 p.m., \$9 a plate, all you can eat.
Mountain Computer User Group meets the 2nd Monday of each month at the Goolsby Center at YHC. Q & A at 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.
FPL Retirees Breakfast will meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Hole in the Wall Restaurant on the square in Blairsville at 9 a.m.
Chattahoochee-Nantahala Chapter, Trout Unlimited meets 2nd Thursday of each month at Cadence Bank in Blairsville. 5 p.m. Fly Tying - 7 p.m. General

Meeting. Everyone welcome. www.ngatu692.com.
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) meets the 3rd Monday of each month at various area restaurants. For information call John Quinlan at 706-896-2430 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridge-mountains.
Alcoholics Anonymous: 24 hour phone line 828-837-4440.
Mothers of Preschoolers meets on the third Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church of Blairsville from 6 - 8 p.m. Call the church office at 706-745-2469 for more information.
Chatuge Regional Hospital Auxiliary on the 3rd Monday of each month, except the months of July, October and December, in the hospital cafeteria at 1:30 p.m.
Old Fashioned Square Dance Lessons each Mon. in Hiawasse, GA, 6 p.m. at the Senior Center (2 blocks south of the town square, beside the Courthouse) Hiawasse, GA 706-896-1060
Mountain Magic Table Tennis Club meets 6 p.m. Thursdays at Pine Log Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in Brasstown. Ping Pong players welcome. Call Lee (828) 389-0924.
Mended Hearts Support Group meets the 2nd Monday of each month at Chatuge Regional Hospital Cafeteria from 5:30-7 PM. For information contact 706-994-6988.
We do Family Oral History of all of our residents. If you have not had your family history recorded ad would like to do so, Please call the Towns County Historical Society at 706-896-1060.