

The Foothills View

"We See It Your Way"

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BOILING SPRINGS, NC

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When The 'Bo-Weevil' Came To Cleveland County

*Bo-weevil, bo-weevil,
Why'd you go and stay?
Bo-weevil, bo-weevil,
Where you been all day?
You'll get a lickin'
Sure as I'm sittin'
On this bale of hay.
— Fats Domino*

There were plenty of cotton farmers in Cleveland County who in the summer and fall of 1950 wished the boll weevil would go and stay — and who weren't sure when that insect would get its "lickin'."

The boll weevil eventually would be defeated, but not before changing the agriculture — and culture — on which Cleveland County is based. Between July and September 1950, the boll weevil, a type of beetle, ate its way into the cotton squares and bolls throughout Cleveland farms, reducing the county's yield by more than half. In 1949 an average acre in Cleveland County produced 1.2 bales of cotton; in 1950, .43 bales.

The resultant crop diversification and industrialization meant that this month 22 years ago the beetle carried on its wings the greatest economic and social changes to Cleveland County since the Civil War. Retired cotton farmer, Bill Philbeck, 71, agrees.

"It was a mighty little bug," Philbeck recalls the weevil when it arrived in 1949. "But it was a mighty little bug."

The weevil's invasion of Cleveland County began peacefully enough 22 years ago. "A sabbath calm



A farmhand works a cotton field the old way — with mules and patience — last summer on land belonging to Eddie Harrill. Harrill says he didn't make money on his cotton.

prevailed" on July 4, 1950, wrote an anonymous reporter for the Shelby Daily Star. The Star's major news that day was the requisition of garrison troops from Japan for the increasing combat in far-off Korea.

Closer to home, the Co-Ed Theater was showing "Curtain Call at Cactus Creek." Holiday theatergoers also could see "All The King's Men" at the State, starring Broderick Crawford, and a pretty, young discovery named John Derick, who about 25 years later would discover his own pretty, Bo.

Meanwhile the Star reported that for the first six months of 1950 "Cleveland County has one of the smallest — if not the smallest — cotton crops in history." Infestation by the boll weevil was directly

blamed.

War from Korea began to dominate news for the rest of the month. On July 14 the Star reported communist assaults on the "do or die" American positions on the Kun River.

The martial spirit was caught by the C.J. Hamrick cotton gin in Boiling Springs. In an advertisement signed by 28 other "public spirited" cotton ginners, Cleveland Countians were warned of the weevil's advances:

"This monstrous thief has come to stay — unless we use all the fighting equipment at our command."

"We just didn't know anything about it," states former cotton farmer D. W. "Dan" Moore, Jr. "We had heard all about the boll weevil's advance through Georgia and South

Carolina but we had thought, 'Oh, that's south of Spartanburg. That doesn't mean anything to us farmers up here'."

It meant a lot. Crop yields reported on September 8, 1950, were just 68 percent the ten-year average.

"Five-cent cotton and ten-cent meat" was the farmer's term for falling yields and rising prices. But it wasn't just beef that was inflationary. A front-page story Sept. 7 broke the news that haircuts in Charlotte had "jumped" in price from 75 cents in 1946 to one dollar in 1950. A rise in shaves was anticipated.

Far-off prices in a Cleveland County that now seems in memory equally remote. Today cotton in a minor crop.

Bill Philbeck's "mighty little bug" prevailed.

Three Take Home Honors

Berietta Francine Woods, a Crest Senior High School student, is among 1,500 black students designated as a semifinalist in the National Achievement Scholarship Program for Outstanding Negro Students.

This scholarship program recognizes students who also score high on the testing program.

Berietta is the daughter of Frances Woods of Route 11, Shelby.

She is a member of the FBLA and the Spanish and Latin Clubs.

Among her high school honors, she received a scholastic achievement award for maintaining an A average and she was also awarded journalism and typing medals.

She plans a career in engineering at Duke University or Clemson University.

E.B. Clayton, principal at Crest Senior High School, has announced the names of two seniors who are being commended in the 1983 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Letters of commendation will be presented to Derek Greene and Robert Lamb who placed among the top five percent of the participants in the 28th nationwide competition.

Derek Greene is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Randall W. Greene of Shelby.

Derek has been a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the French Club and is currently president of the Crest Senior High Band.

Derek has plans for college where he will major in religion or law.

Robert Earl Lamb is the son of Dr. and Mrs. Robert L. Lamb of Boiling Springs.

His activities at Crest include membership in the French Club, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the FTA Club.

Robert plans to attend either Davidson College or Wake Forest University after high school graduation.

The students being commended this month, who are now beginning their final year of high school, entered the 1983 Merit Scholarship competition

Pedaling Past Police

A careful look by an off-duty Boiling Springs policeman at three bicyclers pedaling past his house Sunday afternoon resulted in the recovery of two bikes reported stolen and the arrest of three juveniles.

Officer J. W. Greene noticed that the three were traveling on two red and silver bikes matching the description of two ten-speed bicycles reported taken Friday from the carport of a Boiling Springs residence. After Greene stopped and questioned the youths, the bikes were returned to the residence.

Value of the bikes is about \$200. Charges against the youths are pending.

From Killer Bees To Hungry Cattle

Bees On Way Buy Feed Now

From Extension Reports

Cattlemen should not wait until January to purchase feed to get cows through the winter. It would be a good idea to inventory feed supplies now to determine if additional hay or grain is needed. Prices go up in the winter.

Lack of August and September rains have left pastures with little fall growth for grazing.

Very little fescue can be stockpiled even if it rains now. Cows can subsist nicely until they calve.

At calving their nutrient requirements increase dramatically, and those requirements must be met for the cows to supply milk to support calf growth and rebreed.

An average size cow, 1000-1100 pounds, will need

30 pounds of a good quality hay per day. Over 90 days, that cow will eat 2700 pounds, or close to a ton and a half of hay.

Most growers in Cleveland County had a difficult time putting up hay this year. Too much rain early in the summer and too little rain late in the summer reduced hay yields.

The grain supply on the other hand is plentiful. If feed is short you have a trio of options.

One, supplement your existing hay inventory with corn or small grain to meet your cows nutrient needs.

Second, purchase additional hay.

Third, plant winter annuals to graze.



E.T.

In this case the initials might stand for Extra-Terrific cat, if you ask Skip and Teresa Warrick of Shelby, owners of this tabby. E.T. stands about knee-high to his more-traveled namesake.

The so-called "killer bees," slowly moving north to the United States, are every bit as aggressive as they have been billed and could seriously hurt the American beekeeping industry, say U.S. Agriculture Department scientists.

An extensive study of the aggressive behavior of the bees shows that they are more prone to attack than normal bees and they do so in greater numbers, says a report published in Science magazine.

The Africanized bee, so named because it descends from a variety imported from South Africa, were tested against normal European-derived honey bees during simulated attacks on their hives.

In tests on large colonies, Africanized bees rose to the

attack more quickly and delivered 8.2 times more stings on leather targets than other bees, said the researchers.

The report also said the idea that the Africanized bees would become more docile as they spread north and mated with other bees apparently is untrue.

The stinging rate of bees in Venezuela was about three times higher than those tested earlier in Brazil, where the African bees were introduced in 1956, said the study.

Stinging rate is important because of the amount of toxin it introduces into the target. While some people die each year from allergic reactions to a bee sting, most people can survive results of the small amount of toxin in a few stings.