



Points East

By:
Ike Adams

I was up in Harlan County one hot day last summer on one of those combination business and running around trips where you try to get your own business done as fast as you can so you can get out and stick your nose in somebody else's.

Actually there's nothing I hate worse than somebody coming along when I'm planning my garden or doing a carpentry project and saying stuff like, "I've never seen cucumbers planted in a row like that," or "if it was me, I'd put them onions in a raised bed," and then they feel obligated to give you a thirty minute lecture on how much better your veggies will fare if you do it their way or how much prettier your pipe stand would be with walnut instead of cherry stain.

I swear that I would rather walk on hot coals and listen to a politician lie at the same time than have some know it all give me gardening advice in my own garden. And if I need any

advice on my pipe stand I'll call Rufus Harrison whose taste in wood stain is the only one on earth that I trust more than my own.

Anyway I figure that if I'm polite enough to put up with unsolicited advice, I am, likewise, entitled to do it out from time to time.

I wound up in the head of a little hollow near Wallins with a colleague who was there to inspect the construction progress of a home that the company I work for is financing and I noticed that the neighbors were out in the back yard of the house next door sharpening machetes. My colleague had already made it abundantly clear that he knew precisely what he was looking for and needed not a smidgen of assistance in determining the quality of the construction from yours truly. So I snapped a couple of pictures and walked over to visit with the neighbors.

First of all, the three guys looked like my kind of people and secondly

I was curious as to what it was they might be getting ready to attack.

They were passing around a bastard file and comparing the edges they had on their respective blades when I walked up. I told them I was from neighboring Leitcher County, that I was taking pictures of the house and when I further explained that I'd grown up about 12 miles from Whitesburg they agreed that that was far enough away from town to keep me or my camera from being dangerous.

Right off I wanted to know if they had ever used one of those little grind stones that you can put in an electric drill to sharpen their stuff.

The guy with the file, squirted out a long stream of amber from his chaw and allowed that he could sharpen three blades with a file in less time than it would take to find his drill. The other two nodded to indicate that their drills were also in parts unknown. Already it was obvious that I was going to have to try harder if I was to be of any assistance to these lads.

"What do you all aim to do with the machetes once you get them sharp," I asked, figuring that maybe they might be headed down to the river and needed to hack their way through the stinging weeds so they could get to a fishing hole. I mean I've had a machete all my adult life and chopping stinging weeds is the only practical utility I've ever made of it.

The guy with the chaw of Red Man in his cheek nodded and squirted another stream toward the side of the hill and that's when it dawned on me that kudzu was climbing up the posts on his back porch. In fact, there was nothing visible from the backside of the house for as far up the mountain as I could see except a thick blanket of kudzu. I could tell that there were trees underneath it but you couldn't actually see them.

"We're gonna wage war on that stuff," he muttered and then took a few vicious swings at the leafy vines while his buddies spread out a few steps on either side and went about the chopping and hacking as though they were, in fact, waging war.

"Why don't you just mow it," I wanted to know.

One of the other guys looked me over and grinned. "Are you plumb shore you didn't grow up right in downtown Whitesburg," he answered with a question of his own? "Turn that mower up and look under it."

I raised the lawn mower deck off the ground and couldn't see the blade because a huge coil of kudzu vine had been wound around the spindle so right that the underside of the mower looked like it had been stuffed with one of those grapevine wreaths that are popular among the home-making set these days.

"How bout weed killer?" I hear that new Spectracide Brush Killer will work on about anything. Sure got the poison vine off my rock fence," I ventured.

Red Man (that's what the other guys called him) shook his head and motioned me over. "He held his machete by the tip of the blade, pointed the handle at me and nodded at the vines. By this time sweat was pouring off his brow.

I took the big knife, rubbed my thumb over the hone and allowed that it was sharp as a razor. I chopped a few minutes by which time we had rendered a strip of kudzu about six feet wide and maybe forty feet long into mulch. "There's got to be a better way," I said.

Red Man spat and shook his head again.

"When you get back across the mountain you can tell them that you learned the only way there is to fight kudzu," he said. He stared up the mountain at the kudzu-high and several-miles-wide kudzu thicket.

"Not that we're ever going to win," he said, "but so far we've been able to keep it from taking over the kitchen sink."

Next time I go to Harlan County I'm going back to Wallins Creek. I'm not going to say a word but I'm going to fall in behind the first person I see hacking kudzu and when the blade gets dull I'm going to ask if anybody has a file.

Sweet and Sour

By Zi Graves



A Boy, His Guitar and Dog

Has time changed the way our children acted, or reacted to the problem of being a teenager, or has the life style of families with young people seeking a way out of the world of littered sites and entering a new world of strange, and unfamiliar emotions, privileges and lack of privileges never allowed before, parents, who once were kind and gentle, suddenly their worst enemy, or so it seems, cause he change in so many of the modern kids?

I would like to put the blame on society, the world we live in and shape by our own actions. I am speaking about those of us who must work for a living and raise our offspring at the same time. Or the parent that puts pleasure before love of the children. We have both kinds of parents and it is they who are responsible for the kids on the streets and often the cause of, or ignorance thereof, their child's misbehavior when he/she stumbles or falls during their trying time of their life. Training for this time in their life begins at birth and you are not finished till they are old enough or capable enough to prove they can handle the results of their own decisions.

None of us are, or claim to be perfect. Therefore do not say, with truth anyhow, that we raised perfect children. If anyone has "please hold your hand" and I will salute you. Yet there are a few that have every right to be proud of their offspring, more praise than complaints followed them through grade school and high school, was taken in stride and the struggle of adolescence was simply another step toward responsible adulthood. I was one of those lucky ones.

We lived in the country; and, as many of my neighbors at that time would have described it, "a purty far piece out." It was seventeen miles from Mt. Vernon, with no connecting roads; twenty-two miles to Somerset; sixteen miles to London, plus two miles from our house to Hwy. 80. Playmates for my oldest two lived at least a mile away and the one room schoolhouse they had to walk to was a couple of miles. Polly also went to the Buffalo one room school when her time came. So, a big part of their time was spent doing chores or finding something interesting to do alone. Judy spent time helping me do the canning, cooking and household work. She learned the hard way to be good at all of them.

Red watched his dad work on the truck. Mat was a good mechanic, along with his other talents, so Rod

was learning about man's work at the same time he was learning how to make a bow and arrow for his treks into the woods to target shoot. Since we were not hunters, he never shot off his kill. When they entered school in Ohio during the war years, their grades were good and they continued that way after we moved back to the one room school at Buffalo, then graduated from Shippville High with honors. So, Judy, Rod and Polly didn't have many of the temptations and problems of the children in today's world where rooms crowded with children from every walk of life and drug abuse abounds can interfere with the ability to think or do ones lessons.

Our children had another advantage over many of the other children. We were lovers of reading and had good books in our home. Mat owned a big old fashioned dictionary that was used till it fell apart. And we had most of his old school books, plus educational books on everything from mechanics to advanced carpentry and surveying and Mat was a perfectionist in all. The talk at the dinner table wasn't idle chatter, it covered everything from history to math problems. His collection included classics and western novels also the complete Five Foot Shelf of Harvard Classics. Our dinner was often disturbed by one of the kids having to run into the next room where the bookcase was to look up the answer to some subject we were discussing. Or Mat gave Rod a tricky math problem that needed a bit of time to solve.

I guess my wonderful visit with Rodney and wife Helen this weekend awakened a few memories and opened the door to a part of the past I haven't peeped into for awhile. When I hear the familiar voice of one of the children saying, "Mom, I'm home," it arouses memories of a time when there were five of us and the quiet of my present life is transformed into a time of constant chatter when Mat's voice dominated the occasion with his knowledge of the past, present and predictions for the future. Then, when a pause came, a young voice would break in to add a fresh thought or question to the discussion. Now, I brush the cobwebs from my mind and enjoy the pleasure of a familiar voice.

This was one of those occasions. My article last week about Rod and his dog Stubby, opened the door to an evening filled with the antics and love by, and from, a little boy and his dog. One story was how Stubby would wait for him at the top of the

(Cont. to A8)



Papa says, "If we keep a-selling 'em, he will keep a-bringing 'em in." Luke Gooch



2001 Buick LeSabre
"Everything You Want"
\$ave Thousands



2000 Pontiac Grand Prix
GT, 2 Dr., Roof
\$15,450



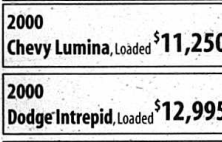
2001 Chrysler PT Cruiser
Limited, Leather, Sunroof, New
\$ave



2001 Pontiac Grand Am
4 Dr., Loaded
\$14,500



1998 Lincoln Town Car
All Options, Perfect
\$ave Thousands



2000 Chevy Lumina, Loaded \$11,250

2000 Dodge Intrepid, Loaded \$12,995

2000 Chevy Monte Carlo, Alloys, Spoiler, Tint, 16K \$16,500

2000 Chevy Impala, Sport Pkg., Loaded, Spoiler, Tint \$14,995
2000 Ford Taurus SEL, Alloys, All Power \$13,995
2001 Dodge Stratus, Loaded, Spoiler \$13,995
2001 Dodge Neon, Auto \$9,995
2000 Nissan Altima GXE, Loaded, Spoiler \$13,995
1999 Chevy Lumina, Loaded \$9,750
1998 Toyota Camry LE, Gold Pkg., Spoiler, Local, 34K \$12,995

1998 Saturn, 4 Dr., 29K, Keyless Entry \$7,995
1998 Mitsubishi Eclipse, 29K \$10,995
1998 Chevy Cavalier, 4 Dr., Auto, 39K \$6,995
1997 Plymouth Neon, Local Trade, 1K on new engine \$5,995
1998 Saturn Sport Coupe, Leather, Sunroof, Loaded \$10,995
1998 Chevy C-1500, 4x4, Auto, 350V-8 \$AVE
1998 Olds Intrigue, Local Trade, Like New \$9,995



1999 Chevy Blazer
4 Dr., 4x4, LS, Loaded, 24K
\$ave



2000 Buick Regal
All Power
\$13,500



1998 Ford F-150
8 Ft. Bed, Low Ks, (13 to Choose)
\$7,500

1999 Dodge Caravan Left Sliding Door \$9,995

1997 Nissan Pick-up XE X-Cab, 4x4, 44K, Local \$10,995

1999 Ford Explorer 4 Dr., 4x4, Loaded, 33K \$16,500

2000 Chevy S-10 "Extreme Pkg" - 11K \$11,995

1999 Chevy S-10 LS Alloys, 11K \$9,750

Plus Tax and License Only

MT. VERNON
Across From High School
444 W. 1st
256-8049

Town & Country Motors

Great Selection of Hand-Picked Vehicles

Top Dollar on Trade-Ins • Different Inventory Weekly

Our Reputation Speaks for Itself

Larry Gooch • Tommy Gooch
Andy Hiatt, Owners

LANCASTER
628 Standard Rd.
West in Burger Drive
792-6958

Come To
Ballard's
Day
in
Wildie
Saturday,
June 30
6 p.m.