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The Party Animal News

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Fake News and Safe Places - Part One

All we are hearing and reading about lately is fake news. It is as if there had never been fake news before. Gossip is undoubtedly a close relative, and it has been around forever. Who doesn't remember playing the game as a child where a sentence is whispered repeatedly down a line and by the time it reaches the end it isn't at all what was originally said. Today with all the social apps sharing information like wildfire it makes sense that fake news would evolve and leave us with the misinformation environment we have today.

As mentioned before, I have interviewed many pioneers of my pest control industry. Modern pest control began in the 50's so I am not far removed from the start. I began riding with technicians in the summer of 1976 and at one point my brother drove the truck and we did pest control together for my dad, Homer. (Today's regulations would never let a 16 or 17 year-olds treat a house for pests, let alone would insurance companies allow them to drive a company vehicle. It was a different time and place.) These interviews gave me insight into the fifties and sixties. One of the biggest concerns from these pest control operators were the writings of Rachel Carson. I have many of these experts stating that Rachel Carson was loose with the facts. I could easily state when it came to pesticides she offered the world 'fake news'.

Not surprisingly, one product she was warning about was DDT. From Wikipedia, "The fledgling EPA's first order of business was whether to issue a ban on DDT. Judge Sweeney was appointed to examine the case and held testimony hearings for seven months. His conclusion was that DDT "is not a carcinogenic hazard to man" and that "there is a present need for the essential uses of DDT".... However, Ruckelshaus (head of EPA) who had not attended the hearings or read the report himself, overruled Sweeney's decision and issued the ban nevertheless."

The pioneers of my industry were looking out to protect the public. They had their day in court, but I am sure Ruckelshaus was being pressured by the environmental groups to ban DDT. So he banned a product and the end result is that millions have died and suffered because of fake environmental news (some call it junk science). For a book on the scientific data on DDT read "The Excellent Powder, DDT's Political and Scientific History".

When I reflect on my education at Purdue University, not only did I learn about the importance of insects in our environment, but I also learned that there is a danger to humans when certain insects are left to cohabitate with us. Today, everyone is aware of the mosquito borne diseases as well as a list of precautions about ticks, bedbugs and fleas. Blood sucking insects can cause serious human problems, and then it must be decided where to wage war and what weapons to use.

Pest of the Quarter:

Subterranean Termites



The most important structurally economic pest in North Texas is the subterranean termite. I was called in as an expert witness on a home where it was clear very little had ever been done to control termites. Maybe a spot treatment here or there. After a few years there was damage everywhere. The house may have to be torn down. So don't take termites lightly, and remember cheap partial treatments are not always the best solution.

Even after I graduated I didn't recognize for a while the battle that had started with environmental groups. I knew pest control operators whose health failed from enduring court cases in the 80's because groups hung onto the fake news narrative that pesticides were bad for you and viewed pest control operators as contaminators of their property. Applications made properly will not cause problems. My pesticide chemistry professor was known to taste DDT in class and he lived to be over 80 years old.

In the 80's I was an elected an officer of our local organization and worked hard to tell our story. Who won out with the fake news stories about pesticides? The environment groups won. Some pest control companies went out of business. Today we have many insect and bug related diseases that I can tell you for a fact Americans did not worry about when I got out of Purdue in 1982. So in the end it is the public that lost because of the fake news that many people believed.

Mosquitoes

Knowing that insects impact our lives, I thought I would give you the 2016 Dallas County West Nile case totals from the dallascounty.org website. There were 60 cases of West Nile and 3 deaths. In 2012 Dallas had 398 human cases and 19 deaths. West Nile was discovered in 1999 in New York City, but because environmental groups opposed spraying for mosquitoes the problem was not contained. Maybe we should be listening to pest control professionals versus environmental groups when it comes to protecting the health of a community.

We VALUE our customers!

If you ever have a possible bug or part of a bug PLEASE save it! That will help us to identify the problem more quickly, target the correct pest and begin treatment sooner.

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Vic Eggemeyer



Vic Eggemeyer—Sales Rep
for Winfield Solutions

We have known Vic Eggemeyer for years in varying capacities. First, he had his own company and was a colleague. Then he became a sales rep for one of the pesticide/chemical companies and stayed with them through many corporate transitions.

Because of his experience having his own company he has been a valuable resource when we have had difficult issues to address at a client's home. He understood the importance of finding a quick solution to relieve a client's distress and has often been David's "go to guy" for finding just the right product for the job.

So, it is with some sadness that we will watch Vic ride off into the sunset next month as he begins a well earned retirement. He will remain in the Dallas area with his wife, near some of his grandchildren, but expressed that he will "not be having anything to do with pest control. I've done that enough."

Vic is planning on getting into the volunteer game. He is very involved in his church and is hoping to help others in this next stage of life. We feel he has actually been helping others already. He certainly helped us. He always comes by our office with a smile and never missed bringing the ladies poinsettias at Christmas to their delight. He is a kind soul and we wish him much happiness and satisfaction in his life now and always.



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