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A-ALL PEST TERMITE EXTERMINATORS, INC.
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The Party Animal News

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What If....

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Several years ago our camping adventures at Ft. Davis State Park usually began with a hiking trail near our campsite that would lead us up the hill (with a view of the McDonald Observatory in one direction and the state park in the other) and then down to the Ft. Davis lodge and back to our campsite. Most times we convinced ourselves that we deserved to eat at the lodge versus cooking at the campsite after this trek. Unfortunately, I forgot the bug repellent one time. I remembered my interview with Harry Katz, a well known pest control writer and consultant, who pointed out how important water is for bugs. So, I knew it was super dry in west Texas and I told Ann we would be OK. Of course, our biggest worry would be chiggers. It would be miserable to be itching in the tent for a couple days. However, no moisture, no chiggers, and we were fine.

This year's August rains could make chiggers worse. Any outdoor adventures should include repellents.

Over the years I have had to consult with my customers about bird mites, tropical rat mites and plain old chiggers. The first two mites can be solved with bird and rodent control. As for chiggers, it is all about being careful where you hike and walk. Tall unmowed grass should be avoided.

You may be aware that A-All has been around over a half a century. My dad, Homer, established many long term relationships with vendors, including financial institutions. A-All has probably outlasted most of them. One such example is Merchant State Bank. The bank crisis in the late 80s did them in. The building was on Ross Avenue, and has been torn down. (See picture) As a teen I had no problem going with my Dad to the bank. The inside had rich wood paneled walls and there were paintings on those walls. There was a barber in the building and I remember my dad getting his hair cut (I think his style could be described as the Elvis Presley cut). He also let me get my hair cut and I remember the barber using hot shaving lotion around the ears (to be fair, my cut would be called the Glen Campbell back then). I don't remember when I noticed, but I am sure it was in the 1980s when I would go to the bank by myself, that there was an oil painting on the walls depicting cowboys itching from chiggers. Somehow that stuck in my brain over the years. This memory bubbled up and a few years ago, so I tried to Google it and nothing came up. Recently, I Duck Ducked it and I found the picture and the artist. His name is Oleg Stavrowsky.



The title was Chiggers III. I probably saw Chiggers I on the bank walls. The later pictures seem brighter to me.

This is where the *what if* comes in. What if a few years ago I had worked a little harder to find the artist? See, he passed away at the age of 93 in Cedar Park, Texas last year during the pandemic. His paintings, he had stated, "evoke a deep emotional response". It made sense a Texas bank had his work on their walls even though he was born in Harlem, New York. He had the heart of a cowboy and studied the frontier to produce wonderful paintings.

Pest of the Quarter:

Chiggers

- Chiggers are a type of mite
- Only their larva bite (0.25mm—REALLY small) they inject a digestive enzyme into the skin and feed upon the decomposed tissue
- They live on the body for 4 days
- Live in tall weeds and grass
- When the temperature falls below 60F they become inactive

If I had the chance, my questions to Mr. Stavrowsky would be about his Chigger painting. How was it inspired? How did it end up in the Merchant State bank? Is there a work out there similar to chiggers depicting similar suffering cowboys during the frontier? Did you watch Seth MacFarlane's "A Million Ways to Die in the West?" Did you like it? And on they continue. It is clear that many paintings he produced did not romanticize the west. Just like life today has hardships, there have always been hardships. If you really want to do something today, don't put it off - it might be too late. —David

We will be closed September 3rd, 6th & 7th. We will not be providing service those days so please plan ahead if you need anything. PLEASE Schedule appointments sooner than later!

We VALUE our customers!

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Time for a picnic lunch! =>

Yes, it's time for a little R&R for the employees of A-All Pest Control. With Russ still out after his fall in June, those of us at the helm are tired and need to regenerate (Ann is a big Star Trek fan and refers to someone here as Borg...you figure out who). So we are extending our labor day time off by a few days. Thanks for understanding.

And as we mention Russ being out, he thanks you for your thoughts and prayers and looks forward to being back after he fully recovers. You may have noticed that Ann is now answering phones just in the mornings and doing services in the afternoons as we try to keep up with our workload. When you answer phones for a pest control company you need to have a pest control license, so I'm putting her in the field some and she is having a fun time. However, if you ever miss her at the office just leave a message and she will call you back when she returns.

And if you see the little green "Attic Party Animals?" car out in your drive that's her checking your rodent stations. She's enjoying putting a face with the voices she knows so well, so please feel free to say "hello"!