

## Busy Bees Reunion at Green Park

*Harold S. Riter, Reporting / The Ontonagon Herald*

Working with young people through the head, heart, hands, and health ideals of the 4-H clubs, one group stands out, in Ontonagon County as one of the clubs that three generations....the Busy Bees.

The Busy Bee 4-H Club was based in Green. Green is more of a community than a specific place. Named for lumber baron Thornton Green, who established the community through sales of cut over timber land to settlers in the early 1900's, Green centered on the Town Line Road, with a post office located at the spot where Ontonagon and Carp Lake townships come together. However, as a community Green included, more or less, an area extending from the Noble Road west to Halfway Creek and inland as far as Tolfree.

The Busy Bees 4-H Club was started in about 1940 (no one is exactly certain) and the first leaders were the late Anna Broemer and Lloyd Mattson. It was a club that brought together young people from throughout the Green area. A multi-project group, the Busy Bees lived up to their name including cooking, child care, sewing, pet care, caring for and showing farm animals, hunter safety, engine repair, outdoor cooking, identification of wild plants that could be eaten, and a host of other activities that met the varying needs and interests of the young 4-Hers of the Green community.

Sunday, July 24th, a reunion of the Busy Bees took place at Green Park. The parking area was full of cars, many with out of state license plates, as the former 4-Hers of Green gathered to renew old times.

At the center of attention was Irene Lobeck, who started as a young 4-H club member of the Busy Bees and eventually became the club's leader, assisted by her husband, "Ardie." Irene took over as leader in 1962 and saw the club through to its final years in about 1985. Irene was joined by several others who had been influential in the Busy Bee's long history of service. Esther (Kangas) Pekkala was present and was the club's first President. Helen (Hill) Waisanen was an early member. Lola Jaakkola, former Extension Service Home Economist and 4-H coordinator who had worked with the late K. J. Moilanen, Extension Director during the height of Busy Bee activity had also come to the gathering.



Pix: l to r. Helen Hill Waisanen, one of the early members of the Busy Bees and Irene Lobeck, early member and longtime 4-H leader of the club.



Pix : pictured, l to r; Lola Jaakkola, former Home Economist and Esther Kangas Pekkala, 1st Busy Bees club President.

In the pavilion, a large sheet cake commemorating the reunion and commemorating Irene Lobeck's long association with the work of 4-H was shared by those gathered, and a HUGE potluck lunch was served. There was much sharing of past times and a renewal of old acquaintances.



Pix: The large sheet cake bearing the 4-leaf clover of the 4-H Clubs of America and a special Thank-you to Irene Lobeck, long time youth leader.