

Opinions

Everybody has one...

A walk in the woods

Bill Bryson is one of the most humorist authors in the world today. And thanks to Bill, and, Robert Redford, Union County will soon be on the silver screen.

Bryson's 1998 humorous account of hiking the Appalachian Trail will begin filming in the summer of 2014.

It's the story of Bryson's attempt to reconnect with his America after having lived many years in Great Britain.

He theorizes about such a trip, and then on a whim, he decides to make it happen.

He enlists the aid of his longtime friend Stephen Katz, who will trek alongside him over hill, mountain and trail.

Bryson's best-selling book, *A Walk In The Woods, Rediscovering America On The Appalachian Trail*, will be converted into a movie, directed by, and starring Robert Redford. Nick Nolte will team alongside Redford in the adaptation of this hilarious literary classic.

Throughout their travels that began on Springer Mountain, Bryson and Katz find their way to Walasi-Yi Inn in Union County. It is here that the two, broken in spirit, revel in the taste of a cold Coca Cola and egg salad sandwiches purchased at the hiker Inn.

They also celebrate civilization with Hostess Cupcakes like it was the first time either had devoured sweet treats.

Their stop in Union County was just one of many adventures in the 244-page travel story by Bryson. The book, a humorous account of two over-weight, middle-aged and out of shape buddies attempting to hike the 2,100-mile AT is sure to be a hit at the box office.

Redford has long wanted to make a film adaptation of Bryson's best-selling book. It's going to happen, and the film will debut possibly in late 2014, or early 2015.

The news of the film is sure to be a boost to local tourism and be a guide to finding the North Georgia Mountains, much in the way Clint Eastwood's *Trouble With The Curve* helped Towns and Rabun counties in 2012.

Bryson holds a true esteem for the Appalachian Trail. In his book, he writes "from Georgia to Maine, it wanders across 14 states, through plump, comely hills' whose very names - Blue Ridge, Smokies, Cumberlands, Green Mountains, White Mountains - seem an invitation to amble. Who could say the words 'Great Smoky Mountains' or 'Shenandoah Valley' and not feel an urge, as the naturalist John Muir once put it, to 'throw a loaf of bread and a pound of tea in an old sack and jump over the back fence?'"

Bryson's book isn't just a humorous account of hiking the AT. It is a personal observation narrative that tells the world of the beauty of the AT, its fragile ecosystem that includes endangered woodlands, nests of copperheads and curious, hungry black bears and other wildlife.

It is the ultimate travel brochure and wilderness narrative that will soon show the world the beauty of the North Georgia Mountains.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



The Divine Library

The Bible is a miracle of God. It was written over a period of 1500 to 1600 years in locations from Babylon to Rome. The 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament were written by 40 plus authors with varied backgrounds. They were kings, farmers, fishermen, shepherds, a physician, a former tax collector, a tentmaker and various other people. For the most part they were not knowledgeable of other writings at the time they wrote. Not a one of them was aware that he was writing a portion of the Bible. However, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and through God's divine providence these books were gathered together to make up the Canon of Scripture which tells a complete story of God's redeeming love.

Even though the Bible has multiple writers it is evident that it has a common author and that author is God. This cannot be said of any other book. Originally the Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek. Some few parts were written in Aramaic. Today, the Bible has been translated into almost every language of the world. It is a God-breathed book. The Psalmist said, "Forever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89). The prophet Isaiah said, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand forever" (Isaiah 40:8). Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35). Solomon, the king of Israel, confessed, "There hath not failed one word of all His good promise" (1 Kings 8:56).

Our generation desperately needs to discover and experience the miracle Book, The Holy Bible. It is the book we need today for instruction, guidance and hope in a very troubled land. To quote the late Dr. A.Z. Conrad:

"Century follows century -
There it stands.
Empires rise and fall and are forgotten -
There it stands.
Dynasty succeeds dynasty -

See Parris, page 5A

It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



Talking SPLOST

Q. When is the election to renew the SPLOST sales tax?

A. It has already begun. You can early vote at the courthouse from now until November 3rd, then on election day, Tuesday, Nov. 5th, if you have not yet voted, you can go to your election poll and vote from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. We encourage everyone to vote. There are no crowds, so voting at the courthouse is very simple and quick.

Q. We heard there would be a new poll location for the Choestoe voting precinct No. 11. Is this true and where is it located?

A. Yes, there is a new voting location in Choestoe. If you have been voting at the fire station located on Highway 180, you will now be at a new location on Collins Road, one mile closer to town at 1034 Collins Road.

Q. What are the directions to the new voting location for the Choestoe Precinct?

A. From Blairsville go south seven miles on U.S. Highway 19/129 (Gainesville Hwy) to Highway 180, turn left and go 3/10 mile and turn left on Collins Road Follow Collins Road 4/10 mile to the newly restored Choestoe School House on your left, which is the new voting location. If you are coming from the old voting location at the fire station on Highway 180, simply continue past the fire station going west for .6 miles. Turn right on Collins Road and continue for 4/10 mile to the Choestoe School House on your left.

Q. Is the Historic Choestoe Schoolhouse open to the public?

A. It will be on Thursday, October 31, 2013. We will have an open house and ribbon cutting. This is the ONLY remaining historic county school house in the county.

Q. Why did the county restore the old school house?

A. One of the family members of a teacher and student from the school donated the beautiful property on Collins Road to the county if we would move and restore the old school. It had previously been moved to a site at a campground and was leaking badly and in danger of falling in. It was a very difficult decision and project to not only move the school, but to restore it. It would not have been possible without SPLOST sales tax funds.

Q. Do you think it was a worthwhile

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor ...

Who Shutdown the Government?

Dear Editor,

Even when it comes to something as basic, and apparently as simple and straightforward, as the question of who shut down the federal government, there are diametrically opposite answers, depending on whether you talk to Democrats or to Republicans.

There is really nothing complicated about the facts. The Republican-controlled House of Representatives voted all the money required to keep all government activities going - except for ObamaCare.

This is not a matter of opinion. You can check the Congressional Record.

As for the House of Representatives' right to grant or withhold money, that is not a matter of opinion either. You can check the Constitution of the United States. All spending bills must originate in the House of Representatives, which means that Congressmen there have a right to decide whether or not they want to spend money on a particular government activity.

Whether ObamaCare is good, bad or indifferent is a matter of opinion. But is a matter of fact that members of the House of Representatives

See Holsapple, page 5A

Apology necessary

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to Ruth Elizabeth Ramsey's article on Coosa Water from 08/28/2013 and 10/15/2013.

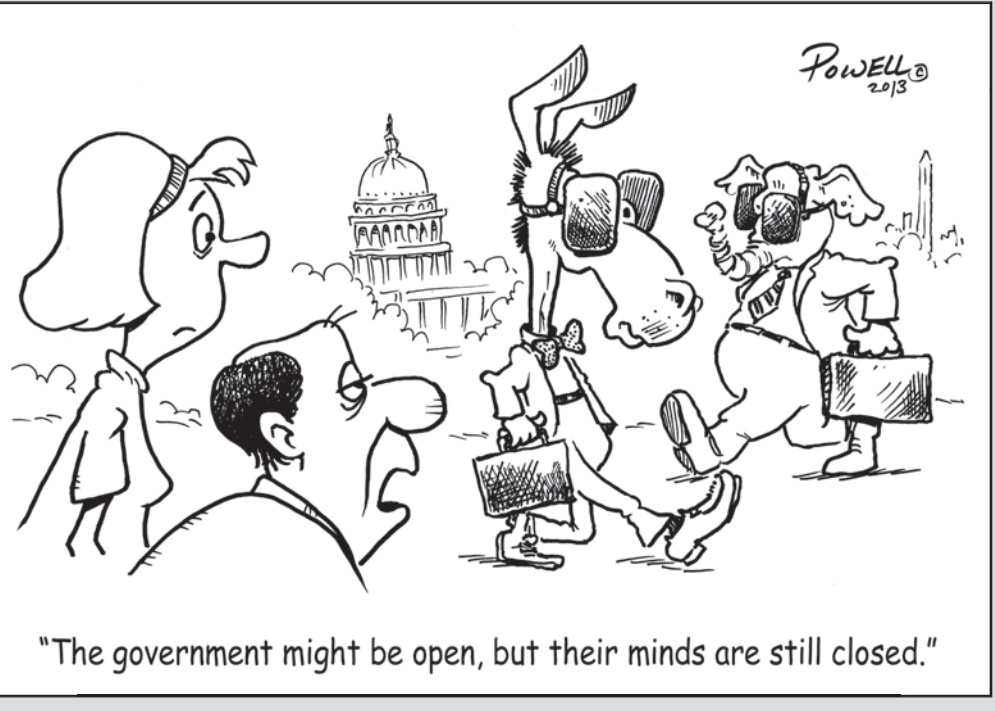
I too am a Coosa Water customer and personally have no complaints regarding their service. Yes, the water is cut off from time to time; however, I understand these things happen. When the water is off in the night have you ever thought that the young men, (the men you refer to as people "out of the hills") are up in the middle of night after working that day at Coosa Water in order to get the water supply back on while everyone else is sleeping to ensure services are restored before customers wake for work, school, etc.?

These young men, I know from personal experience, have been out to my residence on Christmas morning fixing my water when they should have been home with their families enjoying the holidays.

The "forward thinking," "trained," and "responsible" men at Coosa Water sacrifice a lot of time with their family and loved ones in order to ensure the customers are with water. Yes, mistakes are made and I have called and even called after office hours and been provided cell phone numbers to reach an employee on their answering machine so that their employees are readily available at all times; 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year; granted you may not get an answer if they are working on fixing the problem as I am sure they get numerous calls when water services are cut off due to leaks, etc.

You should be ashamed for referring to these educated men as people of the hills and possible terrorists, especially when you reside in the hills. Did it ever occur to you to call the office and ask why the young men were at your meter and why your water was still off, instead of waiting until close to office closing time? Maybe if you had done so, you would have been educated

See Dyer, page 5A



Shutdown consequences

Dear Editor,

How did we elect someone who voted to shut the government down causing a \$24 billion hole in our economy, a loss of 250,000 jobs and a threat to the credit rating of the United States? We need people in Congress who will represent US, not the special interests groups in Washington like the "Heritage Foundation" or "Americans for Growth" or the radio talk show extremists. In the next election remember what happened this month and who did it Elections have consequences.

Frank Maloney, Blairsville

Think before speaking

Dear Editor,

I am a farmer's daughter and I have watched my dad work the land and milk cows in some of the worst conditions imaginable. He did what he had to do while battling stitches, being sunburned, working in the freezing cold, suffering with the flu, backaches, smashed fingers, and near total exhaustion, where he could barely go.

Now I watch my husband and sons do the same thing. Rain, sleet, snow, and thunderstorms, daylight until after dark.

We don't farm just to pay the bills, we farm because it's a family business that has been passed down from one generation to the next. It teaches my children the value of life, where you literally reap what you sow. It instills in my kids the same values that I was taught while growing up. We take pride in knowing that dairy farming

See Kerr, page 5A

Sorghum memories

Dear Editor,

I must say that I really enjoyed the Sorghum Festival Parade this year.

It has been many MANY years since I have attended, being I live out of town and just don't make the effort or have the desire to attend any more. But being I was in town and went with my grandchildren it was very pleasurable indeed.

Still, there are many things I miss about it that once was so long ago when I participated with the band from 1975-1979.

I remember a couple other nearby high school bands marching along with us, which competed in street drill routines for trophies. I guess they all got mad and stopped participating because Union County always got First Place. But look who we had for our directors back then, the BEST! I also remember how the late Union County Sheriff Harlan Duncan use to lead the parade off, usually on his horse. After he passed away, the other law enforcement usually led it off in their squad car. Something I missed for sure with this parade.

I also remember the American Legion behind us carrying the Flag and colors. They weren't there either along with the band from the

See Seabolt-Barnes, page 5A

I Brought R. C. Weeks to His Knees

I met RC Weeks for the first time when I was 4-5 years old. My Dad's hair style was typical of the 1950s and early 1960s. He and I had a Flat Topped haircut. We went once a month to the barber. One particular Saturday we were visiting my grandparents in Alabama. So, we made a visit to the Phil Campbell Barber Shop. You remember those Barber Shops. There was a revolving candy cane by the front door. Inside there were 4 chairs all of which were filled on a typical Saturday. The waiting area was comprised of farmers all of whom were busy talking about their crops, politics or telling fishing stories. We were seated in the Barber Shop waiting our turn. Dad got up and walked over to the chair. He told the barber he wanted a Flat Top. When he was through he placed me on a booster seat and told the barber to give me a flat top as well. Both cuts cost us \$2 and when we walked out of the shop we looked like actors off the set of the Andy Griffith Show. Before going home we went over to the Phil Campbell Pool Room.

Dad bought me a pack of peanuts which he opened and poured into a bottle of a Grape NE HI. We referred to this soft drink as a grape belly wash. Anyway, I was in heaven. This was good stuff. While I was enjoying this treat Dad began to shoot a round of pool. He had played a game or two with some friends when another man walked up to the pool table. This other man was R. C. Weeks. He had married my father's first cousin, Polly.

The two men slapped each other's back and talked a few minutes and everything seemed cordial to me. But, then as R. C. placed a cigarette in his mouth he began insulting my Dad. Now, understand that he was joking with my father. But, how is a 5 year old boy supposed to know that an insult was actually a joke. As R. C. brought the lighter toward the cigarette another insult came from his mouth. I stood up and walked over toward this man with my little fist I hit R. C. Weeks as hard as I could swing. I was not tall enough to hit an adult above the waist. But, you can imagine where my punch landed.

As R. C. bent over in pain he came face to face with me. I looked at him and said, "Nobody, talks bad about my Daddy". The young men in the pool room erupted into laughter. For years I was the talk of the town. I was referred to as the "young'un that brought R. C. to his knees". R. C. and Polly were good people. Later in life they gave me my first job. I served as a stock boy in their clothing store. Although

See Cummings, page 5A

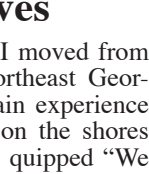
Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Farmers Market Moment

JoAnne Leone



I did not feel this way in Florida. There were three months of heaven and 9 months that were hotter than Hades, for promos that invite you to hell never boast of 100% humidity. Dear friends of mine just came back from spending time with family in Florida. They said, "never again in summer". Bob, you were there the first ten days of October!

It is autumn in the mountains, and that means there is a mass migration of Floridians to our pumpkin patches. It is good for our economy. It's even better for their souls. Of Mother Nature's Quad, it is the feast for all the senses. The banquet consists of the smell of burning leaves, the unique texture of pumpkin pie on your tongue, the sound of the crackling of the leaves under your socked feet, the magnificent sight of the painted mountainside and the taste of hot cider on its way to warm your toes after a walk in the woods on a cool day. It doesn't get much better than that.

OK, for a lot of these folks, it also includes a tour of Alexander's Store, but I digress.

As a kid, I loved to discover a pile of leaves that had been raked by some patient soul, but had been abandoned before they were collected or burned. I would step a hundred feet back, position myself for the Olympic run that would end in a spiral twist as I would hurdle to the top of the pile. Kerplunk. I would land, face up. When I opened my eyes I would be looking at a cloudless deep blue sky. Sometimes I'd just lie there, staring at nothing. Staring at the universe.

I'm finding myself ogling the universe

See Leone, page 5A

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Kenneth West
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Charles Duncan
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Lowell Nicholson
Photographer



Joe Collins
Advertising Director

Todd Forrest
Staff Writer

Website: www.nganews.com
E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com
Mailing: POBox 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514

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Phone: (706) 745-6343 Fax: (706) 745-1830 * P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514