

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Georgia Mountain Fair

Summer in the mountains for many people means getting away from the hustle and bustle of the city to the cool, calming scenery of the Blue Ridge Mountains with the clear creeks running over moss-covered rocks and Laurel and Rhododendron blooming along the roads and streams. Those of us who are lucky enough to live here know that we live in paradise and enjoy it every day no matter what the season, but we don't talk about it too much because then everybody would want to live here. A bad day in the mountains is better than a good day anywhere else.

**RC&D**  
*Frank Riley*  
Executive Director



I remember visiting my grandparents in the summers up here when I was young, and it was something I looked forward to all year long. It was a lot cooler than the hay fields in middle Georgia where I grew up. I fondly remember my grandfather taking me up Corbin Creek in his Jeep pickup before the Forest Service gravel road was built. We had to go up the river thru the Miller place on a small forest service road and catch native trout in the small stream. We also would go up Owl Creek in his Jeep pickup (I still have it) to let his Walker fox hounds out to run the fox on the slopes of the mountains where he and a couple of his mountain buddies would build a fire and sit and listen to the hounds running the fox. Could have been a mason jar there also but I didn't know it at the time. They could tell which hound was baying and what they were doing. I think they were probably making it up, but it was a good way for me to spend a summer evening sitting by a campfire with no lights in sight and nothing but stars and moon overhead. When it was time to go home, Granddaddy would wipe his hands on a Croker sack and leave it where they would find some of the dogs would come back and stay by his scent until he came back to get them. He had 20 or so most of the time. We would then spend the next couple of days looking for the Fox hounds that did not come back that night. I think it was just an excuse to get out of the house and away from Clemmie who always had something for him to do.

They lived here in the summers and Athens in the winter. This is where he grew up in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Mountain Scene which is where we live now on his old farm. He was the first County Agent in the county in 1914 so my roots go way back and deep.

I also remember going across the road with them to Mt. Zion Baptist Church to plan the river community's Georgia Mountain Fair exhibit. Back then it was held in the high school and each community had a section in the bleachers in the gym. They would display canned goods, prize vegetables, flowers, and home-made goods that the local folks made for use in their every-day lives.

This was a time when the fair was a real local community affair that the people in each community in the county looked forward to it all year. It was a community gathering and celebration of where they lived and worked. There would be men walking in the fair parade with their real black powder guns and there would be log trucks hauling giant logs harvested from the Forest Service lands in the county. After the parade there would be a target shooting contest with the real black powder guns. These men used these guns to hunt with all during the year, so they were good shots with the primitive weapons and the contest was hotly contested as to who was the best shot.

In 1950, Towns County held the first annual Georgia Mountain Fair, which was a three-day agricultural exposition in the local high school recreation field. With just 2,000 attendees for the first fair alone, the event would soon exponentially grow, making the high school too small to host the event.

By the 1970s, the Georgia Mountain Fair had nearly 100,000 people attending each year, and fair representatives decided that the event would need to be moved to a larger venue.

With local support of the Towns County Lions Club, organizers purchased a large amount of land next to picturesque Lake Chatuge in Hiawassee, GA, and in 1978, the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds hosted its first Georgia Mountain Fair. It serves as host to countless events including art festivals, world-class bluegrass, country gospel and rock 'n' roll performances, visiting conventions and dance shows, the Rhododendron Festival, followed by the Georgia Mountain Fair, Fall Festival, Super Star Concerts, and Georgia's Official State Fiddler's contest.

The highlight of the week-long affair is the Fair parade on the first Saturday where there are on display old cars, old tractors, floats, Shriners, Fire trucks, forest fire trucks, horses and many other interesting things to entertain the folks lining the street to catch candy and view the passing show. This year Chest-Chatt RC&D and the Towns County Firewise Citizens Coalition will have 2 entries in the parade; one will be a float with a birthday cake celebrating our mascot Smokey Bear's 75th birthday on August 9th. Smokey himself will be there also riding on a horse drawn farm wagon with a real forest Ranger as his handler. Come out and enjoy the parade that our committee has worked hard to put together to kick off the 69th annual Georgia Mountain Fair or enter a vehicle or float of your own. It's a fun way to spend a Saturday in July.

For more information on the Georgia Mountain Fair go to [www.georgiamountainfairgrounds.com](http://www.georgiamountainfairgrounds.com).

## Letters to The Editor

### Pushing Back

Dear Editor,

It seems that you can't turn on the weather channel, national news, or even our local paper without being bombarded with lectures on the so called man made climate change "crisis". I profess that the onslaught of climate change demands being made on our citizenry is akin to religious dogma; no argument or push back will be permitted! Not enough of us are pushing back on this issue! Climate change activists are essentially demanding that carbon based energy, petrochemical building blocks, and downstream chemical derivatives used in our everyday lives be banned.

Beware of proposed legislation that puts more government control on the lives of every American! We do not need the federal, state, or local government to extract more taxes to create another bloated bureaucracy that essentially decides who to tax, how much to tax, and who will be the beneficiary of yet again another redistribution scheme! Our country has now become self-sufficient with respect to our energy needs. I urge all citizens to reject any and all new government programs that purport to save the world in the name of the man-made climate change hoax!

Kevin P. Cannon

## Woke Up this Morning

I woke up this morning to discover that the cantaloupe on my kitchen counter is rotten on one side and leaking juice. I bought it yesterday at the grocery store. Twenty four hours ago my unfortunate fruit was firm and just at the edge of ripening. The side that is not rotting is still green, but the raccoons will not mind.

Perhaps I read too much science fiction in my youth, but I'm tempted to believe that some grocery stores generate a stasis field in their produce departments which holds fruits and vegetables in a state of apparent freshness until you leave the area. That's why the strawberries that are bright red and tasty in the store need a shave by the time you get them home.

We'll come back to the produce department later, because my cantaloupe is a perfect metaphor for the transitional state of politics today. Bear with me.

For most of you reading this, the word "woke" is a verb, an intransitive verb, or the past tense of the infinitive, "to wake," but every new generation takes ownership of elements of past generations for good or ill. "Woke" is now used by some to refer to social consciousness. To others, the word is a pejorative.

Social movements come and go, and they get recycled under different brand names. Like many of you, I may be prevented by education and experience from being fully "woke." My social consciousness was inherited from my family, who passed along the Christian ideal that is fundamentally bound to the American character: The belief that in the eyes of God, the soul is colorless and all people are of equal value.

If anyone had bothered to look, gatherings at my family home often resembled one of those "socially engineered" television commercials where all the races and a good selection of the letters of the alphabet are represented. My parents taught us that the only measure of a human being is the quality of their character, and that measure is taken by observing what people do and, for the most part, disregarding what they say.

A few short years ago I would have been able to say, "The only measure of a man is the quality of 'his' character," and few would have taken notice of my faux pas in excluding almost half of the human race.

I'm "woke" enough to realize the power of the words we choose in shaping the attitudes that lead to actions, and, did you notice? Woke enough to say "almost half" so as not to exclude those who identify as something other than male or female.

The problem, according to the woke paradigm, with the America that many of us grew up in, was that it excluded and marginalized too many people outside the mainstream. I would have to agree with that. Rivers change course, and younger generations replace older ones, and the woke generation is beginning to reach for the rudder.

This is as natural as it is inevitable. But readers of this column will be among the first to appreciate the irony. In reaching for the inclusive and egalitarian ideals of wokeness, many who adhere to these still unripe concepts have become, in word and deed, remarkably similar to that which they condemn.

Instead of attempting to bring the excluded and marginalized into the mainstream and together charting a new course, "wokeness" in many quarters seeks to annihilate the mainstream with an aggressive hostility toward much of our history and heritage, and in particular to anything that it perceives as having been "privileged."

In this environment of hostile "wokeness" we hear some pretty strange statements. For example, a University of Illinois professor recently stated that mathematics is "racist." (This might come as a surprise to the ancient Arabs who invented algebra.) Grammar has also been declared racist.

Last week we learned that Nancy Pelosi, one of the most liberal Speakers of the House who has ever served in Congress, is also racist because she dares to criticize certain members of Congress "of color." Her constant criticism of the great white "golden golem of greatness" (thank you, James Howard Kunstler) in the White House, carries no penalty.

I'm waiting for MSNBC to pick up on the fact that former president, Barack Obama, is also racist because the Betsy Ross flag was prominently displayed at his inaugural address.

There is nothing new in this time of dynamic change except for the technology leveraging the anger behind ideals which are in conflict mainly because they are badly communicated. A divisive force is welded by corporate media, which has monetized anger and fear in its desperate attempt to remain relevant and profitable.

The ideals of the "woke" movement are sound, and not at all dissimilar to traditional American ideals. What is lacking is the civil dialogue necessary to discover the common ground. The biggest impediment to that dialogue is our national addiction to drama and the monetization of that addiction by the information business.

Should that dialogue take place, those who are older and/or more conservative in nature would soon discover their own values repackaged. Those who are younger and/or more liberal would discover that the "other side" was already well on its way to embracing a humanity devoid of labels.

Speaking from the middle, many of us have grown weary of the constant bickering. Turning to the left now, many of us, perhaps a majority, were well past noticing identities until they began to be shoved in our faces. "Pride" means confidence and self respect, but it also means deep pleasure or satisfaction in one's self. It is the latter definition buoyed by anger that can continue to prevent any real understanding.

We have come full circle now, back to the produce department where we find that some of the fruits of "wokeness," like the tortured fruits of industrial agriculture, are at once unripe and rotten, and I believe that they will be consigned to the compost pile just like the cantaloupe on my kitchen counter. Other, more palatable fruits will grow to replace them, because the roots are strong, and they run deep into the rich soil of our American heritage.

## The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

## Rosette Rose Disease

Rosette Rose Disease is a serious disease that is infecting rose plants. It's a viral disease that I've seen in Towns and Union counties. It can spread rapidly and kill rose plants within a couple of years of infection. Let's talk about rosette rose disease, how to spot it, and what you can do about it.

**UGA extension**  
**Watching and Working**  
*Jacob Williams*



Rosette rose disease was first found in California and Wyoming back in 1941. Since then it has spread towards the east. Rosette rose disease also infects wild roses. This is most likely the way that the disease travels. It can infect all roses and is particularly lethal to multiflora roses, which are a species of wild roses.

Mites primarily carry the disease. The eriophyid mite will feed on an infected rose. That mite will then move to an uninfected rose and pass the pathogen onto the new rose plant. Once a rose plant is infected, the pathogen travels throughout the plant. The mites will often feed on new growth of buds, stems, and leaf petioles. These mites are so small that they're not visible to the naked eye. They ride on the wind to spread from plant to plant. It's also possible for humans to vector the disease through grafting and pruning with tools that have the virus on them. Therefore, if you are pruning roses it's a good practice to clean your tools with alcohol between plants.

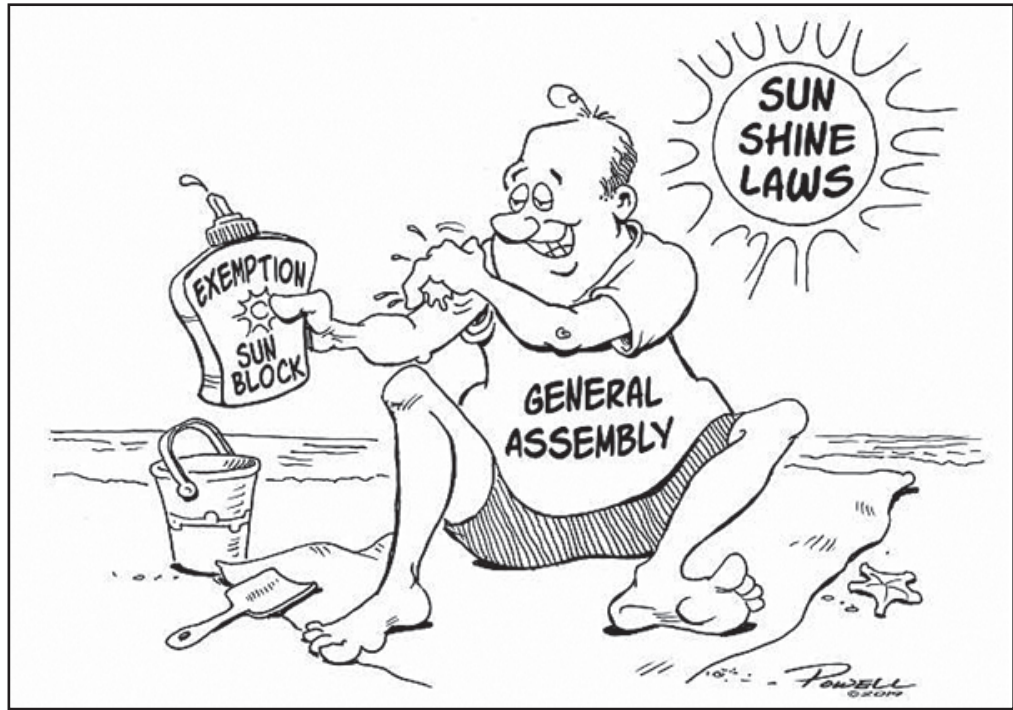
The symptoms of rosette rose disease are usually quite clear. The shoots and foliage will have an unusual red color; the stems will look thick and succulent with long shoots. There will also be an overabundance of small, pliable thorns on the stems. New growth on the plant may have a witches broom appearance, meaning it has many branches close together.

Rosette rose disease only affects roses. However, it is a viral disease, meaning that if your rose bushes get it, they can't be cured. There are no resistant varieties available on the market. There are some that are in research trials, so hopefully within a few years those will be commercially available. Since there is no cure let's talk about how you can prevent your roses from contracting the disease.

The best place to start is by planting disease free material. Avoid buying plants that already look stressed and might be showing symptoms of the disease. When planting the roses leave space between plants so that the leaves and stems aren't overlapping. This will make it a bit more difficult for the mites to travel between plants. Finally, if possible, remove wild roses from within 100 yards of your roses. This is not always feasible, but removing wild roses will decrease the chances of the disease being able to spread to your roses.

If your roses are already showing symptoms, the best course of action is to remove them. Infected plants will spread the disease to other nearby roses. The disease infects all the way down to the roots, so removing the roots is necessary to remove the virus. Bag up and dispose of all the plant material that you pull out. It's not recommended to replant roses immediately into an area that's been infected.

If you have questions about rosette rose disease contact your county Extension Office or email me at the address below. On July 25, the Union County Extension is putting on a Well Water Program. It will be at 5:30 in the Union County Civic Center. If you would like to attend, please RSVP with Union County Extension Office at 706-439-6030 or email me at [Jacob.Williams@uga.edu](mailto:Jacob.Williams@uga.edu).



## Towns County Community Calendar

	Every Monday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Every Tuesday:	4 pm
	Old Rec. Center	
SMART Recovery	Every Wednesday:	7 pm
	Red Cross Building	
Bridge Players	Every Thursday:	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Movers & Shakers	Every Friday:	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Sundance Grill	8 am
	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Sunday:	7 pm
	Red Cross Building	
YH Plan Comm.	Third Tuesday of each month:	5 pm
Co. Comm. Mtg	YH City Hall	5:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Courthouse	5:30 pm
Water Board	Blairsville store	6 pm
	Water Office	6 pm
Quilting Bee	Third Wednesday of each month:	10 am
Book Bunch & Lunch	McConnell Church	11:30 am
	Daniels Steakhouse	
Friendship Comm.	Third Thursday of each month:	6 pm
Republican Party	Clubhouse	5:30 pm
	Civic Center	
Goldwing Riders	Third Saturday of each month:	11 am
	Daniel's Restaurant	
Red Cross DAT	Fourth Monday of each month:	5:30 pm
	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	
Lions Club	Fourth Tuesday of each month:	6 pm
	Daniel's Restaurant	
Hiaw. Writers	Fourth Thursday	10:30
Hiaw. Garden Club	Hiaw. Pk. Comm. Rm.	12:45 pm
	Clubhouse	
	Last Thursday of each month:	5:30 pm
	Cadence Bank	

## Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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