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accept a road or not.

Q. I have a Murphy Highway address. I know this is a State Road but I can't see to pull out of my driveway. Can you help me?

A. Absolutely! Never hesitate to call my office if you feel you are in danger or have a situation that needs immediate attention. Also, when you notice things like a road,

intersection, street or right of way being overgrown please call our Road Department at 706-439-6062 and report it so that it can be put on a work order. In this situation, we do not mow the right of way of a State Highway but we will gladly send someone out to weed eat a trouble spot so that you are not in a precarious situation when trying to enter or exit a road.

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but Maine had other ideas.

Our group decided to fly into Bangor on the 10th of June to begin hiking on the 11th. Our plans were to hike from the end of the trail on Katahdin south to Monson. One week prior to our departure, a late storm dumped a foot of snow on Katahdin. We soon found out all the trails to the summit were going to be closed until June 15th. We had to change plans and decided to begin our hike in Monson and travel north. We also decided to spend the first night with a friend, another Extension Colleague from Auburn, who would help us with re-supply in the 100-mile wilderness. Dr. Kathy Flanders was an entomologist during her career and jumped at the chance to help us with our trek.

The trip to Maine was fraught with much frustration due to the various airlines on which we traveled. Henry and Stan were to fly to New York and meet one another for their flight into Bangor, which was cancelled, forcing them to rent a car to drive the six-hour trip. I was supposed to leave Atlanta on a flight at 9:30 and make a connecting flight in Charlotte. My first flight was cancelled. The next was delayed. I finally found one to Philadelphia and it was delayed. Upon reaching Philly, I ran and barely made the second leg. However, my luggage did not. I finally received it the next day about 9 a.m., so we were finally able to begin our hike at 11 a.m. in the rain.

At the very beginning of our trip was a sign that read "Caution! It is 100 miles north to the nearest town at Millinocket. There are NO places to obtain supplies or get help until Millinocket. Do not attempt unless you have a minimum of 10 days supplies and are fully equipped. This is the longest wilderness section of the entire A.T. and its difficulty should not be underestimated." We all looked at each other and wondered if we had the "right stuff."

After beginning in the rain, we soon found the A.T. in Maine to be a mixture of roots, rocks, bogs and mountains. And due to the rain, everything was wet. Early in the evening, we were bone tired and hungry, so after 9.9 miles, we made camp five miles short of our destination. I thought to myself, "At least there are no mosquitoes or flies." But then the rain stopped and the high-pitched buzzing noise never left us for the next seven days. The next day, we came to Barren Mountain, which was only about 2,100 feet. A piece of cake, right?

As we sat eating supper that evening and wondering about the Chairback Mountains, of which there were four to cross with each higher than the previous, we quickly found that the trail in Maine contained no switchbacks. And the trail designers loved to place trails on old rockslides. So, each mountain we climbed was straight up a rockslide. We averaged about 1 mph while climbing these mountains. While in Virginia,

we averaged close to 3 mph. Now, each day we were falling further behind our schedule. It was time to adapt or fail to reach our goal.

Fortunately, sunrise occurs at about 4:30 a.m. in Maine, so we were able to get up and begin hiking earlier in the day. Our mornings began at 5 a.m. with breakfast, and we started out hiking around 6:30 each day. We began recording 15 to 17-mile days, and by the sixth day, we walked nearly 18 miles and were able to catch up to our original plan. We found fresh moose droppings everywhere but never saw one. We were able to hear the cry of a loon, and yes, even see some. We encountered countless lakes, mostly natural made, of the purest water you can imagine. We camped at a place called Antlers, where we think we heard the howl of a wolf in the distance. The whole state was one postcard scene after another and the toughest hiking I had ever encountered. These grueling days were preparing us for our final leg: the climb up Katahdin.

We began walking that morning at 7 a.m., and within 30 minutes, Katahdin Stream Falls came into view. This waterfall is perhaps the most beautiful I have ever encountered. It must be close to 60 feet high and makes quite the racket as it cascades toward the Penobscot River.

On we marched and soon came to a rockfall. The next 1.5 miles were up and over one boulder after another. Hiking sticks were of little use so they were put away. We used both hands to pull and both legs to push ourselves up and over these boulders. We made the top in five hours, averaging just under 1 mph. The view from the top of our long-anticipated goal was breathtaking. We could see the 100 miles to Canada. We lingered long enough for lunch and looked forward to what we anticipated would be a three-hour trip back to Baxter State Park.

The Abol Trail was another curveball Maine pitched to us. This trail lacked the steepness of the A.T. However, it made up for that with another rockslide, which was about 4 miles long. Our trip that day was about 10 hours long, and by the time we reached the end of the trail, my body was sore and my feet had blisters. The trail in Maine was the toughest I had ever encountered. Blood Mountain is child's play next to it, and Albert Mountain cannot compare. The Smokies are not near as tough.

My friends and I have traveled nearly 900 miles on this trail. Each state and section of trail provided me with fond memories. What will I remember most about Maine? The black flies, mosquitoes or gnats? The feel of rough granite on my hands? The cold, wet rain? Nope. I think I will remember the cry of that loon, or maybe the howl of that wolf. But for sure, I will remember the views from Katahdin and the solitude of the 100-mile wilderness.

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newspapers. Who would provide the contents of local school board, city council and commission meetings?

Who would cover the local veterans and civic organizations? Who would provide such a powerful voice for community input from everyday residents and church leaders?

Who would report on the successes of our children, both academically and in sports? Who would act as a regular keeper of the local historical record?

Who would serve small businesses as an affordable, effective vehicle to advertise local products and services?

Only a community newspaper like the North Georgia News, with our steadfast mission to keep the public abreast

of hyper-local news, is in a position to do all these things and more.

Of course, there are seemingly endless outlets for state and national news, but it's the local newspaper that keeps the public regularly informed on the matters that matter most to small communities.

And now more than ever, hometown newspapers need public support – we need your support – as rural newspapers are closing at an alarming rate.

According to a recent study by the School of Media and Journalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, more than one in five newspapers has closed over the past 15 years, leaving many thousands of Americans without a community news source.

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Monthly Mingle! This lunch and learn style event will take place on July 10 from 12-1 p.m. at the Union County Community Center. The speaker for July is Doug Smith, Culture Director at Chick-fil-A, Blairsville and Ministry Director for Camp Jabez Retreat Center. Doug is a dynamic speaker and will be sharing some mid-year motivation to help you take your business to the next level. You don't want to miss this wonderful time of learning and networking. The cost to attend is \$12 and covers a taco bar lunch, a drink, tax, and tip. Register today by calling the Chamber at 706-745-5789. Or register online at visitblairsvillega.com.

Wonder what new businesses are coming to Blairsville in 2019? To help clarify the rumors flying around, we have scheduled Mitch Griggs of the Union County Development Authority to speak at our next Eggs and Issues. We'd love to have you join us for breakfast on Wednesday, August 14, from 8-9 a.m. at the Union County Community Center. Mitch will be speaking about the current and future plans regarding restaurants, retail spaces, and industrial growth in

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they will need to be removed. When planting Leyland cypress make sure to dig out an area 3-4 times larger than the diameter of the root ball. This will improve soil drainage, resulting in your trees being less stressed and less susceptible to root rot diseases. In addition, planting trees at least 15 feet apart will reduce disease incidence.

There are some alternatives to Leyland cypress trees. Green Giant arborvitae and Arizona cypresses are both trees that serve the same purpose in landscape and are more disease resistant. For anyone planting trees as a barrier or screen, I would encourage them to look into these alternatives.

If you have questions about Leyland cypress please 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.

Fowler...

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ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great."

America was founded on liberty, unalienable rights, and government only by the consent of the governed. These hopes stand on the twin pillars of constitutional government and personal morality. Morality must come from our Creator else it becomes entangled preferences, power struggles, and ugly arguments. Even Jefferson and Franklin, not known to be Christians, recognized the need for transcendent values.

On this Independence Day, join me in praying that America will return to our founding, mutually dependent principles of liberty, virtue, and faith. After all, men are not angels.

Young Harris Jamboree

Country Western Jamboree Session at Stephens Lodge in Young Harris next door to Young Harris Pharmacy hosted by John Cochran and the Cowhands. First Friday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Free admission. Food available. Food sales to raise funds for Young Harris Scholarship Fund.

Bad as that would be here, there's plenty that people can do to support their local newspaper before it ever gets to that point in Blairsville-Union County.

They can subscribe to the paper or buy a copy at a local retailer, then read it front to back to find out what's going on in the community.

Readers can also pay special attention to what locally-owned businesses are advertising – businesses run by our friends and neighbors – and support those local businesses by paying them a visit.

Educators can use the hometown newspaper in the classroom to teach students a variety of lessons, like the importance of civic engagement and why the pursuit of truth matters.

And businesses can con-

tinue to advertise with the local paper in order to support a fellow small business – the North Georgia News itself.

As always, we commit to putting out a quality product for our readers featuring an abundance of community news alongside advertising for quality local goods and services, which in turn serves our advertisers and puts food on our tables.

We humbly thank everyone in the community for their continued support of us and our families here at the North Georgia News.

In keeping with the spirit of the Fourth of July holiday, we also thank all of the brave service men and women – past, present and future – who put their lives on the line to protect our great American freedoms!

Happy Independence Day!