

# Opinion

A community forum for viewpoints from around the world to your backyard

## The Clinch County News

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## TALL TALES

By Lem Griffis

One day years ago, while out fishing, a large bass came up to get my plug. When he opened his mouth to get the plug, the water in the lake all ran in. If he had not closed his mouth and spit the water out, I would of had to left the boat and walked back.

I crossed my bees with lighting bugs one time, so that they could see how to work at night. They made a double crop of honey every year.

A lady told me that with my talk I should go places. She told me one place to go, but I have not been there yet. I am afraid there will be so many ahead of me that I could not get to the fire.

I went to see a flea circus. A dog came by and stole the show.

Truthly yours,  
Lem Griffis

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## Delivering a eulogy can be a tough gig

"Our Lord is a forgiving Lord."

That's how Sammy's eulogy began.

I'm no expert on eulogies. I've heard maybe 75 or so, and, thankfully, haven't had to be the subject of one. But when a eulogy begins "Our Lord is a forgiving Lord," my thinking is that it's a good thing the eulogized isn't around to hear it. Because if he was, he would realize he was in for some serious reckoning.

The story goes: My wife and father-in-law went to their cousin Sammy's funeral, held many years ago at a Valdosta cemetery.

Sammy had lived a hard life, with his chief accomplishment being that he was an expert lock- and safe-cracker. On his coffin, there was a tiny lock holding Sammy's lid down.

## Len Robbins

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"Sammy would crack that little thing in about half a second," my father-in-law whispered to my wife as the pastor rambled.

Of all a pastor's duties, I respect the eulogy the most. To have to come up with something to say — something that will soothe pain and put things in perspective, something that will capsulize a person's life — seems tremendously difficult, even when the deceased is a very popular, forthright person.

But think about the person the pastor didn't know too well. Or who

strayed from God's path quite often. Or someone who always seemed down on their luck.

I guess you could just bury yourself in scripture, like Sammy's preacher did. Or you could start telling jokes. Or you could give someone else's eulogy. I wonder what the guy who did Hitler's eulogy said? Sounds like a tough gig to me.

Toward the end of Sammy's eulogy, the pastor went in another direction — a bizarre one.

In closing, he said, "Sammy goeth into the night like a wet rat..."

I have no idea what he

said after that. My wife and father-in-law were so flabbergasted by the "wet rat" reference, they paid little attention to the last few words.

"Did he just say 'wet rat?'"

Yes, they concurred. He said "wet rat." But what was the significance of the "wet rat?" Was it an analogy? A simile? A slip of the tongue? Was he meaning to say "Sammy goeth into the night like a wet nap?" A wet cap? A ret wat? Why use the term "goeth" unless it's some kind of scripture?

We've called in biblical scholars, presenting them with the "goeth into the night like a wet rat." They're flummoxed.

Goeth into the night like a wet rat? I told you it was a tough gig.

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## Training Jeb

**Editor's Note:** This essay is an excerpt from local author Roy Rhodes's new book "Half Wit-Half Wisdom," available on Amazon.com. The News will publish excerpts from the book for the next few weeks.

We started Jeb on the training program at our house the other day. Jeb is the little boy who lives down the street and, at age 4, he may be a little late entering the program. If it weren't for the extraordinary abilities of his trainers, I'd be concerned we had failed him, but they'll pull him through.

Jeb's trainers are Emily and Erin, who at the age of 4 are already light years ahead of poor old Jeb. It's not that the little boy is lacking in intelligence or anything like that. It's just a matter of being outnumbered two to one by the female of the species who have the advantage of EA (Early Awareness).

Most males know nothing of EA, which is an argument in itself for the existence of such a phenomenon. All the same, all females know about EA, and they use it on us males unmercifully.

For example, females learn early in life (1-2 years of age) that if two or more of them begin bossing a male soon enough, the possibilities of controlling him from then on are limitless.

This natural law of EA was acted out for me the day that Emily and Erin started Jeb's training. I was out raking the yard and watching over the three of them (see how effectively I was trained) when Jeb got his first lesson.

There were three kids with only two bicycles. Emily grabbed one and Erin immediately hopped on the other. There stood Jeb, afoot. After a tum or two around the driveway, the girls started the first lesson.

Emily: "Jeb, pretend we're out shopping and you're home working in the yard." That sounded vaguely familiar to me.

Jeb: "No, it's my tum-to ride."

Emily: "No, Jeb! These aren't your bikes!"

Jeb: "Okay, I'll go home and get mine. I'll be right back."

Erin: "No, Jeb! Your Mama doesn't want you roaming all over the neighborhood. You have to stay here!"

Jeb: "Then let me ride

## Roy Rhodes

GUEST COLUMNIST



one of these bikes."

The girls ride off to the far end of the driveway and then halfway back. Emily: "No, Jeb. You can't ride our bikes 'cause you aren't a girl." Jeb: "Yes, I am!"

I don't think Jeb was ahead of our culture on the gender confusion. He would have claimed to be a monkey if it got him on a bicycle. It didn't occur to Jeb to argue that a boy can ride a girl's bike. For the next twenty minutes he argued that he was a girl and proud of it and then he got his bike.

Actually, I was surprised that the girls let him have one at all, until I saw their strategy develop. The second that Jeb climbed aboard Emily's pink bicycle with the little white wicker basket on the handlebars, both girls abandoned him.

Jeb sat there looking and feeling ridiculous.

The girls skipped gleefully over to the car parked in the driveway, climbed inside, and locked the doors. They busied themselves

at some game in there, ruthlessly ignoring poor Jeb. I watched him. I wanted to go over and explain things to him, but I knew he wouldn't get it.

Jeb's inner conflict ran out all over his face. He looks at the bicycle for which he had worked so hard. He steals a glance at the car. Back to the bicycle. A longer look at the car. Little frown. He is off the bicycle now. Finally, with a hop, skip, and a jump toward the car, he rationalizes away his defeat in the Battle of the Bicycles. I'm a boy, he thinks. I know I'm a boy and that's all that matters. Besides, I'm going to win this next one. I'm going to make them let me into that car. I know what he is thinking.

Jeb pounds optimistically on the side of the car. Two little girls rise up from the car's floor to peer out the window. They each cover their mouth with one hand, giggling, and pointing at Jeb with the other hand. Lesson two begins.