

Senior News Georgia

Providing Helpful Information for Mature Adults in GEORGIA!



*This August
Let's Go to a
Festival!*

August 2026
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page 6

“A TRUE GRIT FARMER”

By Emory Johnson, Guest Columnist

My friend Gene claims to have the largest grit farm in Georgia and maybe east of the Mississippi. He often brags about how easy it is to grow grits, especially using the hybrid variety he has developed. Gene claims his hybrid is especially suitable for the southern climate and more particularly, Southeast Georgia along the coast.

The only complaint I've ever heard Gene level toward his grit farm is the fact that they are the devil to pick. Skilled grit pickers are a dying breed and finding those still willing to perform this menial task with any efficiency at all, is becoming more difficult with the passing of each growing season. The problem with young grit pickers, according to Gene, is that they tend to rush things.

A proficient grit picker must practice an extreme amount of patience and not rush things early in the morning. It is absolutely essential that all the morning's dew be completely dried off before one enters the grit field. If the grit

bushes are "shook" too early before the dew dries off, the grits will get stuck to the leaves. When this happens, the grits can still be harvested, but it takes longer. Also, a chemical reaction occurs on the leaves that will turn the grits to a kelly green color that no one has been able to bleach out.

Gene says green grits are very difficult to market. However, for some reason, he always receives a large order for green grits every March from a fellow in Savannah. Gene says the fellow is a short guy about three feet tall and always pulls out a little sack filled with gold coins to pay for his green grits.

I spoke to Gene the other day and as always, I asked about his farming operation. Grit farming has really taken it on the chin these last few years with the dry weather he has had on the coast.

Gene told me he had looked at several crops to rotate to that would be capable of withstanding long periods of drought. He investigated cactus farming but found that the market was saturated already. However, he thought he had found the right crop when a friend from Italy encouraged him to plant two thirds of his farm in Spaghetti plants. Gene was excited about these tall spiny plants and held much hope for their success in the coastal plains.

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I called Gene this morning. The situation has changed tremendously. Gene was depressed and broken hearted. He had invested so heavily in the Spaghetti plants and watched them grow almost to maturity. He had ordered a Spaghetti combine from Italy and it had arrived the same day that five inches of rain fell in two hours. There's just not much you can do for a Spaghetti plant standing in a soggy field.

The pioneer spirit that I had witnessed in Gene's persona when he told me about his new endeavor has now been reduced to one of extreme defeat and utter frustration. Being a good friend I wanted to help. I attempted to shift Gene's attention away from these close at home problems by asking about his partnership farm over in the Carolinas. Gene began to cry as he told me his partner Bill had just called and reported that a bad wind storm had come through the area last night. Bill said the high winds were so strong that they had completely blown all the blossoms off of every Macaroni tree all the way up to the Virginia state line.

After I hung up the phone I thought about farming and how tough it can be. I thought about how tough Gene and Bill are and how they always bounce back. I thought about the time Bill had talked Gene into converting his watermelon patch to a new crop. Bill convinced Gene that they would be on the cutting edge of agriculture if they planted an asphalt patch.

Well, Gene called me back this afternoon. Boy was he excited! He and Bill offered to sell me a third of their new partnership and a sure fire chance of a life time. These two agricultural pioneers just might be on to something. Next year they plan to have several "Rock Gardens" around the farm to help off set the loses that may occur from their crops. Gene explained it this way. He said, "you know, I've studied a lot of crops and found that Rocks don't seem to show much noticeable effect from the weather one way or the other."

Good Luck Gene.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Having grown up on a farm with extensive farming experience, I have no intention of joining my friend Emory and his buddies by investing in their "Rock Gardens" wonders!

Good luck to you Emory!

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Taking Care!

**Minimize Stress While You Convalesce...
Practical Ideas to Manage Daily Activities!**

By Lisa M. Petsche – lmpetsche@gmail.com

Recovering from surgery or a prolonged acute illness takes time and patience. It also calls for practical adjustments, especially for those living alone. Fortunately, with some thought and creativity, many everyday tasks can be simplified to make maximum use of limited energy.

If you are experiencing, or anticipating, a period of convalescence, read on for ideas for streamlining daily life in order to prevent setbacks and facilitate your recovery. You may wish to continue some of these practices after your recuperation, to free up more time and energy for leisure activities.



**Lisa
Petsche**

Prioritize and organize

- Establish and stick to priorities. Curb perfectionism. Not everything needs to be done to a high standard; take housework, for example. Using a timer for chores may help.
- Perform important activities at the time of day when your energy level is at its peak.
- Pace yourself. Break down tasks into steps that can be performed with breaks in between. Refrain from rushing or performing activities to the point of fatigue.
- Whenever possible, sit down to perform tasks.
- Keep frequently used items close to the point of use and within easy reach.
- If you have recently had surgery, review any educational materials you have received. They may include energy conservation tips specific to your situation.
- If there are others in your household, enlist their help with everyday tasks. Be specific about the kind of assistance you need.

Meal preparation and home maintenance

- Prepare one-dish meals, such as casseroles, stews, soups, stir fries and main course salads.

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- Cook double batches of recipes and freeze half for later use.
- Keep a supply of heat-and-serve entrees in the freezer.
- Buy convenient foods that reduce preparation time: packaged salads, diced fruit and vegetables from the deli section, shredded cheese, frozen mixed vegetables and fruits, and boneless chicken breasts, for example...
- Order takeout once or twice a week. Just be sure to make healthy choices. Keep menus and coupons in a folder for easy access.

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- Concentrate cleaning and tidying efforts on rooms that are used the most.
- Do full loads of laundry whenever possible. Ensure you have enough basic clothing – including underwear – to last for a week. Buy clothes that can be machine washed and dried and resist wrinkles.
- Replace frequently used manual kitchen utensils and other household tools with electric counterparts – for example, a can opener, pill crusher or screwdriver.
- Pay for help if you can afford it – for example, a dog walker, housecleaning service, grounds keeping service, handyman or accountant. Or, hire a trusted neighborhood teen to do yard maintenance and perhaps also errands.
- Arrange with the bank for direct deposit of pension checks and automatic payment of regular bills. If you have a computer, sign up for online banking so you can pay bills, transfer money and check balances from home.

Shopping and errands

- Shop through mail order catalogs, using the telephone or Internet. For gift-giving occasions, purchase gift cards. Many kinds are available online, as well as on display near checkouts at department stores, drug stores and other retail establishments.
- Take advantage of stores and other services that offer home delivery (for example, grocery stores, drug stores, dry cleaners). Keep running lists of groceries needed and errands to be done.
- Investigate available community resources, which might include meals-on-wheels, housekeeping services, volunteer driver programs and accessible transportation.
- Investigate mobile services, such as at-home foot care, hairdressing, dental hygiene and pet grooming.
- Coordinate errands and avoid peak use times of the day, week and month when visiting stores, banks, government offices and other establishments.
- Take advantage of electric scooters available for customers in stores and malls.

Lisa M. Petsche is a social worker and freelance writer specializing in seniors’ health and wellness.

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This August Let's Go to a Festival!

By Carolyn Brenneman, Columnist
COVER: Can't wait for the Georgia Mountains!

August in Georgia offers a wonderful opportunity for families to enjoy cultural festivals, live music, and community celebrations. It's the perfect time to go out, make memories, and discover something new together.

One event that is especially exciting is the Aabaha Art and Theater Festival, which is new to me and one I plan to attend with my grandchildren. Held August 14 - 16 at the Eagle Theatre in Sugar Hill, the festival celebrates how the performing arts can connect people across cultures, languages, and generations. Theater companies from Georgia and around the United States present multi-cultural productions, many performed in multiple languages, offering audiences fresh perspectives through storytelling.

In addition to the theatrical performances, visitors can enjoy visual art exhibitions throughout the festival. One of its most unique features is the opportunity to stay after each performance for conversations with directors, actors, and playwrights. These discussions provide insight into the stories, themes, and creative process behind each production, making the festival an enriching experience for families who appreciate the arts. We can't wait to attend.

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Can't wait for the Georgia Mountains!



What a great truck from way back!

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If your family enjoys automobiles, the Tri-City Mega Show at the Columbus Civic Center on August 15 offers an entirely different kind of excitement. Automotive enthusiasts from across the Southeast gather to celebrate the creativity and craftsmanship behind custom vehicles. Visitors can admire vintage classics, exotic sports cars, lifted trucks, muscle cars, and classic motorcycles, with hundreds of unique vehicles displayed both indoors and outdoors. Best of all, children ages 12 and under are admitted free, making it an enjoyable outing for the whole family.

Ready for even more summer fun? Head north to the Georgia Mountain Fair in Hiawassee. Nestled among the Blue Ridge Mountains overlooking beautiful Lake Chatuge, this beloved tradition has welcomed families for generations. From August 16–22, the fairgrounds come alive with carnival rides, artisan demonstrations, handcrafted goods, regional foods, and nightly concerts. It's easy to spend an entire day exploring before settling into the renowned Anderson Music Hall for an evening performance.

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Cobb’s International Festival is a must see!



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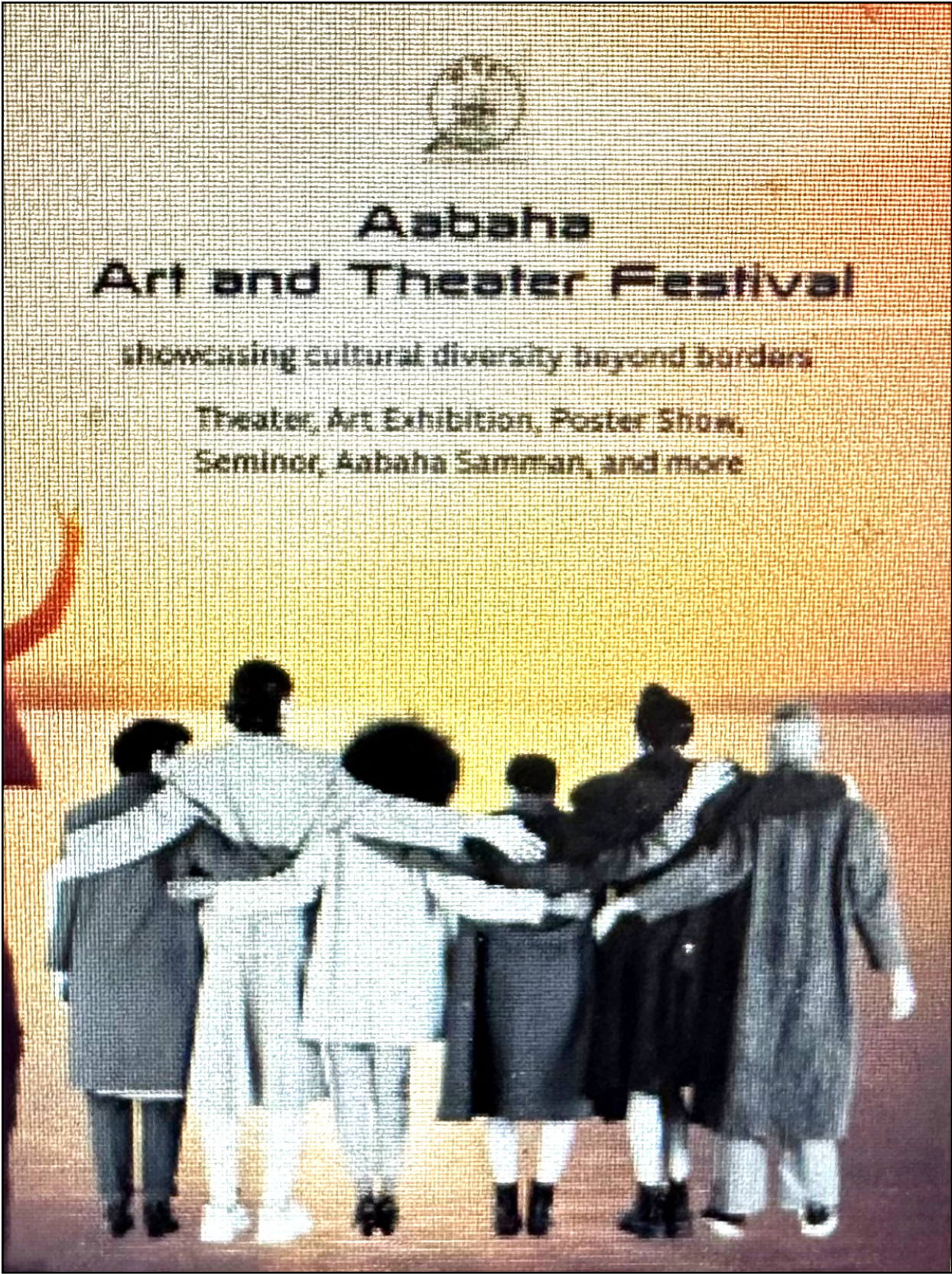
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Aabaha Festival is about to start!

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The fair also celebrates North Georgia's rich mountain heritage. Blacksmiths, woodworkers, quilters, and other artisans demonstrate skills passed down through generations, while bluegrass, country, and gospel musicians provide a fitting soundtrack against the region's breathtaking mountain scenery.

Later in the month, the Cobb County International Festival brings us an adventure we don't want to miss. On August 23, East Cobb Park in Kennesaw is transformed into a colorful gathering where families can experience traditions from around the globe. We can stroll through cultural exhibits, sample international cuisine, browse handcrafted artwork and clothing, and enjoy music and dance performances throughout the day.

The festival is as educational as it is entertaining. Children will love the Kids Zone with its hands-on crafts, face painting, and interactive activities, while adults can enjoy cultural demonstrations highlighting traditions, arts, and customs from many countries. It's a wonderful opportunity to experience the remarkable diversity that makes Cobb County such a vibrant community.

Whether your family is drawn to theater, classic cars, mountain traditions, or cultures from around the world, August offers countless ways to enjoy time together across Georgia. Consider adding one – or perhaps several – of these events to your calendar and create lasting summer memories. Before you go, be sure to check each event's website for the latest information on locations, parking, admission, and schedules.



I'm ready for a ride!

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Natalie Venetia Belcon, Photo by Bradley Credit

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Opinion

GROWING OLDER

by Daniel W. Gatlyn, USN Ret; Minister/Journalist – dangatlyn@gmail.com

I have been here before... actually more times than most people can count. What I am about to say is, I am younger than tomorrow; AND, I am older than yesterday! I say that in a whisper, for one never knows when the end shall be!

There are multiple reasons why I have lingered past NINETY SIX; and, I shall make a portion known!

First, and foremost, I lend credit to "Providence" ...and, for the reasons therein! Since I speak to people of "all merits" and know that they reserve the prerogative to label "Spiritual, Moral and Eternal to their liking, for now I will refer to such as Providential.

From the arena of "Omnipotent Emanations and Sustenance," I will proudly, and honestly, list what I feel adds to my days! I will head the list by reporting an abstinence of drugs, smokes (and such), alcohol and anger! I often disagree with a sordid population, but I do not get angry! From there I substantially adhere to speed limits, drive attentively, do not follow too closely, get ample sleep, eat sensibly... and not the whole thing ...exercise at least once a week (absolutely, I walk each day to the mailbox... if no rain is in sight), live peaceably with my fellow earthlings, do not drive through unknown puddles of water (flowing or dormant), judiciously follow after liberal sharing of goods, live in harmony with those to my right and left (even when they act frightfully); and, believe for the best!

Following the brief items above, I steer clear of Chicago and New York, stay away from tall buildings, do not play soccer, discard revelations from politicians and pundits, don't pick fights, get home early from anywhere, eat chitlins sparingly, avoid Yellowstone's bear and buffalo, do not argue with Democrats, decline most items from the Evening News, shun the temptation toward rendering advice (no one listens to my sense of direction anyhow); and, leave at least one light burning (That so I don't stumble over car parts, chess men, stale bread or other errors I've left behind)!

It must have helped since I've never had a broken bone. Oh, don't eat at fast foods anymore! My last stint with greasy burgers led to a heart attack... 35 years ago! BTW... I do not sound off to ICE... for I was born "right-cheer! I sleep soundly, never spend more than two hours worrying about taxes, tips or trips! There's more on my "never touch list;" but, not to worry, just bring a broom and dust pan when you come this way! And by all means... "Y'all make it back now! Ya heah!"

PS: Tell Bubba hey!



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Blue Ridge Mountains, Virginia: Moonshine Capital of the World!

By Fyllis Hockman, Travel Columnist

The Blue Ridge Mountains, and the infamous parkway that runs through them, are famous for many things: scenic drives; nature tours; hiking trails; fall foliage; farmer’s markets; historical sites, and so much more. And yet none of that covers the most interesting attribute of this Roanoke region in Virginia’s Blue Ridge, the city known as the gateway to the Blue Ridge Mountains, and its Franklin County neighbor. It’s the “Moonshine Capital of the World.” Before, during, and after Prohibition, bootlegging reigned supreme. And it’s no slouch in today’s world either.

First, a little background. During the late 1800’s, distilleries in the area were abundant. The mountain geography provided secluded protection for hidden stills. Corn was plentiful and easily turned into whiskey – and making moonshine was profitable. And then Prohibition hit! Consensus thinking at the time was that it would inhibit drinking and the making of it. But, of course, that was nonsense. Binge drinking probably got its start during Prohibition.

The demand for illegal alcohol skyrocketed – and the Franklin County bootleggers were more than happy to oblige, developing sophisticated transportation routes to move liquor up and down the East Coast. It famously claimed to produce more illicit liquor than anywhere else in the U.S. during Prohibition, entitling them to the moniker of “Moonshine Capital of the world,” a label they remain proud of to this day. My recent visit to the area reinforced that impression. After all, there’s a museum devoted to the very idea – albeit with a slightly different orientation.



Fyllis Hockman
Travel Columnist



The author happily imbibing moonshine at Twin Creeks Distillery now that it’s legal! Photo by Victor Block.

MOONSHINE HISTORY ABOUNDS AT THE MOONSHINE EXPLOSION MUSEUM IN FRANKLIN COUNTY, VIRGINIA!

The Moonshine Explosion Museum is devoted to just that – a June 11, 1930 literal explosion of two over-heating Model T Fords that drove into a garage for repair. Why did they explode? Trunks full of illegal liquor also over-heated. Charred remains of the cars are still ensconced in the basement of the original building which was built in 1912, but they weren’t discovered until 2017 during basement renovations – although the story proliferated well before and after.

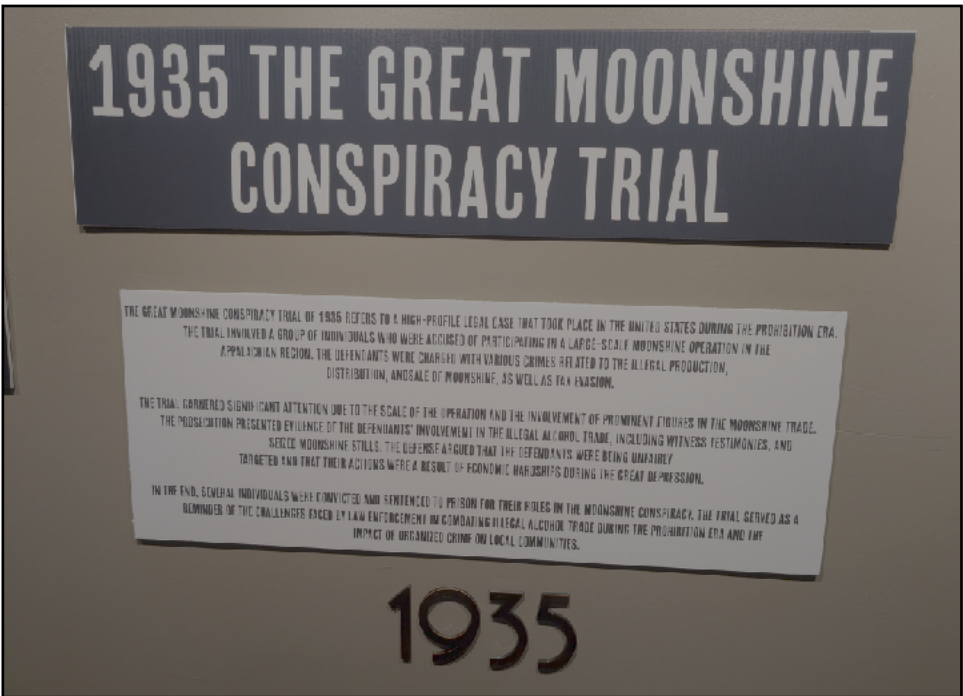
But despite the museum’s singular name, it also paints a much more complete picture of the still celebrated history of moonshine, which kept many an Appalachian family able to survive. The museum highlights the connection between “white lightning” (AKA Firewater, Hooch) and the community, fostering a sense of resilience and ingenuity – and, oh yes, a massive evasion of the law. Franklin County became known for its high-quality moonshine and the persistence of its moonshiners in resisting authorities.

And apparently, ramifications of that questionable ability exist today. Because many moonshiners modified cars to outrun law enforcement, the culture influenced early stock-car racing, and that tradition helped contribute to the origins of NASCAR. Not entirely sure how I feel about that particular legacy...

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Well-hidden mountain stills in Appalachia were very productive during Prohibition! Photo by [CateyeperspectiveDreamstime.com!](#)



The story of the 1935 Great Conspiracy Trial!
Photo by Fyllis Hockman!.

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But back to bootlegging – and the notorious Great Moonshine Conspiracy Trial of 1935, the second longest trial in Virginia history. It involved a high-profile legal case involving 23 defendants accused of multiple large-scale moonshine operations. Many were convicted but the illegal operations continued to thrive.

A visit to Twin Creeks distillery underscores the appeal of the original moonshine. For starters, Twin Creeks owner and master distiller, Chris Prillman, is the grandson of Peg Hatcher, one of the kingpins convicted in the Great Moonshine Conspiracy of 1935. That’s one hell of a family legacy! As much as it sounds like an oxymoron, they serve legal moonshine – slightly less high-octane than the mountain variety and government-regulated. It’s the only establishment in the area to do so. And Chris continues to pay tribute to his grandfather by crafting spirits just as he did.

THE GREAT MOONSHINE CONSPIRACY OF 1935 WAS THE SECOND LONGEST TRIAL IN VIRGINIA HISTORY!

So when I say master distiller, I mean Chris is still making his “bathtub gin” – the colloquial term for stills that are large enough to be utilitarian and small enough to easily hide – at home. Whether he’s still using a bathtub, I don’t know. Back at the distillery, I sampled – okay, guzzled – a coffee moonshine made by a local coffee shop owner who still refuses to divulge his recipe that far and away surpasses any Espresso Martini I’ve ever had.

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THE TWIN CREEKS DISTILLERY IN FRANKLIN COUNTY, VIRGINIA SERVES UP MOONSHINE (ALMOST) JUST LIKE IN THE OLD DAYS!

Flights of “cocktails” adorn the menu. Apparently, fancy cocktails were the norm during Prohibition as bartenders had to get creative in order to mask the taste of poor-quality liquor. Of course, Franklin County probably didn’t have any poor-quality hooch...

More family legacy is carried on by Twin Creeks’ manager, Kathy, whose father owns three of the original moonshine cars that led to Nascar, with enhanced power and extra-large trunks designed to transport the profitable product.

According to Steven Ray Tickle, another proud moonshining legacy and star of the surprisingly popular TV show Moonshiners, “People mistakenly think moonshiners just want to break the law, but that’s not true. They just want to carry on a tradition that’s part of the American heritage. They helped found and fund the Declaration of Independence... If you really love your country, you’re gonna have to love moonshine.”

So if you’re thinking that pretty much brings the story of moonshine to the current day, keep reading. On yet another modern-day front, Franklin County’s moonshine era may seem like a relic of Prohibition, but the legal arguments surrounding home distilling are still alive. More than a century after moonshiners in Virginia’s Blue Ridge battled federal liquor laws, the question of who can legally make whiskey – and under what authority the government can stop them – remains unsettled. In an unexpected twist, a debate that once played out on the ridges and hollows of Virginia’s moonshine country – very much still “The Moonshine Capital of the World” – may soon be argued before the U.S. Supreme Court. I’ll drink to that!

For more information, visit <https://www.visitroanokeva.com>; <https://mainlymuseums.com/post/1339/the-moonshine-explosion-museum-where-history-meets-intrigue>; <https://twincreeksdistillery.com>.



Old Ford Coupe Hot Rod! Photo by [dreamtime.com](https://www.dreamstime.com)!



Moonshine menu at Twin Creeks Distillery in Franklin County, Virginia! Photo by Victor Block!



Remnants in the basement of the Moonshine Explosion Museum in Franklin County, VA of two moonshine-carrying cars that exploded in June 1930! Photo by Fyllis Hockman!

BBB Alert: Want to watch the local high school game? Be aware of sports streaming scams!

Submitted by **Kelvin H. Collins, President/CEO, Better Business Bureau**

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If you're like me, you are excited that high school football season is almost here. You used to have to go to the stadium to root for your local high school athletic team or your favorite college or professional sports team. However, online streams now make it possible for people to watch games from the comfort of their living rooms. Unfortunately, the scammers have followed. By sharing fake streaming links on social media, scammers aim to capture personal information, including credit card and Social Security numbers, as fans get tricked into logging in to watch their team play.

How the scam works

You want to watch the local high school's football game, or your niece's travel softball team is playing in a tournament out of state. You search on social media to find a link where the game might be streamed, and sure enough, a fan has put in a link where you can watch for free! It's almost time for the game to start, so you eagerly click the link. The next screen asks you to sign up for the streaming service, so you enter your name and email... and then you get asked for a credit card number and potentially more sensitive information. Are you seeing red flags yet?

These scammers infiltrate social media with links to fake streams. The posts often will tag the schools involved to make the post appear legitimate. The scammers hope the would-be viewer inputs their information and pays to watch the event. The consumer doesn't get to watch the game because the scammer has not set up a stream. Instead, whatever data they entered may be compromised.

As a new school year begins, Better Business Bureau (BBB) reminds consumers to do their research when looking to watch a high school sporting event online.

On social media especially, take notice of account names and photos, which often seem random, and look at their follower and following numbers. Low follower counts indicate the account likely was just started. Look at the content of their posts as most are nothing but tweets to stream games.

Last year, many state associations that oversee high school athletics issued warnings about the fake streams.

If you want to watch a specific school's game online, check with the school to see if it has streaming options available. While many schools do offer live streaming now, there are others who do not. BBB Scam Tracker has received reports of fake sports streaming links. One consumer shared, "The link was posted under a high school football post claiming we could watch the high school football games for free. Then it asked for credit card information in order to charge \$1. After putting in credit card information, I was not able to watch any football games...my trial was for 24 hours, and if I didn't cancel, it would charge my credit card \$60 per month."

BBB offers these tips on how to stay safe online:

- Research any website before paying any money or entering any information. Check the company's BBB Business Profile at BBB.org.
- Pay by credit card whenever possible if you need to challenge the payment. Credit cards offer extra layers of protection to protect consumers.
- Check a site's security settings. If the site is secure, its URL (web address) should start with [HTTPS://](https://). You may also see a picture of a small closed lock in the screen's lower right-hand corner.
- Confirm the site you're visiting is legitimate. Scammers can create fake, realistic websites to trick consumers into thinking they're on the right webpage. Read BBB's tips on identifying a fake website.
- Be cautious before clicking through to links included in social media posts, unsolicited text messages, or emails. Clicking on unfamiliar links can place you at risk for malware or identity theft.

For more information, check out BBB's Social Media Scams page at BBB.org for more examples of scammers that lurk on social channels.



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Kelvin Collins is president & CEO of the Better Business Bureau serving the Fall Line Corridor, serving 77 counties in East Alabama, West Georgia, Southwest Georgia, Central Georgia, East Georgia, and Western South Carolina. This tips column is provided through the local BBB and the International Association of Better Business Bureaus (IABBB). The Better Business Bureau sets standards for ethical business behavior, monitors compliance and helps consumers identify trustworthy businesses. Questions or complaints about a specific company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: BBB.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org.