

BLUE RIDGE LIVING



Cody Bradford, fifth generation moonshiner and owner of Howling Moon Distillery in Asheville, discusses how moonshine is made. PROVIDED

New documentary explores untold stories of local moonshine history

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Everything we know about moonshiners and moonshining history is wrong.

That's one of the themes of the Center for Cultural Preservation's new documentary film on regional moonshine history, "The Spirits Still Move Them."

David Weintraub, award-winning director/producer of 40 history films interviews nearly three dozen moonshiners and their families in Western North Carolina, East Tennessee and the Dark Corner of South Carolina to tell a story about moonshine history that's never been relayed before.

"The myth that all moonshiners are violent, lazy, drunk criminals hiding in the woods wearing long beards and longer arrest records has been recounted by the media for over 100 years," said Weintraub. "In reality, liquor production

was hard, backbreaking work that only the most entrepreneurial farmers conducted which they did in order to survive difficult circumstances and put food on the table. It's a fascinating story and far more interesting than the myths and distortions we've heard."

The film digs deep into Southern Appalachian history exposing the stereotypes and fabrications about mountaineers that have been fodder for movies and cable television programs for generations from the Beverly Hillbillies to the Moonshiner Show.

Says Cody Bradford, fifth generation moonshiner and owner of Howling Moon Distillery in Asheville, "People think all moonshiners were outlaws but it was the federal government that enacted an excise tax after the Civil War that poor farmers had to bear. It was either starve or make liquor and it's not

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Cody Johnson and his family are chronicled in the film. Here he's interviewed by David Weintraub, executive director for the Center for Cultural Preservation. PROVIDED

Let's just agree to let me have all the gas



Celia Rivenbark
Guest Columnist

The scrawny redneck girl held up the line at the convenience store pumps ahead of me as she filled her tank and a few gas cans in the trunk of her car. She was greedy but prepared, unlike the Documented Idiots who pumped gas into Ziplock bags during "Panic at the Citgo," as our imaginary gas crisis came to be known here in the Southeast.

By now everyone knows there wasn't a gas shortage, so much as a major slowdown after the main pipeline supplying Southeastern states was hacked and it took a few days to fix the problem. This caused many of us to, in fancy psychological terms, lose our poo.

For nearly a week, Southerners were triggered to the point of not just hoarding gas but also toilet paper and bread once governors declared a "state of emergency." We have a Pavlovian re-

sponse to that ominous phrase after too many hurricanes. We can't help it.

Amused transplant: Why are you buying toilet paper for a gas shortage?

Us: Shut up.

Once the "state of emergency" was declared, the gas shortage that wasn't became real because of all the panic buying. (See scrawny redneck above).

You might ask why I was in line at 10:30 p.m. at only one of two service stations with any gas in town. It's a legitimate question since I'm clearly bashing the gas hoarders. That's easy. With just a quarter tank, I had a 200-mile drive to attend my daughter's graduation and I was nervous as a hen on a hot griddle.

So here I sat watching Honey Boo Boo Lite trying to drain every last drop from one of two pumps still working. Bless her heart. After a solid 12 minutes of no movement at all, I bailed and drove to the only other store with gas according to my newly acquired Gas Buddy app.

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In the woods, or the garden, enjoy these orchids



Betty Montgomery
Columnist

Often times when one thinks of orchids, they are thinking of orchids that grow in tropical areas of Florida and other warm areas. Many people do not realize that there are orchids that grow wild in many places around the world. In fact, there are orchids that grow on every continent except Antarctica. Many of the orchids that grow wild in the woods are quite unique and show off a lovely bloom that can be quite exotic when examined up close. These orchids are called terrestrial orchids.

Each spring I love to walk in the woods and look for the lady slipper orchids. There are pink and yellow ones that grow wild where I live and I cannot wait to see them each year. I am sad that some do not return but I am happy when I find others that I did not see the year before. I tend to find the pink lady slippers growing in the



Yellow Lady Slipper orchid has leaves that come off of a slender stem whereas the pink lady slipper foliage are two large leaves that emerge from the ground. PROVIDED

woods under large older pines where the soil acidity and the nutrients must be exactly what they need.

I remember once coming upon a large area of them in a mature pine forest and was sad to see the next year, the pines

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