

GOVERNMENT

Dixie Divas



Dew's birthday party

With Rhonda Rich

The first year I threw a birthday party for Dixie Dew, my adorable dachshund, muttered rumblings spread quickly through my kin-folks and friends when the invitations were received. It was the beginning of what they had long suspected would happen — I was turning into an oddball eccentric destined to be the loony old spinster who leaves her earthly possessions to a dog.

For the record, I will never be a spinster because I was once married. I like, however, being known as eccentric. It is much more interesting than being normal and in my line of work as a writer, I have discovered it makes me more marketable than the normal ones. I also like the idea of my leaving my worldly possessions to my dog. This will be good for years of animated discussion and will perpetuate my legacy. I don't want to be forgotten quickly. You know how it is. People tend not to talk about you much after you die.

From the beginning, Dew's birthday parties have been a great success. Though the first year, my sister held her hand over her face anytime a camera was near and commanded, "Don't take my picture! I don't want anyone to know that I came to a birthday party for a dog!" This is especially interesting since she was the first one to call the next year and ask, "When is the dog's birthday party? I want to put it on my calendar so that I don't schedule anything else."

Dew's annual celebrations have become a much sought-after social invitation. People ask to be invited and the ones who phone with

regrets are less than 2% of those invited. But who could resist? It's such a happy, whimsical event where laughter begins the moment I answer the door and the guest of honor runs with childish joy to greet her guests. She then parades around proudly in her new dress covered in lace, satin ribbons and bells that her grandmother sews for her. She responds well to being the center of attention. She prisses, prances and performs from blowing out the candles on both cakes (a bone-shaped one for just for her) to opening each gift with the animation of a precocious child. Her favorite presents have included a ham hock bone, colorful chew toy with ribbons, a squeaky bear, a biscuit with chicken and the carton of French Fries that her Uncle Guy brings every year.

At her last party, I passed an autograph book around and instructed, "Everyone should write a note of endearment to Dixie Dew and tell her how precious she is to you." From the kitchen, a few minutes later, I heard the happy squeals and silly laughter as the book made its way around the room. "Those merry sounds," I said to a friend, "are the signs of a very successful party."

My aunt, who has an 87-year-old perspective on it, wrote, "We're glad you're Ronda's dog so we can come to your parties. We hope you make it another year." Others wrote of the joy she brings, how pretty she looked in her dress and all the smiles she gives.

"We love coming to your birthday parties," one uncle wrote. "Everyone is so happy." He's right. Dew's parties are so silly and capricious that the laughter is non-stop and the spirits are sky high.

"I know why you do these parties," said one friend. "It's a great excuse to bring together all those you love."

Shush. Don't tell anyone that. It's sounds too logical and I much prefer for people to think that I'm an oddball eccentric. I don't want to ruin my image.

Ronda Rich is the author of *What Southern Women Know (That Every Woman Should)* and *My Life In The Pits*.

I-3 like a nuclear mistake

By Dwight Otwell
Sentinel writer

Allowing an interstate highway to be built through Cherokee County would be like "a nuclear accident", the chairman of the Cherokee/Clay County chapter of a coalition to stop I-3 said.

John Clark made the statement Monday as a group of citizens urged the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners to approve a resolution opposing the proposed interstate highway that would stretch from Savannah, GA to Knoxville, TN.

The commissioners made no commitment but said they would take the matter under advisement and try to determine how county residents feel about the matter.

Clark pointed out that a specific route has been removed from a bill for the highway. A previous proposal suggested the interstate would go through Hayesville along Highway 64 and follow the route of Hwy. 74 through Cherokee County and then

through Graham County.

A feasibility study is supposed to be conducted but there are no funds yet to build the road, Clark said.

"Rural counties lose when an interstate comes through," Clark said.

It would be a 600-foot wide right-of-way that would cause disruption to the area and damage to forests, streams and scenic vistas, he said.

Clark said that the coalition represents several hundred people. In Georgia, commissions for Habersham, Rabun and White counties have gone on record opposing the interstate.

"Politically, the chances are slim that this will be built, but if it is built, it will be like a nuclear accident," Clark said.

Bob Massey said I-3 could bring rapid and unplanned growth.

"We will continue to grow in spite of I-3," he said. "It (I-3) would bring a rapid demise of values that brought us to this area."

Gil Hargett said the Clay County commissioners have

come out in opposition to I-3. The \$1.3 billion for the feasibility study is still in the transportation bill.

"We are talking about a \$50 billion (highway) that would disrupt our lives," Hargett said.

He said that one of the big proponents of I-3 is Wal-Mart, because it would lower their cost of transporting goods. Another proponent is Harrah's Casino, he said.

Hargett said the \$50 billion road would save only 30 miles in its route from Savannah to Knoxville.

"We could redirect these resources into something that helps Americans, instead of benefiting just a few businesses," he said.

Joe Miller said he lived along a little town that had everything it needed to live. The town "dried up and blew away" after an interstate came through, he said.

"I am going to have to investigate this and see what the constituency says before I make a decision," Commission Chairman Dana Jones said.

CCCRA awarded for excellence by Handmade in Amercia

By Sandy Wright
Guest writer

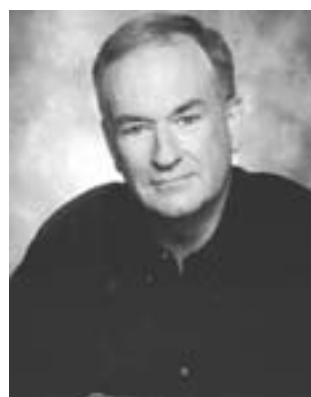
On November 1, in Bryson City, CCCRA attended a cluster meeting of the Small Town Program developed by Handmade in America. Representing CCCRA were Vice-President Rob Tiger, Treasurer Wayne Smith, and Board Member Sandy Wright. Handmade in America's Small

Town Program mentors small towns and offers assistance while encouraging self-help and learning from neighboring communities on how to enhance assets and strengths, preserve history and culture, and promote local artisans in one's community. Rob Tiger reported on completed projects, the future ground-breaking of the biking trail, and CCCRA's interest in the

preservation and re-location of the pioneer village of the Nelson family. CCCRA was awarded a Certificate of Excellence for Small Town's Cluster Meeting Attendance and \$50.00. CCCRA is a non-profit organization, composed of volunteers, that strive to achieve both self-made goals and the goals set forth of the Small Town Program.

Oh no, Alito

With Bill O'Reilly



The left-wing media has already labeled the new Supreme Court nominee, Samuel Alito, a crazed right-wing zealot who, if he had lived back then, would have been Attila the Hun's right-hand man. That's right, that dreaded conservative, Alito the Hun, is up for the highest court in the land.

If you listen to the far left, Sam Alito is a grave danger to civil rights, reproductive rights, animal and vegetable rights, and your right to watch a wide-screen TV in the privacy of your own home. The man is bad, awful, horrendous and not good at all.

So what exactly has the Alito guy done that has raised so much liberal ire? Well, he ruled that notifying a husband that his wife was having an abortion did not put an "undue burden" on the woman. Now, you may disagree with that, but it's certainly not a loopy point of view. In fact, the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that a husband is not entitled to know about his wife's abortion, but the ruling was and is highly debatable.

Somehow the far left has overlooked the fact that Judge Alito also ruled against a partial birth abortion ban in New Jersey. That decision was based on a previous federal ruling concerning a Nebraska case. So it seems Alito is following established law, doesn't it?

But all the facts in the world don't matter because the issue is not really about Alito — it's about the culture war. The far-left, secular-progressive movement realizes it is losing the highest court in the land, and the judiciary is the only way the secular progressives can impose their radical agenda. The folks are simply not going for it on Election Day.

The secular progressives have made a lot of gains recently. They own the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in California as well as many federal judges in the Northeast. The Massachusetts Supreme Court is hard-core secular progressive, and so is the Supreme Court of Florida and Oregon. But now, all that is threatened.

With John Roberts and Sam Alito sitting on the U.S. Supreme Court, radical

changes to law in America will be difficult to achieve. Justices Anthony Kennedy, Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas all lean toward a traditional interpretation of the Constitution, and the two newcomers also fit into the category. That means taps for gay marriage, euthanasia, legalized narcotics, exorcising the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance, and tearing down public displays of Christmas — all the things that make the ACLU and other radical groups warm all over.

So Judge Sam Alito is definitely a cold front blowing in from New Jersey, and he has got to be stopped; the stakes have never been higher for the secular-progressives.

The problem for them is that Alito, like Judge Roberts, looks to be a pretty solid guy. An attempt to label him "Machine Gun Sam" fizzled when it was found that his ruling allowing the intrastate movement of machine guns was based on the Commerce Act rather than an affinity for the NRA. But you know the far left isn't going to stop — they'll find something on Alito, wait and see.

But I believe the public is finally catching on to the demonizing game, and backlash is a very real possibility. Judge Alito is certainly not a crazed ideologue and is obviously qualified to sit on the Supreme Court. Any attempt to slime him is fraught with the danger for the mud-slinger. And that is a good thing.

Veteran TV news anchor Bill O'Reilly is host of the Fox News show "The O'Reilly Factor" and author of the book "Who's Looking Out For You?"



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