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Clarke Daily News

News and Events in Clarke County Virginia

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Berryville Artist Shares "Life in the Coop"

July 19, 2012 by [Michael Dowling \(Edit\)](#)

Bill Newitt has spent a lifetime in ink. After almost 40 years working for the U.S. Treasury Department as a chemist developing inks for currency, he has accumulated a wealth of knowledge about the science of printing money that few will ever know. However, even in retirement, Bill has continued his journey with ink. Turning his focus from science to the art of printing he rediscovered a childhood passion and began to develop cartoons.

Bill was born in Chicago, but has spent most of his life in Virginia. He came to Clinch Valley in the southwestern part of the state as a young boy. There, Bill had to adjust from his life in Chicago, rich with culture and diversity, to a much simpler way of life in a very rural area. It was during that time that he found an interest and refuge in cartoons.

Enthralled by the emergence of Walt Disney he began to draw and dream of life as a cartoonist. Bill recalls, "I spent years drawing cartoon strips that went into high school annuals and things like that." He studied all manner of cartoons and learned the technical aspects of the art form by observation. His stories, however, came from the common questions that plague youth and adults alike. "I wanted to study everything, religions, philosophies, and my mind was going every which way because I wanted to find the basis for life. Why are we here? What are we doing?"

As childhood years passed into college, Bill put his drawings aside and began to study chemistry at Roanoke College. He took three years off from his studies to travel the country hitch-hiking and doing odd jobs before he returned to school and finished his degree at Lynchburg college.

After graduating, Bill began his search for gainful employment. He cast a wide net applying for many jobs, one of which was at the Treasury Department. "They offered me a job and I thought, 'I'll take it for a few weeks,' and I ended up staying for 39 years." The irony still amuses Bill. "In college I was voted the least likely to ever hold a steady job, but as it turned out I was one of the few who held one job for 39 years."

After those years of work for the government, Bill retired and was able to turn back to his childhood preoccupation with cartoons. He took a whole summer and inked out "Life in the Coop," a story that pecks at life's big questions through the day to day lives of a coop full of chickens.

The Clarke Daily News is pleased to share Bill's work as a weekly comic. Every Sunday, we will post a new strip until the series is complete.

While Bill doesn't see any more comic strip series in his future, he still illustrates and has hopes of contributing a few political cartoons.

Bill lives with his wife Alma in Berryville. They have been married 51 years.



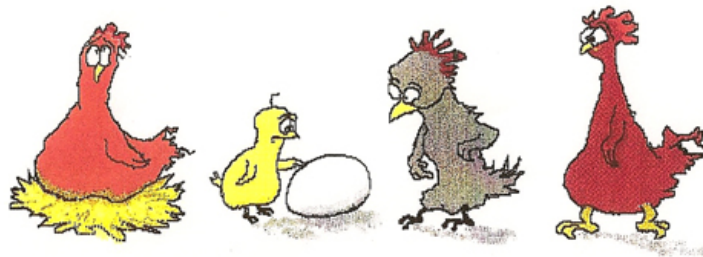
Bill Newitt, author and illustrator of "Life in the Coop."

LIFE IN THE COOP

by B Newitt



A MYTHILLOGICAL SAGA



WHICH COMPASSIONATELY EXAMINES A BURNING ISSUE OF OUR TROUBLED TIMES:

CAN TRUE HAPPINESS BE FOUND IN A DYSFUNCTIONAL CHICKEN COOP?

Filed Under: [Feature](#)

Comments

Keenque says:

[July 19, 2012 at 3:39 pm](#) ([Edit](#))

I am excited about this!



Mary T. Morris says:

[July 20, 2012 at 10:26 am](#) ([Edit](#))

Come on, Sunday!! Looks like Fun!



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