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Fat Dumb and Happy Down In Georgia

Bill Boyd

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Retired Macon Telegraph columnist Bill Boyd wasn't always Fat, Dumb, and Happy Down in Georgia. That's the name of his new book, but Boyd led a nomadic existence for the first 38 years of his life, first as the son of an Oklahoma sharecropper and then as a member of the United States Marine Corps. Boyd says a sergeant major used to warn career Marines: "Don't get too fat, dumb and happy here (at a duty station in Cleveland, Ohio). About the time you do, you'll get orders to go to Vietnam or Okinawa or some other enchanted land."

Boyd explains: "Three years was about all a Marine could expect to stay in one place. But I put down some roots when I retired in 1973, and, for more than 25 years, I have lived in the same town. And the sergeant major will just have to excuse me this time. In Macon, Georgia, I have indeed grown fat (like a hibernating grizzly bear), dumb (like a fox), and happy (like a bullfrog under a drippy faucet on a hot summer day)."

In 25 years with the Telegraph, he won more than 20 writing awards from various press associations. Nine of those awards came for the column he began writing in 1977. In all, Boyd wrote more than 3,500 columns and some of his best are included in _Fat, Dumb, and Happy Down in Georgia".

Like most columnists, Boyd sometimes wrote about the interesting collection of people that make up the Boyd family: Marvalene, a sharecropper's daughter and his wife of 33 years; Joe, now 28, an adopted son who teaches at Houston County High School; Wanda, 26, a foster daughter who is now a missionary and will fly home from Virginia for the book signing; and his only grandchild, Josh, 8, who appears on the dust cover of the new book with the author. However, Boyd captured a wide audience by writing about everyday people.

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