

October 13, 2008

SKEETER SKATES DISPENSES SOME MUCH-NEEDED ADVICE

Leave it to my friend and counselor, Skeeter Skates, owner of Skeeter's Tree Stump Removal and Plow Repair in Greater Metropolitan Pooler, to shake me out of my doldrums.

"Hoss, glad to see you back in the paper," he growled over the phone. "You are about the only one of them sissy newspaper people I can abide. I just wish you wouldn't write about me so much because every time you do, folks want to stop in and talk politics and I ain't got time to mess with them. In case you have forgotten, I've got a tree stump removal and plow repair business to run." Skeeter is also concerned about the number of people driving around Pooler looking for his shop. "Remind them I'm not in downtown Pooler; I am in the greater metropolitan area. If they want to know where that is, tell 'em it's in Savannah. Ain't nothing in Savannah but too many Yankee tourists and a bunch of monuments of dead people I never heard of."

I wanted to tell Skeeter that Savannah also happened to be the home of the Georgia Bulldogs' beloved mascot Uga VII; former Georgia Rep. Tom Bordeaux, the only liberal politician I ever met who had a sense of humor; and the site of the best-selling book "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil," but he didn't seem to be in a mood to debate the issue.

Instead, I asked him what had been happening during my absence from the paper. "Well, for one thing," Skeeter opined, "your Ambassador to Outer Space Cynthia McKinney has done gone and got her some real competition for her job. There's a non-Caucasian-American" — Skeeter is a stickler for political correctness — "in Cobb County named Annette Kesting, who lost her county commission seat and is accused of trying to get some witch doctor in South Carolina to issue a voodoo curse on her opponent. It's about run all the chickens out of Pooler. They ain't taking any chances getting their heads wrung off in some voodoo ceremony for a wacko politician who is a sore loser."

Skeeter added, however, that if he finds that voodoo magic by some chance does work, he plans to try it on the insurance executives who talked the federal government into bailing them out of hock and then turned around and held a party at a California spa that cost about a half million dollars. "I know a bunch of chickens that have already volunteered for that job," he said.

I asked Skeeter about the presidential race. "It beats anything I've ever seen," he grumped, "Politicians must think the rest of us are dumber than an armadillo. Both of the candidates are blaming the federal government for the mess we are in and both of them are U.S. senators. Now, Hoss, correct me if I'm wrong but I would say being as they are a part of the federal government, they are therefore a part of the problem. Then you got that boy running for vice president who couldn't get his facts straight if you gave him a Rand McNally road map and that feisty lady from Alaska whose claim to fame is she shot a moose. Let's just say I ain't overwhelmed with our choices."

Skeeter said as much as he enjoyed our conversation, he had to get back to work. "I've got a Howse Moldboard 3-point, Category One, 14-inch plow blade sitting here staring at me and it sure ain't going to sharpen itself," he said. "Before I go, let me give you some advice, Hoss. I know you have been through a tough time, but don't forget how lucky you are. You actually get paid to write about loud-talking Yankees, a governor who leaves the country whenever things get tough, flaggers, corn-fried shrimp, those yo-yos in the Legislature, the dysfunctional city of Atlanta and politicians who consult witch doctors. It sure beats the hell out of having to work for a living. Now suck in that pookie lip and go kick some butt. The world is waiting."

Leave it to Skeeter Skates to put things in perspective.