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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Geologist and author to present “Golddiggers, Generals, and Tightrope Walkers”

Dr. Bill Witherspoon, geologist and co-author of *Roadside Geology of Georgia*, will present a slide show illustrating three examples of Georgia geology’s impact on people on October 2 at 7:30, at Columbus State University Main Campus, Jordan Hall 213.

This event is free and open to the public.

The event is one of several walks, talks, and book signings by the authors of *Roadside Geology of Georgia*. The full-color, 320-page guide has sold over 6,000 copies, and is part of a Mountain Press Publishing series that has sold over one million copies.

“Our goal is to engage the reader with the Earth science that lies behind Georgia’s natural wonders and history,” says Witherspoon.

“Golddiggers, Generals, and Tightrope-Walkers: Three Georgia Geology Tales” first tells the story of north Georgia’s gold deposits, which can be traced back to seafloor volcanic processes and the subsequent mountain-building when Africa collided with North America. The gold sparked America’s first gold rush by the “29er’s,” many of whom became ‘49er’s in California in 1849.

The second geology tale begins with the layers of tilted and overlapped sedimentary rocks that gave northwest Georgia its Valley and Ridge landscape. The rail line, defensive strongholds, and water sources in the landscape shaped the Atlanta Campaign, which helped seal the outcome of the Civil War.

The final tale looks at northeast Georgia’s Tallulah Gorge, site of tightrope walks. The narrowness of the gorge reflects its relatively recent origin, when one river that flows to the Atlantic eroded through a ridge and captured waters that formerly flowed to the Chattahoochee and the Gulf of Mexico.

Witherspoon taught undergraduate geology to students at The University of Tennessee Knoxville and Chattanooga campuses. He worked for a petroleum company, and as a software developer, and as a K-12 geology teacher for 17 years at DeKalb County Schools’ Fernbank Science Center.

He joined with first author Dr. Pamela J.W. Gore to write *Roadside Geology of Georgia* (2013). He retired in 2014 and has presented over 60 walks and talks on Georgia geology for the public.

Contact for information: Dr. Bill Witherspoon, bill@georgiarocks.us .