

Commentary

Page 4A // The Brunswick News // Thursday, August 31, 2017

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EDITORIAL

Service learning program a boon for Brunswick, Golden Isles

Every semester College of Coastal Georgia holds an event that shows us how a thriving state college can impact a community.

Local organizations set up more than a dozen booths around the Campus Center on Monday during the start-of-term so students could find new volunteer and community service opportunities as part of the college's service learning initiative.

This initiative is one we have supported whole heartedly since it began and have enjoyed watching its success.

Monday's service fair was just one small piece of it all, but the steady stream of students expressing interest in serving their community, whether it's home or they are away for college, gives us hope for future generations. These youth have shown a desire and a propensity for community service.

As Lea King-Badyna, executive director of Keep Golden Isles Beautiful, told The News, "College students are a great resource. They're full of energy, they're excited and they're ready to make a difference."

Since the program started in 2010, the service learning program has grown to 29 courses, all of which put students out in the community to help in a vari-

ety of ways. These courses often have students swinging hammers for Habitat for Humanity, cleaning up roadsides and creeks for Keep Golden Isles Beautiful, or volunteering to help people secure jobs through Goodwill.

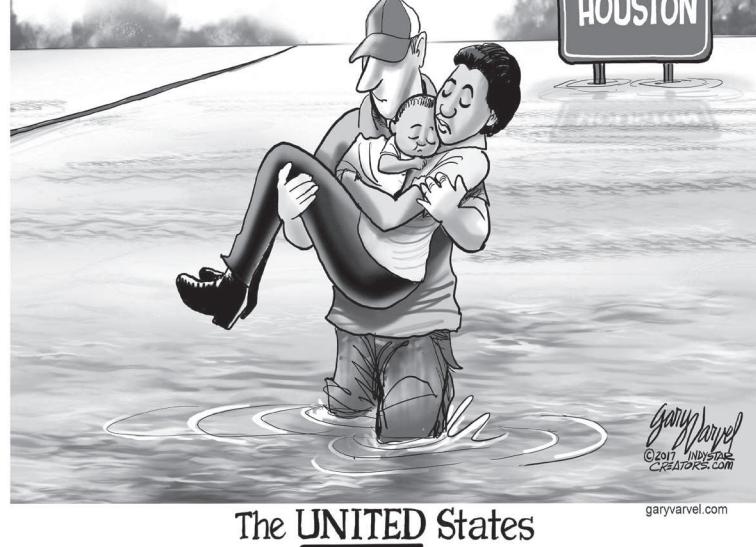
But service learning goes beyond just volunteering. It ties in specific community service activities to academic coursework, offering students invaluable real-world experience.

Students in natural sciences classes have worked with the St. Simons Land Trust on projects at Cannon's Point on St. Simons Island to create a butterfly monitoring program, invasive species ID program and a living shoreline project.

Chemistry and natural sciences programs worked with America's Second Harvest's Feeding the Hungry Campaign. Nursing students developed teaching programs to address specific community needs and students in the teacher education program worked with eighth graders in a living classroom program.

These are just a few of the projects that have been completed over the years. We look forward to what is to come and thank the students, professors and administration for bringing such a useful program to Coastal Georgia.

ANOTHER VIEW / GARY VARVEL



The UNITED States

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Incorporate island to control construction

Little Hilton Head — I have heard four people nickname St. Simons Island with that label. Went to Hilton Head once, vowing to never return because of traffic. St. Simons residents need to realize building on SSI is a cash cow for developers and Brunswick. Building here is controlled by six Brunswick commissioners who approve all building here as they want the real estate property tax money. The monstrosity going up at Gascogne Park is from what I can guess \$400,000 of tax money each year. No impact fee is collected, so we the citizens pay for new sewer and waterlines, etc., for each development. Impact fees are what are collected by most cities in this

country from developers to help pay for infrastructure changes caused by their developing large subdivisions.

Not here — a free ride. I heard from people who did not want to incorporate that their only reason was our real estate property taxes would go up. Guess what. We aren't incorporated, and our taxes are going up. We have one elected commissioner who is on our side, but fighting six who are anxious to build here. We need to incorporate to control the building and our island. They are starting to build up north and Frederica is going to be more of a parking lot.

Frank Walker
St. Simons Island

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send letters on topics of general interest to readers in Southeast Georgia by:

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You must include your name, address and phone number.

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COLUMN / GEORGE WILL



Yale offers a tutorial in social descent

WASHINGTON

Summer brings no respite for academics committed to campus purifications, particularly at the institution that is the leader in the silliness sweepstakes, Yale. Its Committee on Art in Public Spaces has discovered that a stone carving that has adorned an entrance to Sterling Memorial Library since it opened 86 years ago has become "not appropriate."

The carving, according to Yale Alumni Magazine, depicts "a hostile encounter: a Puritan pointing a musket at a Native American." Actually, the Native American and the Puritan are looking not hostilely at each other but into the distance. Still, one can't be too careful, so the musket has been covered with stone. This is unilateral disarmament: The Native American's weapon, a bow, has not been covered up. Perhaps Yale thinks that armed white men are more "triggering" (this academic-speak means "upsetting to the emotionally brittle") than armed people of color.

National Review Online's Kyle Smith drolly worries that Yale might be perpetuating harmful stereotypes.

If such campus folderols merely added to what Samuel Johnson called "the public stock of harmless pleasure," Americans could welcome a new academic year the way they once welcomed new burlesque acts. Unfortunately, the descent of institutions of learning into ludicrousness is symptomatic of larger social distempers that Frank Furedi has diagnosed abroad as well as in America.

Furedi is a professor emeritus in England and author of "What's Happened to the University?: A Sociological Exploration of Its Infantilization." Writing in The American Interest, he cites a warning issued to Oxford University postgraduate students about the danger of "victarious trauma," which suppos-

edly results from "hearing about and engaging with the traumatic experiences of others." This, Furedi says, is symptomatic of the "medicalization" of almost everything in universities that strive to be "therapeutic." Universities are "promoting theories and practices that encourage people to interpret their anxieties, distress and disappointment through the language of psychological deficits." This generates self-fulfilling diagnoses of emotionally fragile students. They demand mental-health services on campuses that are replete with "trigger warnings" and "safe spaces" to insulate students from discomforts, such as the depiction of a musket. What academics perceive as "an expanded set of problems tracks right along with the exponential growth of the 'Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.'"

The socialization of children, which prepares them to enter the wider world, has been shifted from parents to primary and secondary schools, and now to higher education, which has embraced the task that Furedi calls "re-socialization through altering the norms that undergraduates grew up with." This is done by using speech codes and indoctrination to raise "awareness" about defects students acquired before coming to campuses that are determined to purify undergraduates.

Often, however, students arrive with little moral ballast bequeathed by parents who thought their role was, Furedi says, less to transmit values than to validate their children's feelings and attitudes: "This emphasis on validation runs in tandem with a risk-averse regime of child-rearing, the (unintended) consequence of which has been to limit opportunities for the cultivation of independence and to extend the phase of dependence of young people on adult society."

The therapeutic university's language — students are "vulnerable" to routine stresses and difficulties that are defined as "traumas" — also becomes self-fulfilling. As a result, students experience a diminished sense of capacity for moral agency — for self-determination. This can make them simultaneously passive, immersing themselves into groupthink, and volatile, like the mobs at Middlebury College, Claremont McKenna College, University of California, Berkeley and other schools that disrupt uncongenial speakers. Hence universities provide "trigger warnings" that facilitate flights into "safe spaces." Furedi quotes an Oberlin College student who says: "There's something to be said about exposing yourself to ideas other than your own," but "I've had enough of that."

Times do, however, change, as the Yale Alumni Magazine delicately intimated when it said the stone now obscuring the Puritan's musket "can be removed in the future without damaging the original carving." And the future has come with strange speed to New Haven.

In a peculiar letter in Tuesday's Wall Street Journal, a Yale official says the university is removing the stone "that a construction project team had placed on the stonework." By clearly suggesting, implausibly, that this "team" acted on its own, the letter contradicts the magazine's report that the covering up was done because the Committee on Art in Public Spaces deemed the carving "not appropriate." The letter, which says the uncovered carving will be moved to where it can be studied and "contextualized," speaks volumes about Yale's context.

George Will is Pulitzer Prize-winning conservative political commentator. Contact him at georgewill@washpost.com.

COLUMN / STAR PARKER



Who gets to defines hate?

"As sickening as the "alt-right" racist bigots may be, at least we know where they're coming from."

As if recent events don't give us enough to worry about, now we have a new missive in The Atlantic from former Vice President Joe Biden concerning the incident in Charlottesville.

Biden wants to declare America a hate-free zone.

He says we should declare "no place for these hate groups in America. Hatred of blacks, Jews, immigrants — all who are seen as 'the other' — won't be accepted or tolerated or given safe harbor anywhere in this nation."

Biden articulates for us here the vision of the "alt-left." America gets transformed from being about limited government, with laws to protect individual freedom, to sponsoring search and destroy missions for eliminating hatred. And, of course, Joe Biden and his left-wing friends will define for us who the haters are.

As sickening as the "alt-right" racist bigots may be, at least we know where they're coming from. They make no claim to the high ground. Their racism is on the table, in the light of day.

But the "alt-left" is far more insidious.

Take, for instance, the Southern Poverty Law Center. They are self-appointed mission control for identifying who and where are the haters in America.

They publish a "Hate Map" on their website, in which 917 "hate groups" are identified, ripe for elimination in the spirit of Biden's appeal.

Included are 101 anti-Muslim hate groups, but somehow not a

single anti-Christian hate group is identified. Actually, Christian groups, in their map, turn out to be the haters.

SPLC identifies at least 19 Christian organizations as hate groups. Groups like the Alliance Defending Freedom, which provides legal counsel to those whose religious freedom has been abrogated (e.g., a Christian baker being sued for refusing to create a cake for a same-sex wedding), or Family Research Council, which publishes research in support of public policy consistent with traditional Christian values, or D. James Kennedy Ministries, which, through its church and media, disseminates the Christian gospel and sermons of its founder, Dr. D. James Kennedy.

Peacefully preaching Christian gospel is, in the eyes of the Southern Poverty Law Center, an act of hate because part of this gospel chastises homosexual behavior as sinful.

Unfortunately, in today's tortured culture, sources deemed by some authority like CNN or GuideStar, which provides data on evaluating nonprofit organizations, reference the SPLC "Hate Map" as a guide to hate in the country.

Two major corporations, JP Morgan and Apple, announced six-figure contributions to the Southern Poverty Law Center after the events in Charlottesville.

In a memo to employees, JP Morgan's head of corporate responsibility noted that their contribution to SPLC is "to further

their work in tracking, exposing, and fighting hate groups and other extremist organizations across the country."

In 2012, a young man entered Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., and shot the building manager. He, fortunately, was caught and subsequently sentenced to 25 years in prison.

He was a volunteer at a pro-gay organization and told the FBI that he used the SPLC hate map to find FRC and that his plan was to kill as many as he could.

D. James Kennedy Ministries recently filed a lawsuit against SPLC for defamation.

In recent media appearances discussing Charlottesville, I noted the equivalency I see between the LGBT rainbow flag and the Confederate flag.

Both stand, as I explained, for particular dogma and are statements of exclusion to those who don't fit their worldview.

Those who don't agree with me are welcome to say so.

But instead, the so-called advocates of tolerance shut down my office in Washington, D.C., with an avalanche of calls and threats.

We can't legislate what people feel.

We can and must recapture the American vision of freedom, where law protects individual life, liberty and property, so our large and diverse population can live together peacefully and productively.

Star Parker is an author and president of CURE, Center for Urban Renewal and Education.