

Commentary

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EDITORIAL

Explorer posts offer great opportunity for area youth

There could soon be two more outlets for young people in Glynn County to get real-life career experience.

The Boy Scouts of America Exploring program, which is open to both boys and girls between 16-20, is already operating at Southeast Georgia Health System. At this Explorer post, high schoolers are able to see first hand what health professionals do on a daily basis. This doesn't just mean standing around and watching. At this post, youth get to participate in various learning experiences that allow them to simulate parts of what is really required of careers in health care.

Soon, maybe as soon as next month, a second Explorer post is expected to open through the Glynn County Fire Department that will offer a similar experience.

Another may open later through the Glynn County Police Department.

These posts will be invaluable to the strategic focus of United Way of Coastal Georgia, which has focused its mission on addressing the unusually high rate of disconnected youth in Glynn County. As a refresher, disconnected youth are young people between the ages of 16-24 who are not in school or are not employed. The goal is to get young people into the workforce or into a program that will help them gain access to it.

Roughly 24 percent of the youth

within that age range qualify as disconnected, which is roughly 10 percent higher than the state average. Statistics show there is a higher likelihood of falling into a cycle of crime or generational poverty among youth who fit that category.

Because the United Way did not take on this mission lightly, the non-profit clearing house used a grant to get the posts going because officials there realized the Exploring program has a real chance to expose youth to careers that can be enriching and well-paying.

Not all participants in the program will be considered among the disconnected youth statistics. In fact, because there is a requirement to either be in school, or have a high-school diploma or GED to be in it, many of the young people involved have career goals in mind. For them this is hopefully laying the ground work for a successful career.

For others, those who may be undecided about their future plans or who have not been exposed to the different career options in the Golden Isles, the Explorer posts may be just what they need to avoid falling into the category of disconnected youth. Preventing them from falling into the category is just as important as trying to get them out of it.

We look forward to seeing this program grow locally and hope there will be more Explorer posts popping up soon.

ANOTHER VIEW / GARY VARVEL



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Space for Surf Sailors too hot, buggy for other uses

The people who are driving the Coast Guard Beach development do not understand the environment. The prevailing summer wind is geothermal onshore — frequently 0-10 knots. The trees and bushes along the eastern fence of the boat park blocks this for the next 50 yards so that at 90-100 degrees, you cannot enjoy the area while also contending with the swarms of gnats and mosquitos, especially after rain. At 10-15 knots, it is better, but at 15-30 knots you would need windbreaks. If the vegetation were removed to see from the planned observation platforms and lifeguard tower, the sand will blow into the area, destroying the dunes and potential turtle nesting habitat.

The committee plans to eliminate St. Simons Surf Sailors by failing to provide adequate, secure space

against vandalism and robbery for our equipment with no place for our social activity. The only place where the breeze comes into the area is along the southern access pathway between the trees, where we have a deck for cookouts.

We have 125 members, but our numbers are in the thousands considering families and friends. The club is open to small sailboats, windsurfers, paddleboarders, kayakers and we have social memberships. We are not exclusive. Our fees are affordable. We pay the county a fee and we cost the taxpayers nothing. We are nonprofit. How much will the beach development cost and how much will taxes for maintenance cost for something only a few will use for a small part of the year?

Dr. Malcom Wright
St. Simons Island

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

Mail Letters to the Editor,
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Email: editor@thebrunswicknews.com Fax: 912-280-0926

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You must include your name, address and phone number.

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COLUMN / RICHARD YARBROUGH



The state of the column cannot be overstated

This column was able to offend an ever-growing number of the humor-impaired nearly each week this past year.

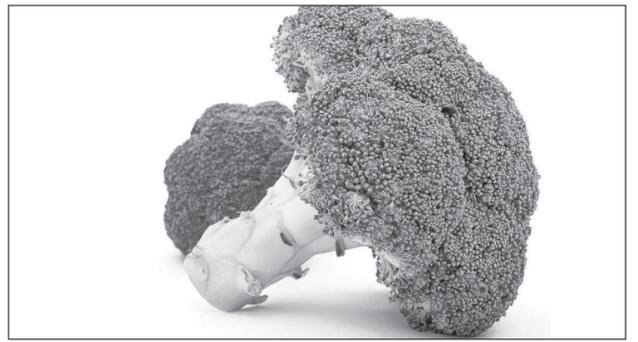
My Fellow Georgians: I come before you today to submit my annual State of the Column address! (Yay! Clap! Clap! Clap!) I can state to you unequivocally that the state of this state cannot be overstated! (Yay! Yay! Clap! Clap! Clap!)

Let me say at the outset that I know that the New York Times (Boo!) will be fact-checking every statement I make. (Boo! Boo!) My friends, it's a fact that I don't care what the New York Times thinks! (Standing ovation!)

The year 2017 was one of challenges. I am pleased to tell you that we met those challenges with a barrage of nouns, verbs, subordinate clauses, a few compound sentences and a lot of misplaced commas! And I have only begun to conjugate! (Thunderous applause.)

As has been the long-standing tradition of this column, we were able to offend an ever-growing number of the humor-impaired this past year. (Boo! Pfft!) They include supercilious liberals who have turned tut-tutting into an art form. (Boo! Pfft!) Bible thumpers, who can cite a Biblical injunction against women preachers but see nothing wrong with carrying a .357 Magnum to church in case they need to violate that silly Commandment about not killing anybody. (Ha! Ha! Ha!) Athletic supporters at You-Know-Where Institute of Technology (Buzz! Buzz!) who tell me they wanted UGA scholar-athletes to win the state football championship this year because they intend to "put a whipping on the dogs (sic) next year, as we have done for two of the last four years!!!" (Roars of laughter! Shouts of "Woof! Woof!" More laughter!)

I discovered this year a heretofore unknown genus of humor-impaired known as genu adducendum est, which translates generally as "knee jerks." These are the jerks that take a knee whenever they hear the national anthem played, especially if they can get themselves seen on national television (Pfft! Double pfft!) They claim



Provided photo/Pixabay

Columnist Dick Yarbrough said he will continue his effort to rid the entire state of Georgia of broccoli.

they are protesting police brutality. (Boo!) They might want to take a moment and consider those among their number who abuse women, sire babies they will never see — let alone support — and who snort drugs while driving around with unlicensed weapons in their cars. (Shame! Shame!) I consider these knee jerks about as relevant to our society as snail poop. If these buck-ethers are role models, Dr. Pepper is a heart surgeon. (Ha! Ha! That's telling 'em!)

All in all, it was a very good year, but this column can never rest on its glorious past. We must continue to look ahead to the future. (Clap! Clap! Clap!) To quote my esteemed colleague, Junior E. Lee, general manager of the Yarbrough Worldwide Media and Pest Control Company, located in Greater Garfield, Georgia, and a pest control professional: "The past is prologue and the future isn't analogue." I have no idea what that means but Junior would get his feelings hurt if I didn't mention his name today.

In this coming year, I will continue to push my School Daze initiative in which our intrepid public servants in the Legislature (Boo! Hiss!) will spend a thankless week in the classroom while public school teachers get wine and dined under the Gold Dome by lizard-loafed lobbyists! (Yeah! Yeah! Clap! Clap! Clap!)

I will not flinch in my efforts to get Sept. 23 declared a national

holiday. That is the birthday of Ray Charles Robinson, of Albany, Georgia, the greatest singer in the history of the world. (Amen! You go, Ray Charles Robinson!)

I will continue to fight to make this state broccoli-free while promoting the health benefits of banana pudding! (Hooray! Clap! Clap!) I will oppose illegal immigration by constructing a wall from Dade County to Rabun County and cover it in kudzu so loud-talking, know-it-all Yankees can't come down here and make fun of how we talk! (Dang right!) As for the Dreamers — those who are already here — we will let them stay if they learn to drink sweet tea. (Only mild applause.) And finally, I will not rest until there is a national signing day for high school band members on ESPN. (Standing ovation!)

In closing, my fellow Georgians, let me say what a privilege it has been to serve as your modest and much-beloved columnist for another year. (Clap! Clap! Clap!) God bless you. God bless the Great State of Georgia and God bless the University of Georgia, the nation's oldest state-chartered university and the nation with which it stands. Thank you and thank God this chore is over. (Sustained standing ovation!)

Dick Yarbrough is a syndicated humor columnist from Georgia. Contact him at yarb2400@bellsouth.net.

FROM THE MURPHY CENTER / DON MATHEWS



Welcome Richland Rum and Silver Bluff Brewing

The booming distilling and brewing industries coming to downtown Brunswick is a good sign.

Kicking back and conversing with a friend or friends over a cold beer or cocktail is a simple, yet great joy. Doing so in the environs of the Golden Isles is an even greater joy.

Piling on even more joy, a distillery and a brewery are on their way to downtown Brunswick.

The Richland Distilling Company's new rum distillery is in the final phases of construction on Newcastle Street. The distillery has already had a couple First Friday open houses.

On the other side of Newcastle will be Silver Bluff Brewing Co. Silver Bluff is in the early stages of construction. When it opens, perhaps this year, it will be a fully operational brewery with a beer garden and tap room.

The distillery industry is booming. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of operating distilleries in the U.S. has increased from 145 in 2010 to 675 in 2016. Employment in the industry has increased from 7,252 workers in 2010 to 12,207 in 2016. And distilleries pay well: the average weekly wages of distillery workers in 2016 was \$1,362.

The boom in the brewery industry has been even more impressive. In 2002, there were

365 breweries operating in the U.S. By 2010, there were 527. In 2016, there were 2,843. Employment in the brewery industry has increased from 24,864 in 2010 to 58,580 in 2016.

But there's much more to the beer story than that. If you are an old and inveterate beer snob, as I am, the evolution of the beer industry in the U.S. since the 1970s is a small yet glorious episode in the history of American capitalism.

In the 1970s, the beer situation in the U.S. was grim. The country had only 40 breweries, and the industry was highly concentrated: the five largest beer manufacturers accounted for 75 percent of beer sales. Weak and wimpy lagers ruled the day. Beers with actual flavor were pricey and hard to find.

Big beer's only innovation in the 1970s was to introduce light beer. Is there any beer worse than a weak and wimpy lager? There is: light beer. It is light beer, along with disco, bell bottoms and a disturbing enthusiasm for polyester that mark the 1970s as among western civilization's lowest ebbs.

In capitalism, such situations are the mothers of entrepreneurship. And it was in just that situation in the 1970s that craft brewers were born. The increase in U.S. breweries from 40 in

1970 to 2,843 in 2016 is almost entirely attributable to craft brewers entering the market.

Compared to the 1970s, the variety and quality of beer available in the U.S. today is spectacular. The big brewers of the 1970s had to become entrepreneurial to survive, and most of them have, by offering much more variety and much better quality.

Now the booming distillery and brewery industries are making their way to downtown Brunswick in the form of Richland Distilling and Silver Bluff Brewing. This is great news for downtown Brunswick and an encouraging sign. Entrepreneurs don't locate just anywhere. They locate where they see profitable opportunities.

And Richland and Silver Bluff are the sorts of businesses that can spark a boom in a small and pretty downtown. Downtown Brunswick has seen a rising wave of entrepreneurship over the past couple years. Richland and Silver Bluff could make the wave much bigger.

Don Mathews is a professor in the School of Business and Public Management at College of Coastal Georgia and works with the college's Reg Murphy Center for Economic and Policy Studies.