

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

A Eulogy for Piedmont

Outside The Box

By: Don Perry
worldoutsidethebox.com

In the film, "The Razor's Edge," when Piedmont dies in a muddy trench after saving Larry Darrel's life, Larry gives him a battlefield eulogy in the spirit of Piedmont's contrarian personality. He speaks of Piedmont's "thrill of offending people and making them uncomfortable."

I'm feeling a bit like Piedmont this morning in anticipation of offending someone with the opinions that follow, but I'm trying to be more like Larry in the hope that these uncomfortable ideas will serve as a spice and not the main course.

We'll begin with a new character, "Gort," for the purposes of this discussion. Gort was the robot in the 1951 science fiction film, "The Day The Earth Stood Still." In the somnolence of those dark days, Gort was referred to as a "he," but as we all know, robots are genderless, and we need a genderless character for this conversation, so Gort will suffice.

We continue with a story told by a friend who shared with me his own struggle for (or with) enlightenment, which I will take the liberty of paraphrasing here.

Sitting at a dinner table with a gathering of people, my friend thought he overheard someone say that Gort missed the potatoes when they were passed around. Looking toward the other end of the table, his vision obscured by the thick scales of patriarchy and cisgender confusion, his casual glance revealed what he assumed to be an attractive young lady.

With potatoes in hand and in an attempt to be polite, he turned to his dinner companion and said, "Did she want some more potatoes?"

An immediate and uncomfortable silence permeated the room as all eyes turned toward my unfortunate friend. Awkward moments passed during which he actually felt the steaming bowl of potatoes begin to cool, and then someone cleared their throat and said, "Gort prefers gender neutral pronouns."

I have another friend we'll call "Chuck Wayne" who is as unambiguously male as any guy would be who was forged from an alloy of Chuck Norris and John Wayne. He's not at all concerned about his pronouns. So many of us are not properly concerned that the masters of the pixel universe have decided to reprogram us in the spirit of diversity and inclusion. The other day when Chuck updated his profile picture on Facebook, Facebook announced, "Chuck Wayne has updated 'their' profile picture."

A quick glance at the stone tablets I used when I learned English reveals "their" to be the possessive form of "them," the objective form of "they," which refers to a group of people, animals or things not clearly described, or in other words, more than one of any or all of the above. Of course the online dictionaries have been updated to include the more inclusive definitions.

Facebook knows that Chuck is a he, and I'm confident that an algorithm which can generate advertisements based on a scan of the words you type and websites you visit surely remembers whether you listed yourself as male or female or chose the "custom" gender option in your profile. "We," as Queen Victoria might say, were not amused, but we got over it.

There is a lot to be said for the virtual world. The pixel universe gives us a place where ideas can achieve their full flower, grow and grapple with and bump up against other ideas to prevail, or diminish, or merge into something new, and all without having any real skin in the game. But this cannot happen when the gatekeepers of this universe keep their virtual thumbs on the virtual scales.

In Pixeland and in the rarefied but inclusive world of academia, where any associate professor at every junior college can serve as an expert commentator for CNN if they have the proper opinions, it is vitally important to ask someone about their "preferred pronouns." In the real world, approximately point four-two percent of Americans identify as someone who might prefer something not on the his-and-hers menu.

"But shouldn't we, in the spirit of equitable outcomes, elevate those who have been excluded? After all, only a small percentage of Americans are persons with disabilities, but every public building has wheelchair ramps and accessible parking."

True, and does that mean that you consider zie, sie, ey, ve and tey to be somehow disabled and in need of a Facebook-designed wheelchair ramp? I'm sorry but I just don't see it that way. Any Y-chromosome individual willing to endure surgery, or any X-chromosome person who wants to knock heads with the guys on the gridiron, or anyone willing to confront a societal norm and hold their ground to preserve the freedom to chart their own course – these are not fragile people, even though they may seek the benefits and privileges of fragility.

"A-ha – so you mention privilege, and that's exactly what we're trying to eliminate in our efforts to form a more diverse and inclusive society!"

Well, the problem with "equitable outcomes" is that when government and the gatekeepers of information attempt to coerce those outcomes, you end up with unintended consequences. Let's say that seventy two percent of Americans prefer their potatoes with salt. Twelve point eight percent prefer pepper. Point nine percent like them plain. Five point seven percent prefer curry or Chinese five spice. Five percent are like Lucy Ricardo at a restaurant and can't decide what they want, and about three point four percent like to mix it up.

To accommodate everyone's taste, the host adds a spice rack to the table next to the salt and pepper shakers, then they discover that 18.4 percent of vis diners grew up eating salsa, so they add a condiment stand to the table. The table is getting a little crowded now and the food is getting cold, but everyone can pretty much get the potatoes they prefer – until someone in the 18.4 percent group objects when a 72 percenter reaches for the salsa, because that would be "appropriating my culture."

Meanwhile, the caterer, who has been doing quite well selling salt and pepper and spices and condiments, discovers that it would be a lot more profitable to deliver potatoes

Don Perry continued...



Fastest WWII Veteran I Never Met

Brigadier General Chuck Yeager was called Home by our Supreme Commander on December 7, 2020. He was 97, appearing to be a much younger man. Only a very high level overview of his accomplishments and life, can I present here, as there were so many.

As a young West Virginia native he enlisted in our Army Air Force in September 1941, as an aircraft mechanic. By 1943 he had completed pilot's training and was given a second lieutenant's bars just before seeing air combat over European skies. After being shot down over France and injured he received a Purple Heart, went right back to work shooting down NAZI fighters. He sure made up for being shot down! While escorting American bombers he shot down five German fighters in one day, in October, 1944, becoming an instant ace. He flew 64 combat missions and downed 13 enemy aircraft from the seat of his P-51 Mustang.

After the war, he became an Air Force test pilot and was our FIRST to break the sound barrier in 1947 while flying a Bell X-1. There was not much he wouldn't or couldn't fly, experimental or not. "Retiring" in 1975 with the rank of Brigadier General, later he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from our CIC, President Ronald Reagan in 1985.

Once he stated that, "It may sound funny, but I've never owned an airplane in my life. If you're willing to bleed, Uncle Sam will give you all the planes you want."

Other accomplishments include setting a world speed record of 1,650 miles per hour, 1953 in the X1A. Flew 127 Vietnam War combat missions. Did you know that?!

Served as commandant of the Aerospace Research Pilot School which trained and produced several Apollo and space shuttle astronauts. Broke the sound barrier AGAIN in 1997, while flying the famous F-15 celebrating the 50th anniversary of his most famous flight. As a true American Patriot he was also a bold spokesman for our NRA; he was a life member of our American Legion Post 111 in Hamlin, West Virginia, telling delegates, "Having been involved on the leading technological development of U.S. Air power for quite some time, I appreciate what you, AS LEGIONNAIRES have done and are still doing today.....We, you and I have been involved in a lot of activity in supporting our country, and all I can say today is, keep up the good work." He had received the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, The Legion of Merit, The Congressional Silver Medal (equal to a noncombat Medal of Honor) in addition to those listed above.

To quote another Legionnaire, "He was brave as he was fast!"

Semper Paratus

The Veterans' Corner

Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



Soil Testing

Soil testing is a very important part of growing a quality crop, having a good looking garden, having a quality lawn, or a good pasture. Soil testing gives you an insider look at what is going on in your soil. Even though it's only February now is a good time to think about soil testing and prepping the soil. Let's take a look at what a soil test can do for you and why it's a good idea to have your soil tested. If you have a garden at your house it's a good idea to have your soil tested every other year. A soil test will show you the pH, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, and manganese levels in your soil. These are essential elements for plant growth. Nitrogen is also a very important nutrient for plant growth. However, nitrogen is very mobile in



the soil. Therefore, you could test your soil and by the time that you receive your soil results back from the lab the amount of nitrogen in the soil could be drastically different.

pH is often the most limiting factors when it comes to growing plants in the mountains. A soil test will tell you the pH and the recommended lime to bring that pH up to an acceptable level for the plants. Any lime that is added to soil will take 3-6 months to fully take effect. That means for spring plantings, now is a good time to take a soil test and begin adding lime.

When taking a sample for your lawn, a depth of 4 inches is appropriate. If you're taking a sample for gardens, ornamentals, mixed fruit trees, and wildlife plots sample to a depth of 6-8 inches. You can use a spade or a soil probe. When you take the sample it's best to take multiple samples from around the plot that you are interested in. This way you'll get an average of the area that you're sampling and a better representative sample. Using a trowel or small shovel, take 8-10 samples and mix them together in a bucket. From that bucket take the sample that you'll bring into the Extension office so that we can send it to the UGA labs. Make sure that you get enough soil so that the lab can test properly. About 2 cups of soil is needed.

If you're sampling from an area that has mulch or grass on top of it push that material away so that you penetrate down to the soil. Pull out any rock or roots that you get with the soil sample and throw them away. When you take the sample, spread the wet/damp soil on a newspaper and let the soil air out overnight before bringing it in to the office, so that it dries down some. When deciding how many samples you need to take, look at the area and determine how many different types of conditions you have. For example, if you have a low lying spot, a steep slope, and a wooded area, each one of these would need a unique soil sample done. When you receive the results from the lab they will have recommendations for you based on the types of plants that you have or plan to have.

Bring soil samples into your County Extension Office. If you have questions regarding the soil sampling or the results you can call your local Extension office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Letters to The Editor

Biden's EOs on Green Energy

Dear Editor,

As promised, President Biden recently signed executive orders exploiting the climate alarmist narrative. Biden claimed that his administration's climate executive order will create more jobs. That is a flat out lie. Biden's climate move put a complete halt to the Keystone XL pipeline which immediately cost over a thousand jobs, and an estimated 10,000 more. The president repeated his unfounded proposition that moving to green energy would create more jobs than it eliminates, without mentioning that creating this climate-industrial complex requires massive amounts of hard earned taxpayer money. In addition, the executive order will kill tens of thousands of blue-collar jobs with his ban on new oil and gas drilling on federal lands. Oil and gas industry workers earn between \$70,000 to \$80,000 per year compared to \$40,000 to \$60,000 in the wind and solar energy sectors. Eliminating oil and gas blue-collar jobs will accomplish nothing for the climate or environment. Rather, it will reduce our standard of living by making energy more expensive and making us more dependent on OPEC. These policies will also allow federal money to go towards more wasteful and pointless green energy projects like Solyndra. We all remember that fiasco. During the Obama administration, Solyndra deceived the Department of Energy and robbed the American taxpayer of \$535 million dollars. As I recall, Biden took credit for the administration's biggest scandals. It is only a matter of time before more Solyndra-type boondoggles are in the offing as Biden's new executive orders are implemented.

Tim Groza

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Letters opposing the views of previous comments are welcomed; however, letters cannot be directed at, nor name or ridicule previous writers. Letters that recognize good deeds of others will be considered for publication.*

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