

HERMIT HERALD

YOL 1 ISSUE 88

DEC. 29, 2020

QUOTE FOR THE DAY

**“Down is up. Up is down. Good is wicked.
Wicked is good. The times are changing....”
Danielle Paige, author**

AND, OH, HOW TRUE

Looking back on this tumultuous year and leaving aside the horrid covid- 19 problems for a moment – what a year of destruction or attempted destruction of cherished aspects of our country’s history. The cancel culture efforts by a small, often violent minority, has indeed caused many of us to believe that, in retrospect, the “good were wicked.”

It somehow has become acceptable to tear down statues of Washington, Jefferson and nine other presidents who had owned slaves.

Oh! And you might not even be aware of the latest tear down targets – Hamilton, Johns Hopkins and even Abraham Lincoln- apparently Abe just didn't do enough.

Flawed activities by our forebears who lived in much different cultural times – activities which are deserving of our criticism today, but not at the expense of extinguishing the incredible accomplishments of how they created this great country and nourished it through its infancy. I have little in common with those who attempt to dissemble, revise, the history of our country and am dismayed that so many have become acolytes of the burn and tear down elements of our society.

The regrettable history of slavery in the United States, aside – what about the rest of our history? What about the indigenous indian peoples and the Mexicans of the south west? Speak about people who were unfairly and horribly treated – some would contend that all those of us who are not descended from these people should just pack up and go back to Europe, England , Ireland or wherever.

Dear readers – sorry – this is just the history of the world, whether it be colonialism or just plain old warfare – the victors take over the land and write the history. Today, with there still being many exceptions worldwide, we do live in a relatively more civilized world. No question that we should be aware of things that have been wrong in the history of our country, but tell me, was Washington 90% good and 10% bad or the other way around? I am so disappointed in the cancel/ tear down culture – living life in the rear view mirror – destruction instead of trying to build – nihilists all.

BUT, I'M SO SENSITIVE

So, now that most of the statues have been torn down and school names – “gotta get rid of that Jefferson High name” – are in the process of being changed, we’ve got to go after the school/college/professional sports icons and mascots.

Let’s start with the Cleveland Indians – what a deserving target. When I was fifteen and living in Cleveland, I couldn’t help but think how

insulted Indians must have felt looking at that cartoon character, Chief Wahoo, that was the logo for the team for many decades- how degrading/insulting. However, never did I have such a feeling about the Atlanta Braves or the Kansas City Chiefs having named their teams in recognition of skilled, fierce warriors. Here we are today, where, essentially, you can't have a team logo having anything to do with any type of person (ethnic, religious, otherwise) because someone is, "so sensitive". Actually, was just thinking the other day – gotta get rid of the name, New Orleans Saints. Football is such a violent game and, basically, so unsaintly. Really, I mean, I'm so offended. Advice to franchise owners and school boards – stick with Cardinals, Jays, Lions, Bears and Sox.

BUT, TODAY SENSITIVITY IS THE BYWORD

Many of our readers who are of similar vintage as the Hermit can relate to a couple of these analogies: High School football – because you made the team didn't mean you got a varsity letter – you had to play 60% or more of the quarters – try harder – improve – maybe next

year you can earn one. Swimming – oh boy – I remember this one. I was at University School in Shaker Hts, Ohio, the number one swimming team in the state (including private and public schools) Our team had a number of nationally ranked swimmers. Points were awarded by the order of finish in any event (5,3,1,0), and to win a varsity letter you needed a lot of points (I forget how many) In any event, I was never the fastest fish in the water, but sure was proud when, in my senior year, I finally lettered.

Fast forward to today, in youth soccer every player has to be in for at least half the game. In sport after sport everyone gets a medal from first to last place. Everyone who makes the varsity team gets a letter. See – that’s why I’m a hermit – out of it – just don’t understand today’s world.

ETHICS/ BEHAVIOR- A MIXED BAG

When I was in high school there was a big debate amongst the students whether or not to approve an honor code. While all professed that they would never cheat (unlikely), many

felt they could never turn in a classmate they saw cheating (that provision was part of the proposed code). A highly respected English teacher asked us to consider this. “What sort of friend/classmate is it who, by cheating, would put you in such an ethical dilemma?” The honor code was approved.

The other day we learned of 70+ cadets at West Point having cheated on a calculus exam. Integrity/ honesty have always been among the most important guiding principles at the Academy. With similar problems in decades past, the perpetrators have been, “drummed out of the corps.” Not so, today, there’s a special rehabilitation program and most of the guilty will be able to stay. I find this really puzzling. I cannot believe that you can fail a course at West Point and not be able to take remedial training or repeat the course. Why risk your reputation and career by cheating? Right or wrong? Your choice. Times have changed.

EVERYONE GETS A DO OVER

Cadets at West Point have been selected for their maturity and leadership skills and should know better, but then there are other situations that are more nuanced.

The young American girl who was partying in a big way in the Cayman Islands, having been made fully aware of their very strict Covid - 19 restrictions. She got caught and was understandably totally traumatized as the judge sentenced her to jail for four months. C'mon, Lori Loughlin only got two months. In any event after repeated, "I'm so sorry" cries of despair her sentence was reduced and she only spent about a week in jail. I am confident, a lesson well learned - justice served.

Now we come to the story of Mimi Groves, captain of the Cheer leading team at a high school in Leesburg, Va. She had been accepted to go to the University of Tennessee which has one of the best Cheer leading/dance teams in the country. At age 15 Mimi, had, in a three second disappearing snap chat, uttered a racial slur, that, according to reports was commonly used at her school and, in fact, came from a rap song. Another classmate, Jimmy Galligan, who is half black took a screen

picture of the utterance and hung on to it. Jimmy had also previously complained to the school administration about these types of slurs and no action was ever taken.

According to the article, Mimi, now 18, is proclaimed by others to not harbor any prejudicial views at all.

Jimmy continued to harbor a grudge, although it would seem more at the school administrators for their do nothing attitude. Whatever his motivation, he decided to re cycle Mimi's three second screen shot three years after the event. Result – Mimi's life was crushed. Under tremendous civil rights groups and alumni pressure, Tennessee told her to withdraw or they would rescind their offer. Is Jimmy Gilligan pleased with this outcome? Absolutely. Was justice served? – Your call.

“Good is wicked. Wicked is good. The times are changing.”

FINALLY

So, in these changing and challenging times, all the best to my HH readers for what has to be a much happier new year.

**Your faithful scribe,
PB**