

## It is the best of times; it is the worst of times

Chit chat for change  
**Christine Kleck**



Americans seem to be doing a lot of crying and even a lot of laughing these days. This emotional roller coaster caused by economic scares, yet economic encouragement; sports victories, yet national grievances; and untamed hatred, yet explosive unity, has sent us running to the bathroom with our hands over our mouths.

We are posed with questions. "How much more are they going to shove on our plates?" "How much longer before we just lose it all?"

Well, for starters, on a more positive note, our sense of unity and our overall love of American pastimes and athletics have kept us from completely cocooning up - so be proud of yourself for that.

By doing this we are bettering ourselves as individuals as we unite together to show our cowardly enemies of the world that we are stronger than any of them.

Secondly, learning from history and our ancestors, we have refrained from being overtaken by the consuming wrath of fear and depression that so many past generations suffered from in times of tragedy, because they simply didn't know better.

This idea reminds me of a favorite quote of mine: "Those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it." With that note, I congratulate you, America, for doing your homework, by understanding and comprehending past reactions to past tragedies.

It is sad that past generations had to experience so much turmoil and grief just so that future generations would be able to learn from it, but "everything happens for a reason" (yet another quote I live by).

Just remember that every hardship you experience now is one more lesson that future generations will have to learn and apply to their own lives.

Pennsylvanians seem to be riding on their own emotional roller coaster right now. While our Steelers and our Nittany Lions seem to be overcoming the odds with their athletic victories, businesses and corporations are closing their doors or moving out of the state left and right.

Not only that, but people are afraid to open their mail and visit shopping centers and malls on certain days and at certain times.

With all of these images and fears constantly looming in our minds and plaguing our beings, many of us have begun to question so much.

To one extreme and in one respect we ask ourselves, "Can it get any better?" only to turn around and ask, "Can it get any worse?"

At this confusing time in American and even in world history, the only thing one can do is accentuate the positive and overcome the negative. "Yeah, right," you say, "easier said than done." Well then, don't say it, do it!

Surround yourself with people, places and things that make you happy. This will help you keep your mind off the negative as you better yourself and spread your happiness.

It can be the best of times - just as long as you don't let the worst of times take you over.

Kleck's column appears every three weeks.

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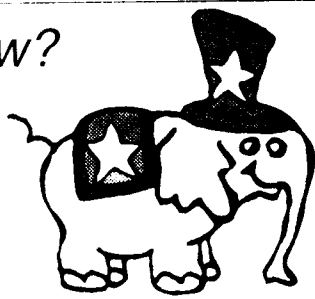
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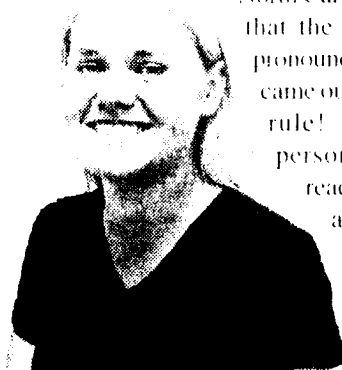
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## Just a good ole boy

Press 'I' to graduate

**Katie Galley**



Just a good ole boy... yea-haw! Yes, that's right, I just wrote, "yea-haw," but why? Well, simply and bluntly put, I am a redneck. Yes, that's right, I just called myself a redneck. Not just any redneck, though. I am a redneck who is proud that they are a redneck. It's in my roots, what can I do? But before you judge me as some hick sitting out on the back porch, chewing on a piece of hay, let me explain myself to you and let me defend the fact that I am a redneck.

Reason number one: I was conceived and born in the wonderful state of Georgia. That's right, I am a "litta Georga peach." I always have been, I always will be. While some kids were playing in sandboxes, I was clawing and patting the red clay that served as dirt in the south. But it goes deeper than that. My

grandmother was born and raised in North Carolina, and for years I thought that the word "pen" was actually pronounced "pin" and the word "hill" came out as "hell". Southern accents rule! Soon to come, my personalized license plate that reads, "Jst Pchy." Look for it on a silver Prizm near you!

Reason number two: I actually like the WWF. Not only that, but I have paid real money to see this entertainment in person!

We are talking hundreds of dollars when you add them all up! And yes, I do sit in front of the television on Monday nights waiting to see The Rock (my favorite wrestler) come out and say some funny lines and do obviously fake moves on other grown men. And why do I even find this entertaining? That's right, because I am a redneck! I can state with a straight face that I own not one, but two action figures of wrestlers. Sure, both of them were gifts, but I display them on my dresser. One of them even talks! How's that for cool?

Reason number three: I listen to country music. Hold on though, don't freak out yet. I don't listen to all country music because I would probably go insane, but I do like my share of it. The Dixie Chicks and Tim McGraw to name a couple, there's nothing

wrong with that, right? And I suppose since we are on the subject of music, the fact that I also play the violin (which can double as a fiddle) doesn't help my cause. And I do get excited when the song "The devil went down to Georgia" comes on the radio... or on my CD player when I put it in there. Okay, okay, I like more than just a couple of country songs. It's not my fault though, remember, I am a redneck by blood. As much as I fought the redneck gene for years, it has been slowly starting to leak out. But don't be expecting me to go line dancing anytime soon that might be too much for me to handle.

Reason number four: This is possibly the most embarrassing thing that I have ever admitted to the Behrend campus but I have been to an actual NASCAR race. And let me tell you where I went to this race. In none other than Richmond, Va., home of the Confederacy! You don't get more redneck than that!

It wasn't a one-time thing, though. I initially went to it because my boyfriend invited me, and being the good girlfriend that I am, I tried it so I could get involved with things that he likes. Big mistake! After we left Richmond, I found myself watching the races on television on Saturdays. At first it was just the last 10 laps or so, to see who won. Then it turned into flipping it on every 10 minutes or so to see if anyone new was in the lead. At this rate

I will watch entire races on television by Christmas. I even know the names of about 20 racers and I know that there is no racer named "Bobby Dale," as I originally thought. The best part of the race for me though, was getting invited to sit next to a man with very little teeth and tattoos of entire race cars on his arms, because he heard that it was my first race and he felt the need to lend me his headphones so I could listen to the drivers talk to their pit crews. The horror. The horror.

So, where do I see myself in the future, with all this redneck oozing out of my veins? Driving a car with my "Jst Pchy" license plate on the back and my airbrushed 'Redneck@©' license plate on the front. Probably getting engaged during "Cock Fight Night" at the local bar. Wearing wife-beater tank tops and flip-flops in the middle of winter. You name it; it is unstoppable at this point.

I am sure that if I sat here for another 20 minutes or so, I could easily come up with about five or six more reasons why I am a huge redneck, but I have to get going because the NASCAR race at Phoenix is almost over and I need to see the cars cross the finish line! So remember, ya'll come back now, ya hear!!

Galley's column appears every three weeks.

## King Kong was misunderstood

'Sweet' Lou Whitaker and the '87 Tigers  
**Mike Butala**



This all occurred to while listening to Jim Croce one day when I pondered the line, "badder than old King Kong." What makes King Kong so bad? He didn't really do anything all that bad. What did he do? Climbed a building and swatted at a few planes. It not like he stole your car or robbed your house. He was just an oversized,

yet proportional gorilla. Everyone gave him static because he wasn't a traditional gorilla and brainwashed the population into thinking he was a menace. Well, I'm not buying it. Gorillas for the most part are sensitive animals with no intent of hurting anyone; they just want to protect themselves. If people were shooting at you and flying around you in planes, wouldn't you be upset? I know I would. Look at other things that are oversized that do not get any ridicule from anyone else. Things such as James's Giant Peach, Andre the Giant and Epcot Center were a lot bigger than their traditional size and did not get ostracized from everyone.

James's Giant Peach got wide publicity and created a financial enterprise for James's two aunts and got them out of financial turmoil, although James did not get a nickel for his efforts. No one said, "That huge peach is a nuisance and the world would be better off if it had never existed." No one shot at it and shouted profanities at it, until it broke loose and created havoc on the streets.

Andre the Giant, a phenomenal wrestler and world-renowned actor, was not heckled on the wrestling mat nor was he exiled out of the United States. The most ridicule he received was in the "The Princess Bride," where his incredible size was unappreciated by local townspeople when he was dubbed the strongest man alive. In the movie he WAS exiled, but "The Princess Bride" was a fictitious fable of greed and organized crime. In real life, by the respect of others and the rational that he was an accepted member of the United States, oversized objects should not be condemned by their size, especially when they cannot help it.

Now for Epcot Center, symbolized by a big, silver ball. This landmark is not only accepted for its size, it is appreciated by young and old as a salvation from work and a place where happiness and family bonding can be correlated. People actually pay money to Epcot Center to see the attractions and state-of-the-art visual effects. They patronize this spherical monstrosity and create pilgrimages to Florida to experience the mechanical wonder. They also pay homage

to Mickey Mouse, a false God and idol. By the age of 4, these people's children have committed heresy against their own religion while humming the tune of "It's a Small World."

All of those things are accepted into society and some are even beloved landmarks while an animal, which has feelings just like you and me, is killed shamelessly. You should all be ashamed of yourselves, prosecuting an innocent animal with no trial, no jury, and no appeals court, just execution.

People like big houses, big cars, Big Macs and big checking accounts, however big gorillas are singled out and judged impractically. So in conclusion, don't disrespect King Kong for his size. You need to accept new and different things, and a 100-foot tall gorilla is a good place to start. Broaden your horizons and look for the misunderstood homeless orphan beneath the gorilla. Leroy Brown and junkyard dogs are bad, not exorbitant gorillas.

Butala's column appears every three weeks.

## The Hot Debate of the Week Smokin' in the boys room!

Los Angeles considers banning smoking in public parks. Should Behrend be next?

A few years ago when I had the joy of living in Perry Hall (aka the ghetto dorm), I remember a nice spring morning when the snow finally melted and the sun was trying to peek through. And yet, I was still blinded by whiteness.

How can that be? Because, with the snow gone, the cigarette butts that had been hidden for six months were exposed. An eight-foot radius around the entire porch was an appealing mix of mud and butts. The snow prevented the janitors from cleaning up the butts as is done daily during the other seasons.

There are plenty of containers for ashes and butts outside of Perry, as there are outside of most campus buildings. But no one uses them. It is apparently more fun to flick the still-smoking cig into the air and watch it fall to the grass to sputter out and die with its comrades.

And what about those nice, frosty mornings when you are scurrying to class? You are already huffing and puffing and just as you reach the entryway, you try to catch your breath and suck in a big gulp of ... cigarette smoke, which then forces you into the throws of a coughing fit as you attempt to maneuver your way around the dozen or so smokers loitering outside the building. And isn't it so cool to be standing around an entryway in below-zero temps, huddling together like a bunch of moronic birds, just to minimize lung capacity a little bit more?

Smoking should be greatly limited on campus, if not banned altogether. Sure, you have the right to smoke and get lung cancer and stink and cough the whole way through your classes. Go right ahead. But when your habit affects my health, your rights end. And when your reeking and hacking distracts me from learning, sorry, but it's my turn to stomp on someone's butt.

College students have proven time and again that they are irresponsible slobs. Go take a stroll through Perry on a Saturday morning, if you don't believe me. No one uses the cigarette receptacles? Fine - take 'em away and the cigs with them. Then the janitors will have more time to clean the feces out of the lobby and clear the graffiti from the stalls.

- L. Hayes

Every week, two editors from the staff will debate a topic that is hot. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to email suggestions for the hot topic. Send ideas to [behrcoll2@aol.com](mailto:behrcoll2@aol.com)