

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Government support for greenways

Connect Buncombe, a greenway advocacy organization, commends Buncombe County and the City of Asheville for working together to complete planning for the Woodfin/ River Arts District greenway connection along the French Broad River. The County received a grant through the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization to undertake an engineering study for this portion of greenway. Oversight of the project was subsequently handed over to the City of Asheville. However, neither government had adequate funds available to meet the 20 percent match required by the grant.

Connect Buncombe offered to donate 1/3 of the required funding if the County and City would each contribute 1/3. Both governments included their share in recently approved budgets and the planning will go forward. This is a great example of what we can accomplish through private and public partnerships. We also commend the County and City for making other significant budgetary investments in greenways. Buncombe County's budget includes funding for greenway construction in Enka, Black Mountain and Woodfin. Asheville's match will fund two additional greenways in the River Arts District.

Thanks to County and City elected leaders and staff for their cooperation and support of a County-wide greenway system!

Robbie Sweetser, President, Connect Buncombe

Our judiciary has been poisoned

Our Supreme Court, the mother of checks and balances for our democracy, is now contaminated, corrupted by politics. Our Constitution, a document of philosophy, is a political football rather than a guiding light, its tenets twisted to serve special interests. The Court's newest member, Gorsuch, and nominee Kavanaugh both appear to be infected and unable to do the People's business. And Chief Justice Roberts will not save honesty and ethics. He threw them away with his fifth vote for the Citizens United disaster in 2010 and with it hope for justice. Roe v. Wade is a smoke screen. It pales in comparison to Citizens United, leaving our nation overwhelmed by special interest money and by corporate power. And all in the guise of interpreting what has become a shattered first amendment.

Peter Gentling, Asheville

An unrecognizable leader

Donald Trump knows he is hated, has been hated pretty much all his life, but he literally has no feeling, no emotion about that. He listens to no one. No one else on the planet matters one whit. It's all about himself and only himself - what he wants, what he alone thinks is right.

He wants, expects and demands to be worshipped, and yet he insults, demeans, bullies and treats everyone with whom he has contact like dirt.

Would you not suspect that such a person must be miserable beyond comprehension? And, as President

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of the United States, dangerous beyond comprehension? This is a person who is in the position of "Leader of the Free World." Does that not scare the hell out of you? Does this person not disgust you?

If you support and adhere to Donald Trump's values, ideas and methods, if you think that Donald Trump is a good person, walk into your bathroom and take a look in the mirror. That person you see is part of the problem in America today. Sadly, you will be unable to recognize that person.

Is this person Donald Trump really our President?
Ben Trotter, Asheville

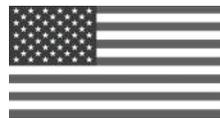
Mission merger is no marriage

Sunday's paper is full of information and concern over Mission Hospital's impending sale to Hospital Corporation of America. One op-ed came forth from Doctors John Ball and John Garrett, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Mission Board. This piece contains two sentences needing careful study.

The first sentence refers to "...Mission Health's decision to align with HCA Healthcare...". The second, further down, refers to the Board's deliberation and conclusion that "...Joining HCA..." would best serve the people's long-term interests. This hopeful thinking is in error. The words align and join infer a marriage. Mission's sale to a major for-profit corporation, HCA, is clearly a divorce. Any vestiges of cooperation between the new and the old management will last only as long as the HCA feels it will be in its interests.

Peter Gentling, MD, Asheville

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