

Readers' Forum

Mayland Community College update

Mayland Community College's 2018 Fall semester is successfully underway and there have been many initiatives completed in the past year with more to come.

Renovation projects have been carried out at all campus locations during the past year. Four new science labs were built on the Mitchell Campus and students will be able to take advantage of the latest state-of-the-art lab equipment. A new facility for the Mitchell Campus welding program is in design and will include updated safety and production equipment. Also in Mitchell County, the Pinebridge Project is progressing with a new roof going onto the Coliseum building in October. Mayland continues efforts to obtain temporary occupancy for the event space area of Pinebridge, and plans to start the construction process for a new Cosmetology Center in Spring of 2019. In addition, MCC's Avery and Yancey Center locations have undergone extensive cosmetic updates.

Mayland is in the process of expanding activities at the newly named Earth to Sky Park (ESP), previously known as the EnergyXChange. To enhance



Dr. John Boyd

the experience visitors have at the Bare Dark Sky Observatory, a landscaping design has been approved with phase one to begin this fall. This phase will incorporate the construction of eight private telescope viewing stations and will provide better handicap access areas to the Observatory. More than 1,624 people visited the Observatory last year, and that number is anticipated to grow with the completion of a 63-seat planetarium. Mayland is currently in the process of hiring an architect to design the planetarium with plans to begin construction in the spring of 2019. This fall Mayland will offer outdoor family-friendly movie nights at the ESP. An astronomy club has

been created with membership open to both students and community members. There will be special events for club members at the Bare Dark Sky Observatory throughout the year.

The Mayland Foundation is hosting a Dream Home Tour in Yancey County on October 5th. This day-long event assists the college in raising funds for student scholarships and is a great way to spend a fall day in the mountains. Tickets are available at www.mayland.edu/foundation or by calling the Foundation office at 828.766.1233. Community support will assist in the elimination of financial barriers for students and help them reach their educational goals. New on the tour this year is a pre-paid lunch option catered by Pig and Grits in Burnsville.

Mayland Community College continues to play a strong role in education and economic development for our communities. We encourage suggestions on how the College can continue to be a resource, and as always, our doors are open to offer excellence and opportunity to those we serve.

Dr. John Boyd
President Mayland Community College

Proposed gift from the Mission Health

It is a welcome sign that the Board of Directors of the Mission Health System appears to be responding to concerns about the effects of its planned sale to the Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) on the rural areas of western North Carolina that it serves. However, I question the timing of a recent announcement and the Mission Board's authority to take the action it proposes. Mission and HCA say out of the proceeds of the sale, they will give up to \$15 million to each of six hospital foundations, all but one connected to a rural hospital they currently own. The Blue Ridge Regional Hospital Foundation is one of them. They say that each foundation would receive an initial grant of \$5 million when the sale is finalized. Distribution of funds in years 2 and 3 would depend on each foundation's progress in the first year of the period and their focus on the local social determinants of health. Here are some of my questions about this plan.

First, this announcement comes from Mission Health but it does not have the authority to do it. It should have come from the Dogwood Health Trust. After that group had a full board of directors representing the entire region after that board had met, after they had decided that this was a wise course and after the sale of Mission had been completed and they actually had funds to pledge.

Second, where will the \$90 Million to be given to the affiliated foundations come from? Estimates of the amount to be received by the Trust range from \$1 to 2 Billion. Would it reduce the amount placed in the Trust? While it is a modest amount compared to the pro-

jected total, the earnings of \$90 million would add up over the years and have a larger impact than expending it during the first three years.

Third, since the board of Directors of Mission Health does not have the authority to commit this money and the money will not be available until the sale is consummated and at that time the Mission Health board will be dissolved, who makes that evaluation of whether each foundation gets additional funding? Though the Dogwood Health Trust reportedly did not make the initial decision, they will be tasked with carrying it out. But is the Dogwood Health Trust really different from the Mission Board? No, it is not. Of the nine members announced to date, three are current Mission Board members, three are past Mission Board chairs, and one is the past chair of the Blue Ridge Regional Hospital Board - a total of seven of nine Mission-affiliated members, all but one from Buncombe County.

Fourth, why has this donation been announced at this time? If the Trust is going to be responsible for the management of these funds, would it not have been better to wait until the board of the Trust was in place and its funding established? The Mission Health board took the initiative to create the Trust and start appointing members to its board with little input from other stakeholders in the region it serves. It now appears that they are making commitments for the Trust instead of letting it do its work.

Fifth, the stated purpose for the Trust is to address the influences on personal and population health in Western

North Carolina that do not directly involve medical intervention. These influences are called social determinants of health (SDOH), and they include a wide range of factors from food availability to education, housing, transportation, pollution control and much more. Grant proposals could address a great variety of approaches. Success in addressing SDOH typically requires many years. How much impact can a single three-year grant have?

If the goals of the local foundations were changed so that they addressed SDOH in their communities, rather than supporting the hospitals that would be owned by HCA, they should be able to compete very well for grants from the Trust.

Finally, while providing funding to our local hospital foundations is a worthy aim, it seems premature to do so before more planning has been done. That planning should be done through the organizational structure of the Dogwood Health Trust or whatever foundation is established from the sale of Mission Health. I say this because it may be wiser to start over and create a truly independent foundation.

I hope you will give this some thought. Send your questions and comments to Mission Health through www.missionhealthforward.org as well as to Attorney General Josh Stein at <https://www.ncdoj.gov/Home/ContactUs.aspx>

Jonathan B. Ward Jr., Ph.D.

Dr. Ward is a retired professor from a major academic health science center in Texas where his work focused on environmental toxicology and public health. He is a resident of Burnsville, N.C.

Electro Magnetic Pulse warning is serious stuff

Many folks are ignorant of the effects of an Electro Magnetic Pulse (EMP) on our society. If you enjoy the conveniences of our modern world such as refrigeration, air conditioning, your car starting when you turn the key, your good well-providing water to your faucets you may want to

educate yourself on EMP. If a rogue power were to detonate a thermonuclear device at high altitude over the central U.S.A. those aforementioned conveniences would cease to function.

At that point, our society would instantly revert to the Dark Ages. In the fact-based

novel, One Second After, such an occurrence takes place. The story focuses on how a small western Virginia town, very similar to Burnsville, copes. It's quite an eye-opener given where we stand with North Korea no longer being a nuclear threat and great food for thought.

Highly recommend Times Journal readers either read that book or study EMP and how it can affect our everyday lives.

Respectfully, Fred Cramer Burnsville

Get Sports physicals now

Mercy Urgent Care is offering a special rate of \$25.00 on sports physicals for all elementary through high school students from now through December 31, 2018. The new Burnsville location will also offer the physicals.

Drop in to get your sports physical for your upcoming season.

Dear Fellow Yancey County Citizens

We must make sure that the proposed transfer of our Blue Ridge Hospital of Mission hospital is done right. We must be sure that the foundation which will be involved in the transfer of Memorial Mission Hospital

to HCA has people from all walks of life and all places that use the Mission/HCA system.

That conversion foundation board should have people from our community which uses Blue Ridge Community Hospital in

Spruce Pine. It should not just be people from Asheville. We in Yancey and other rural areas need to help decide what is done with the money.

Jane Goldthwait
Burnsville

Reader says Thank You to Senator John McCain

When Senator John McCain lies in state this Friday in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol, he'll join a group of only 31 Americans upon whom such an honor has been bestowed. Boy does he deserve it.

Senator McCain's passing is a loss for our country. Americans like John McCain are rare in any era, but in times like ours—when leaders from both sides foster division over unity, and cynicism over optimism—the example he set feels even more exceptional.

A man who shed his own blood for our country faced excruciating and enduring torture in the face of war, and

who spent over five years of his life in a faraway land trapped in a squalid, hellish prison, said this about our country at age 81: "I believe in America. I believe in its people . . . I am not a pessimist about the future. I still think we're a shining city on a hill."

Surely if Senator McCain still believed in American exceptionalism, after all, he had seen and experienced, so can we. And as he did, we can stand up for our values both at home and across the globe, fight for what is right and true, and look toward a tomorrow that is better because of the course we chart here in America.

The road to a more perfect

union is inevitably paved with the imperfect vehicles that are ourselves. We'll continue to make mistakes, and from time to time, will veer off the path. We might even feel lost. But as Senator McCain showed us, if we stay authentic to who we are, stand firm for and remember what is right—even in the toughest of times—the world will be a better place.

Thank you, Senator McCain, for a lifetime of service to your country.

Rick Ingram
New York

Rick Ingram is a graduate of Mountain Heritage High School now practicing law in New York City.

Be careful what you believe & who you believe

I have had my own Industrial Design consulting business for 56 years with very large clients like The Tampa International Airport and a 700-bed hospital in Chattanooga, TN. The research I have had to do had to come up with the very best answers and the forecasting I had to do was for 15 or more years into the future. We all have to research in effect for making decisions that we use in our personal and family life. I have been trying to inform people about the Grand Solar Minimum and probably most people here in Yancey County do not believe me. All the things that I have predicted about what to expect have been coming true like much more cloudy & rainy weather, more volcanic eruptions, more earthquakes and weather getting cooler. The news is reporting these constantly. The UN and the DNC have been vigorously promoting Climate Change caused by adding more CO2 to

the atmosphere. CO2 was chosen as the primary greenhouse gas, not because it is the most powerful, clouds are 95%, but because if you inhibit people from producing it, you control energy and food production. The Grand Solar Minimum is now proving that the sun alone controls our climate and as it gets bitter cold, adding more CO2 will do nothing to make it less cold.

What the DNC is doing is promoting One World Government by limiting our energy and how well plants grow. That has had a negative effect on our economy and will cause those who believe the DNC, not to prepare for this devastating cold chaotic weather ahead for the next 40 or more years. For all of you wanting to get Donald Trump out of office, your wish will come true in 2020 because the DNC plans to solve the financial problems of the Millennials by promising to forgive their debts, free college

education and a form of socialist government. This will buy their votes and they form the biggest voting group in the country.

Our government is living on borrowed money and our creditors are ready to stop loaning us more money. A socialist government is not sustainable and what seems wonderful at first will collapse into another Venezuela and everyone suffers. I looked at the research on this subject, produced by Stansberry Research, that is a nonpartisan financial forecasting company. They are extremely trustworthy and reliable.

If you are a Democrat, it is very important for you to find out what the DNC truly plans and see if you agree with them today. What do they have other than hating Trump?

Things have been changing rapidly with their goals moving far more left, you need to keep up with it.

Joe Maxwell
Burnsville, NC

Reader encourages voters to get involved this election

As the grandchild of immigrants who fled Italy to escape the terrible poverty and the rise of fascism in the early 1900's, I was raised to value the opportunities here in America that my grandparents never had growing up: free public education, a social safety network that protected the elderly, impoverished and disabled and above all, the democratic rights and responsibilities that come with American citizenship.

In today's world, many people don't get to vote and are subject to undemocratic, totalitarian regimes. They would give anything to have even an imperfect democratic government such as in the United States. This

November, we have the chance to participate in this democratic process with our votes. Voting is the opportunity that every American citizen has to express their hopes and dreams for our country.

Many people feel that their voice, their vote, doesn't really matter. There are certainly challenges and imperfections in our electoral system. However, I believe we Can use our votes and our activism to make a difference in our country. Most of us share the same values and care about the greater good for our children, our community, and our world.

The greater the turnout for elections, the stronger our

collective voice is to manifest these values.

I encourage you to register, educate yourself on the local and national issues, learn about the various people running for office and then vote!

Here are some dates and information sources to help you be an empowered citizen whose voice DOES count!

Oct. 12-5 p.m. Deadline for voter registration- Oct. 17-One-stop (Early & Absentee) Voting begins-Oct. 30-Deadline to request Absentee Voting ballot-Nov. 3 at 1 p.m. One-stop (Early & Absentee) Voting ends Nov. 6 -Election Day.

Jade Pierce
Burnsville

A Neglected Commandment

"For the Bible tells me so . . ."

By Rev. Michael Lamm
What things would you consider to be Christian virtues? What attitudes, what actions? Galatians 5:22-23, Timothy 6:11, and 2 Peter 1:5-7 list qualities such as kindness, perseverance, peace, mutual affection, and love. Today, we will consider a virtue that we almost never put on a list of Christian virtues - hospitality. Oh, we think of hospitality as a social grace, a pleasant sort of thing that kind of lubricates relationships with other people. We probably wouldn't rank it high enough to call it a virtue, and certainly not high enough to call it a commandment.

Hospitality, in the strictest sense, is about how we treat a guest. Often, hospitality involves food, a place to sleep, and congenial conversation. The focus isn't on our wants and needs, but on the contentment, and as we will find out, even the safety, of our guests. Let's look at scripture!

In the epistle to Titus we're told that our church leaders should have several virtues, and among them should be hospitality. Titus 1:7-8 "Since an over-

seer manages God's household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. 8 Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined." The same message is also found in 1 Timothy 3:2. "Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach."

But the charge to be hospitable doesn't apply only to leaders of the church. In Paul's letter to the Romans (12:10-13) "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. . . . Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality." Paul tells all the members of the church in Rome to practice hospitality.

John writes about hospitality to fellow Christians who are travelers and missionaries. 3 John 1: 5,7-8 "Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers and sisters, even though they are strangers to you. It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiv-

ing no help from the pagans. We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth.

In Isaiah 58:1-7 the prophet is preaching a message the people need to hear. They've been fasting and they've bowed low in sackcloth and ashes, but they complain that God hasn't paid any attention. The prophet delivers God's response, telling them that they have been seeking their own pleasure, they oppress their workers, and they get into fights. In short, they've been going through the motions of fasting and humility, they've been going through the motions of worshipping, but their minds and their lives have been all about their own selfish desires, their personal gain, and getting their own way by force. Then God, speaking through Isaiah, says "Is not this the kind of fasting I have

Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles on various Bible topics that are relevant in today's culture.

Continued on page 7

Times Journal
23 North Main Street, Burnsville, NC 28714
Telephone: (828) 962-3120 / Fax: (828) 962-9704
Web: www.yanceytimesjournal.com
Email: editor@yanceytimesjournal.com
Advertising: advertising@yanceytimesjournal.com

Editor/Advertising Manager — Pat Hensel
Editor — David Caldwell
Business Manager/Advertising — Anne Hilde
Office Manager/Circulation — Anita Strigg
Distribution — Bill Wrenn

The Yancey County Times Journal is published weekly for the citizens of Yancey County and surrounding counties. Our goal is to provide quality, readable, community-oriented newspapers that you, our readers, can proud of. We will remain true to our mission, integrity, and service to our community, providing the facts, opinions and commentary you need to know. — President Pat Hensel, Anne Hilde — Editor

The Yancey County Times Journal is published weekly for the citizens of Yancey County and surrounding counties. Our goal is to provide quality, readable, community-oriented newspapers that you, our readers, can proud of. We will remain true to our mission, integrity, and service to our community, providing the facts, opinions and commentary you need to know. — President Pat Hensel, Anne Hilde — Editor