

Mission trust isn't being built by 'your neighbors'

Your Turn

Bob Scott
Guest columnist

In her role as Chair of the Dogwood Health Trust, Janice Brumit's guest column on Dec. 30 stated that "The Trust is being formed by your neighbors who are volunteering their time and good will. It is an evolution... one from which all Western North Carolinians will benefit. Together we can build something truly transformational."

As the Mayor of Franklin, which has

one of Mission's Hospitals (Angel Medical Center), I have yet to have anyone from HCA meet with our residents to discuss the sale or the Trust.

There has been a lack of transparency in this proposed sale and formation of the Trust. There is no local representation on the Trust from Macon County and Franklin. There have been "listening" sessions which I was not invited to and I understand was closed to the media (In Cherokee).

There has been little effort to have any local representation who will be

directly impacted by this Trust... such as low income, underserved and diverse persons...the same people the Trust says it will benefit. So I am not sure there is any togetherness in the formation of this Trust.

We have unanswered questions about HCA building a "replacement" hospital in Franklin, and what will happen to the present facility. I have yet to be assured that the quality and current services will continue. We have doctors leaving the area. Our labor and delivery unit was closed.

We stand to have a severe economic and social impact from the sale of a non-profit hospital (Angel) to a for profit HCA Hospital.

Mission seems to be interested only in talking with like-minded people in favor of the sale.

HCA is posting full-color, full-page advertisements in the local media promoting the sale.

Why will HCA not hold public meetings to answer some of these questions and why has the Dogwood Health Trust remained aloof from the very people it says will benefit from the formation of this Trust? From my viewpoint I see little evidence that the Trust is being formed "by your neighbors..."

From my position in the community, I see just the opposite. I see the Trust as Mission and HCA dominated.

Bob Scott is the Mayor of the Town of Franklin.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The real owners of Mission Health

I commend ACT for the coverage of the Mission-HCA proposal. And I believe Attorney General Josh Stein is making an earnest effort to assess the proposed sale.

What I don't understand however, is why no one has commissioned a scientifically valid public opinion poll to gather a clear view of the people in Western North Carolina. Obviously the government entities, organizations, agencies, and individuals who will benefit from the deal have made their voices heard. But most people do not believe their opinions will make a difference and have not commented. Only a well-constructed, professionally-conducted public opinion poll will inform policy-makers of the predominant view of the local population.

I strongly encourage the Asheville City Council and the Buncombe County Commission to call for a pause in the sale process and commission a poll to be conducted on the subject by a credible, non-partisan agency. We should not forget who the real "owners" of the Mission Hospital System are.

David Westling, Fletcher

Asheville symphony is worth celebrating

On New Years Eve, I had the pleasure of attending the Asheville Symphony Orchestra's New Year's celebration. This was not the usual concert, but one designed for people who do not regularly attend their concerts. It consisted of a number of short classical pieces familiar to most non-concert goers, with acrobats who entertained, many in time with the music, in the front of the orchestra's players.

What was really interesting, and I think the concept of the concert, was that about 60 percent of the audience consisted of non-concert going people, many with children. The credit for this special concert goes to the Executive Director David Whitehill and the new Music Director Darko Butorac. I wish to congratulate both for a great plan and execution of the concert, and I hope many of the audience will have found that classical music concerts are worth attending.

Dan Pinciu, Asheville

Better use for a city asset

I am writing to suggest the city explore developing the Asheville Public Works Facility on Charlotte Street into multifamily buildings and townhouses. This is a very large, flat parcel of land used as garages for city vehicles. Given its location this is a very poor use of a valuable city asset.

The property is right up against the edge of downtown and is an easy walk



to government and businesses downtown.

The property has excellent access to Charlotte Street and the interstates. It is easy to identify many other industrial sites close to downtown where a public garage and maintenance facility could be relocated. The change would put valuable property on the tax rolls.

More importantly it would provide much needed affordable housing for moderate income works such as teachers, police, firemen and hospitality workers.

Tim Robinson, Asheville

We're only getting started

And so we begin 2019 with President Trump exclaiming the need for the country to build a wall. And we look back remembering President Reagan telling Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the walls.

The question therefore becomes what is the purpose of such walls. Do walls in fact make good neighbors? Or do they merely antagonize political differences? It appears then that they can do both. This to suggest that walls obviously do not provide answers to substantive differences.

But they can serve as markers indicating a particular position. In this way, they are best understood as simply the starting points of meaningful dialogue and problem resolution.

All this to remind us that our position on an issue may best be regarded as the beginning and not the necessary end.

Jim DeLeo, Asheville

It ain't about the wall

It ain't about the wall; it's about Trump and his daily lies.

It's about trying to kill Obamacare. It's about separating migrant toddlers from their families. It's about pulling out of the Paris climate accord. It's about pretending to believe Putin rather than our own intelligence agencies. It's about sending our troops to the Mexican border.

It's about defending white supremacists. It's about calling the press the enemy of the people. It's about hiding tax returns. It's about being a lifetime creep. It's about our shame, but for sure, it ain't

about the wall!

Fran Ghee Ross, Asheville

Of historic walls and men

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Jim DeLeo, Ph.D., Hendersonville

The violets will still show up in the spring

Thanks fellow readers for all the good information you have shared, books recommended and truth. Thanks to Phillip Price and David Wilson Brown for trying to bring a new level of representation to District 10 and 11.

So, we brought in lights to ease the longest night, we celebrated (hopefully) with family and friends, and practiced our traditions, whatever they may be.

May I suggest visiting the website for the Northern Jaguar Project, it has some great information regarding species that would be impacted by a wall on our southern border. Here is an idea. Build a giant wall around Mar-a-Lago, have Mr. Limbaugh be the outer gatekeeper, have Steven Miller be the inner gatekeeper. Ann Coulter and Laura Ingraham could write the authorized entry numbers on the arms of visitors. Sean Hannity could be the tour guide, show off the elephant trophy room, the asbestos solarium, and the unlined coal ash pit in the back. The Trump-Fox Party could ferry people out to the oil rig, right offshore. Maybe Scott

Pruitt could come back on to be sure there is plenty of mercury released into the atmosphere.

Happy New Year; it helps to remember that underground as we speak the violets are planning to show up in the spring.

Regina N. Rhyne, Fairview

A quandary for the symphony

Question to the Asheville Symphony Orchestra. Next New Years Eve, how are you going to top this years New Years Eve performance? A truly outstanding performance. Well done! You have a real challenge before you.

Tom Balsanek, Weaverville

Cheers to conservatives who have spines

Give thanks and great joy to the Baby New Year and incoming Sen. Mitt Romney (R-Utah). Coming from a conservative state he has the courage to stand up and say The Emperor Has no Clothes. In fact the Emperor is stark naked. Romney may be doing a kamikaze act and be shunned by some of his in-denial fellows in the GOP senate, notably by that half witted senate leader from my home state of Kentucky. But he seems to have broad shoulders and the ability to come smiling through the barrage of negative tweets.

Doug Walker, Asheville

Time for Burr and Tillis to step up

This is an open letter to Senators Burr and Tillis and Representatives Henry and Meadows. It is a plea, as well as a reprimand.

Gentlemen, I am nearing 68 years old and spent about 50 years of my working life in the public and private sectors. Five of those years as an active duty Air Force officer. It is past time for you gentlemen to look in the mirror and take stock of your own character. You are allowing a punk and bully President to use good Americans as pawns in his games.

If you do nothing you will pay a price in the next elections and history will note your lack of courage and character when the country needed it most.

Robert James, Arden

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