

OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

617 N. LIBERTY STREET
336-722-8624
WWW.WSCHRONICLE.COM



ERNEST H. PITT Publisher/Co-Founder
DONNA ROGERS Managing Editor
ELAINE PITT Business Manager

Our Mission

The Chronicle is dedicated to serving the residents of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County by giving voice to the voiceless, speaking truth to power, standing for integrity and encouraging open communication and lively debate throughout the community.

Helping others can help our economy, too

Samaritan Ministries opened its new building to the public on Sunday for tours. Those who went on tours of the facility were shown impressive new features and much more space for several facets of the building, which holds 80 beds for homeless men.

These men, for whatever reason, are homeless. Some of the men might have lost their jobs or were in the military and couldn't find jobs in civilian life. That could render people homeless. Without the independence a job can bring, many people lose their homes, their automobiles and even their families.

Jobs are important to people's well-being. It's easy to become depressed without a job. This depression can lead to destruction of self or of others.

Jobs are important to the economy, too. The more people are working, the more people are contributing to the economy by spending money on housing, food, clothing and other necessities. People with jobs also pay taxes.

Jobs are the linchpin that holds lives together. Jobs allow people to feed their families and pay for their homes so that they won't become homeless.

Fortunately for some homeless people, organizations are helping them get back on their feet. They are providing stopgap measures until they can get jobs and provide for themselves, and for others too. Whole Man Ministries is another organization that is providing homes for the homeless — veterans — and some low-income families. This organization, Samaritan Ministries and others like them make sure that some people without basic necessities have them.

But those organizations and others like them need help to do their work. They need money and volunteers to help them fill a void that might not otherwise be filled in Winston-Salem. They seek help to help others.

The organizations have received help from large donors and grants. Samaritan Ministries received help from a housing fund agency. Whole Man Ministries received help from several businesses. These donors recognize the importance of what these organizations are doing.

And volunteers help keep their organizations going.

Willis Miller, assistant director at Samaritan Ministries, spoke highly of his organization's volunteers on Sunday.

"We have the best volunteers in Winston-Salem and the state of North Carolina," he said. "I'm not bragging; I know that for a fact!"

While some people can't volunteer to help the organizations, many more can give money, which usually is tax-deductible.

Giving of time and money is helping the economy. Eighty men are not living on the street as a burden to public safety agencies. They are encouraged to be working toward being contributing citizens to the Winston-Salem community. Just imagine if that happens. People's lives will be changed, and money will be flowing into the economy.

Samaritan Ministries has portions of Scripture from the Bible on the donor wall of its new building. The words are from Matthew 25:35 — "for I was hungry and you gave me food ... I was a stranger and you took me in."

Helping an organization that helps others is good for the economy, and will probably be good for the soul, too.



BLACK LIVES MATTER?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Where is leadership from Roy Cooper?

To the Editor:
Where was the chief law enforcement officer of this state, Attorney General Roy Cooper, before the North Charleston [S.C.] shooting? Where was Roy Cooper on body cameras during the Ferguson and Eric Garner tragedies?

In December 2014, when it was not popular to call for police video body cameras, I sent a letter to Gov. Pat McCrory calling upon him to join me in seeking legislative support for requiring local law enforcement officers to wear body cameras as they carry out their official duties. This occurred at a tenuous time when demonstrations and emotions were very heated and high.



Spaulding

Attorney General Roy Cooper remained politically timid, shy and sileft. As usual, he offered no leadership or constructive solutions to address a major problem for so many minorities and citizens in North Carolina and across this country.



Cooper

Now after an obvious video showing in North Charleston, Roy Cooper wants to finally show up and support the use of body cameras in North Carolina. He has been a day late and a dollar short for so long when it comes to the need for courageous leadership.

If Roy Cooper is proving he cannot lead as Attorney General, then how can we trust his leadership as Governor?

Ken Spaulding,
Durham, N.C.
Democrat,
North Carolina
gubernatorial candidate



PETA and possums

To the Editor:

House Bill 574 — which would decriminalize cruelty to opossums and nullify every other law relating to opossums in North Carolina between Dec. 29 and Jan. 2 each year — makes a mockery of the legal system and puts animals in danger.

This bill caters to the interests of one man — the organizer of Clay County's New Year's Eve "Opossum Drop." It would allow him to continue terrorizing opossums by capturing them, confining them in a tiny box, dangling them above a rowdy crowd, and bombarding them with loud music and fireworks. Wildlife experts warn that the stress of such abuse can be fatal to these shy animals.

If passed, this bill would also grant anyone in North Carolina carte blanche to torture, dismember or otherwise abuse and kill opossums during that time period.

A similar law was passed last year, but PETA's legal challenge ensured that no live opossum was tormented at last year's Opossum Drop, and it is expected that the law will be permanently struck down by the court. But now, the sponsors of HB 574 are trying to replace one unconstitutional law with another.

I urge readers to ask their state representatives to oppose this shameful bill today. Visit www.PETA.org to learn more.

Amy Elizabeth, Writer
The PETA Foundation
Black Mountain, N.C., branch

EDITOR'S NOTE: On the website of the organizer of Clay County's New Year's Eve "Opossum Drop," it states: "We just want to let you know that we do ABSOLUTELY NOTHING to harm the 'possum. We celebrate in honor of this marsupial!"

A personal plea for action

To the Editor:

My name is Charles R. Peet. I reside in Troutman, N.C. and I am a career Army veteran who filed a claim for PTSD in the year 1990. This claim has been active since that time. Eventually I sought legal counsel with the case and after several attempts, my claim was awarded. This took a long time in which my lawyer had to take the case to a Supreme Court Judge in Washington, D.C.

My dilemma is that I've never been compensated for this case. I have made numerous trips to the Veteran's Administration inquiring about the matter. I have been given the run-around every time. Several employees at the VA in Winston-Salem told me that African-Americans have a hard time getting compensated, whereas whites don't seem to have as much trouble.

I even went as far as to write to Senator Kay Hagan and Congressman Stanley Purple about this matter. They also were given little help. They were told that my paperwork was on the desk at the Finance Department. This led me to believe that my case was in the process of being settled ... to date nothing has happened.

On my visit to the VA in Winston-Salem, the man that was helping me said that I was paid retroactive payments for my four dependents. The amount that he showed me were \$280 and \$800. I disputed the \$800 payment. I was told by the Salisbury, N.C. Veteran's Administration prosthetics department that the \$800 payment was my yearly clothing allowance.

The information that he gave to me was from an employee. I have made several attempts to speak with her to no avail. How can \$280 be retroactive pay to four dependent children with a claim that has been running since 1990?

Charles R. Peet, Army Retired



Visitors look at the wall of donors at the new Samaritan Ministries building on Sunday, April 12.

We Welcome Your Feedback

Submit letters and guest columns to letters@wschronicle.com before 5 p.m. Friday for the next week's publication date.

Letters intended for publication should be addressed "Letters to the Editor" and include your name, address, phone number and email address. Please keep letters to 350 words or less.

If you are writing a guest column, please include a photo of yourself, your name, address, phone number, and email address. Please keep guest columns to 550 words or less. Letters and columns can also be mailed or dropped off at W-S Chronicle, 617 N. Liberty St., W-S, NC, 27101; or sent via our

website, www.wschronicle.com.

We reserve the right to edit any item submitted for clarity or brevity and determine when and where material will be used.

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