

OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

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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.



Speak out now as lawmakers reconfigure districts

The grand solar eclipse is over. All the excitement has come and gone. The money made on people wanting to see and commemorate the hugely popular event is in the pockets of many.

The eclipse excitement took away some of the luster from the Charlottesville, Virginia, fatal event in which a woman was killed and two state police officers in a helicopter crashed and died as white supremacists fought with peaceful marchers. Now, nationwide and in Winston-Salem, people are having vigils and memorial services, praying for peace and love and commemorating the slain woman, who was killed when a car crashed into a crowd in Charlottesville.

In Winston-Salem, attention has centered around the statue saluting Confederates, as in the Civil War. It has been defaced and celebrated and prayers for peace and love have drifted across the street from it.

This outpouring of emotion is a huge contrast to the little attention paid to the statue a little over two years ago, when The Chronicle reported about that same Confederate statue at the corner of Liberty and West Fourth streets. It sits beside the former Forsyth County Courthouse, where it's been since it was erected in 1905.

There was no peep about the statue in July 2015 when The Chronicle reported that the local United Daughters of the Confederacy James B. Gordon Chapter, who erected the statue more than a century ago, still owned it.

There was no peep in 2015 when The Chronicle reported that state lawmakers were about to make a state law that would bar local governments from removing any Confederate monuments and symbols. This action came after South Carolina removed the Confederate flag from the top of the State House in Columbia. That action came about after nine church folk were killed in Charleston, S.C., by a man who revered the Confederate flag and white supremacy.

In 2015, the GOP General Assembly majority proceeded to pass the bill that would take away more authority from local governments and shield statues that now many people want moved.

The lesson here is that people need to keep abreast of what is happening in their governments and their world. It's easier to stop something before it starts. Now there are cries to repeal the law that protects Confederate statues on public property. Now people want to figure out how to move the Confederate statue in Winston-Salem from private property.

The GOP-led General Assembly is now working to reconfigure its senatorial and representative districts. Speak up now about this action so that you won't have to wish you had months or years from now.

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 whether material will be used.

We welcome your comments at our website.

Also, go to our Facebook page to comment. We are at facebook.com/WSChronicle.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Humanity overcomes inhumanity

To the Editor:

While the country that gave birth to my soul searches for answers to a barbaric tragedy which caused the lives of three innocent citizens and serious injury to many more, I am fortunate to be comforting our 10th grandchild and wondering how to respond.

My instincts recall how my paternal grandfather protected me as a child whenever danger was in the community. Even then, humanity overcame inhumanity. The threats then were few. The threats now are far more frequent and the need for individual responsibility is paramount.

The ideas that founded this country included a declaration of the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That duty to protect the rights of the common citizen falls upon every citizen today. All of us are individually responsible to honor the liberties that define the

best of the dreams of our ancestors.

My grandfather was one of those ancestors. He lived during the horrors of Jim Crow, lynchings and institutional racism. Yet he found the time to protect his grandson and encourage him to be something.

We are the answer to our ancestors' prayers. We must speak up, write, work and organize to keep answering our ancestors' prayers.

What happened in Virginia is an example of inhumanity. I am convinced that humanity will overcome inhumanity again.

Fleming El-Amin
Winston-Salem

Note: Fleming El-Amin is a member of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners.

To the Editor:

As a teacher, I would have to give the General Assembly an A for political gerrymandering and an F for a fair election and map drawing process.

Just like we need to return our public school system to the beacon it once was, we should demand and expect more when it comes to creating fair districts and elections.

Mark Jewell, President
N.C. Association of Educators
Raleigh

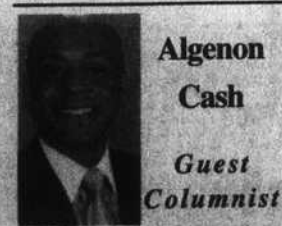
Note: This afternoon [Tuesday, Aug. 22], NCAE President Mark Jewell submitted written comments to the General Assembly's Select Committee on Redistricting as part of its public input and public hearing process.

NCAE supports the creation of an independent redistricting commission.

NCAE is the state's largest education advocacy organization for public school employees and represents active, retired, and student members.

Teachers group calls for fair legislative districts

Economic and national security rely on American energy independence



Algenon Cash
Guest Columnist

Every year, American sends billions of dollars to countries engulfed in turmoil and populated by people who clearly don't like us or the values that are so important to our way of life. These countries threaten our national and fiscal security by exploiting our growing demand for energy and increasing reliance on their oil resources to feed that demand.

Undoubtedly, we understand the expansion of domestic energy production can significantly boost jobs, grow our economy, and reduce burgeoning federal deficits - but more homegrown energy can also improve national security.

World petroleum consumption is around 84 mil-

lion barrels a day and the United States consumes about 25 percent of that production, which makes us the Number One consuming country in the world. Over 2 million barrels a day are imported from countries that have expressed disdain for America - these are places such as Venezuela and the Middle East.

Energy is at the center of life for most American families and business owners; it directly or indirectly drives the cost of gas, food, and utilities. Relying on countries that are clearly not our allies places American strategic interests in jeopardy.

Emerging technology in energy exploration is creating new options for domestic production and bringing forth the possibility that America can achieve energy independence. Technologies such as horizontal drilling is helping oil companies to restart what they once thought were exhausted oil wells and its largely responsible for lifting U.S.

oil production 25 percent since 2008, which has reduced the cost of oil imports by \$75 billion. The careful expansion of offshore oil exploration along the Atlantic Coast could further improve output to meet growing energy demand.

Other technologies such as hydraulic fracturing have been around 60 years; a process that allows energy production companies to extract natural gas from shale developments, higher oil costs is making the process more cost efficient.

The United States is estimated to have enough natural gas to meet 100 percent of current domestic demand for at least 90 years and shale gas accounts for 10 percent of the overall U.S. energy supply. The unprecedented growth of shale gas will save Americans from spending \$100 billion on importing liquefied natural gas and deeply incentivize companies to remain in the country instead of searching for lower energy cost

countries to operate.

The 1973 oil crisis motivated President Jimmy Carter to consolidate energy policy into the U.S. Department of Energy in 1977. The department was given one simple mission - reduce America's reliance on foreign oil.

They were given a budget of \$5 billion in the first year, under the current administration; DOE's budget has ballooned to \$25 billion. Are we any less reliant on foreign oil?

The only way to achieve that coveted goal is to increase domestic production, which requires less burdensome regulations so that we can access more homegrown energy assets.

Algenon Cash is the managing director of Wharton Gladden & Company, an investment banking firm, he is also a national spokesperson for the oil and natural gas industry. Reach him at acash@whartongladden.com.