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National Guard soldiers find a loving community during mission to Bethel

October 8, 2024 | Watauga Democrat, The (Boone, NC) Author: Moss Brennan moss.brennan@wataugademocrat.com| Section: Local | 381 Words OpenURL Link

BETHEL — While the National Guard soldiers stationed at Bethel Baptist Church had mentally prepared for the worst, they found a loving community and new lifelong friends instead.

Six soldiers have been stationed at the church in the Bethel community to help run the showers, ADA toilets, and donations that the church has received to give to those in need.

This deployment was SSG Tameisha Sumpter's fourth set of state active duty orders.

"This is my favorite set of state active duty," Sumpter said. "Though there was a lot of destruction, these guys are so welcoming. Everyone kept a positive spirit, and they made it easy for us to do our job."

She said that on the first day in the Bethel community, they took food up the mountain to elderly community members who could not get out. Now at the church, they helped set up the mobile showers and toilets that those in the community without power can utilize.

"Honestly, it's just a lot of love in here, man. Like, I feel like I'm at home," Sumpter said. "I know we're here for disaster relief, but it felt like a cookout, like a family reunion out here. All the kids are having a good time with my soldiers. I couldn't imagine a better place to be. There's a lot of destruction in other places, and we were all nervous about coming here and what we were going to see. And we're just glad that we're able to help in whatever way that we could."

Her soldiers feel the same way, especially when they see how the community is responding.

"They're full of joy, they're helping each other out. They're even making sure the soldiers here are being well taken care of," SPC David Reyes said. "It's actually really amazing. I'm glad to have been able to come to this community."

Sumpter also sang at the church's first service since Hurricane Helene tore through the High Country.

"I've been singing since I was a kid. In the midst of things, I sing to keep myself calm," Sumpter said. "Honestly, everywhere I go, I'm singing. It lifts spirits."

She said one of the church members would "call her about once a week" if Sumpter didn't call her. Sumpter plans to come back and visit.

"We have made some lifelong friends," Sumpter said.

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Moss Brennan moss.brennan@wataugademocrat.com, 'National Guard soldiers find a loving community during mission to Bethel', *Watauga Democrat, The*(online), 8 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C160F713A8BAE8>



Mountaineer home games currently in limbo, pondering options

October 8, 2024 | Watauga Democrat, The (Boone, NC) Author: Zach Colburn | Section: Sports | 867 Words OpenURL Link

BOONE—As Appalachian State University's athletics have resumed, the question is becoming whether it will host games on campus for the remainder of the fall.

The university's Strategic Communications department stated on Monday that no true home events will take place as long as students are not on campus. They also stated that everything is "fluid at the moment" regarding scheduling.

Classes are currently canceled through Oct. 16, which also includes the school's Fall Break.

Doug Gillin has prioritized Helping Mountaineer student-athletes find housing after Hurricane Helene's flooding over the past week, but the Appalachian State Director of Athletics is also trying to determine whether playing home games at Kidd Brewer Stadium is still an option this fall.

According to Gillin, there was no damage to the playing surface, but says there's a leak in the press box, which sits on the seventh floor of the Mark Ricks Athletic Complex, and some of the suites were soaked.

"Certainly our main focus right now and has been, since the get-go, the health and safety of our student-athletes," Gillin said on Appalachian State's pregame show this past Saturday. "And then communication is really big. You know, we want to make sure we're communicating to parents and coaches."

The good news for Gillin and the Mountaineers is they have some time to work with, but not a lot.

After the Oct. 5 game at Marshall University, the Mountaineers are scheduled to travel to the University of Louisiana in Lafayette this coming Saturday and then have their open week on Oct. 19.

Appalachian State is slated to host Georgia State on Oct. 26 and welcome Old Dominion the following Saturday. The Mountaineers' final home regular season game is scheduled for Nov. 23 against James Madison (there's also potential to host the Sun Belt Conference championship in early December).

"When you start thinking about playing a football game, there's a lot that goes around it when you're in active recovery and relief operation," Gillin said. "Some of our competitions like volleyball, we can't see the competition this week. We're looking at options, whether we can or can't play football on the 26th in Boone. We want to make sure that we're very cognizant of what our community needs and that we're additive in that regard. I think communication and safety is really the two things that we're really trying to focus on."

If the Mountaineers can't host the Panthers at Kidd Brewer, Gillin stated that there has been conversations with both Wake Forest University and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte about possibly playing the remainder of their home schedule at one of those schools.

In terms of availability, it could work.

On the Saturdays that Appalachian State is scheduled to host, it could possibly play at Allegacy Federal Credit Union Stadium since the Demon Deacons play at Stanford and Miami on Oct. 26 and Nov. 23, respectively. Wake Forest has its bye on Nov. 2.

As for Jerry Richardson Stadium, home of the 49ers, UNCC travels to Memphis on Oct. 26 but does host Tulane on

Oct. 31, which is a Thursday night game. The 49ers travel to Florida Atlantic on Nov. 23.

"I would love to play here in Boone if we could, but we're going to do what's best for Watauga County and Boone, North Carolina," Appalachian State head football coach Shawn Clark said during Monday morning's press conference. "If that's to play here, we'll play here; if that's to play somewhere else, we'll play somewhere else."

Other Appalachian athletic programs

In addition to Kidd Brewer Stadium, the Holmes Convocation Center is currently serving as a Red Cross emergency shelter.

The facility is also the home court for the volleyball team.

Other athletic programs, such as women's soccer and women's field hockey, have already relocated some home matches.

Appalachian State volleyball had its matches with Louisiana, which were scheduled for this past weekend, canceled.

The Lady Mountaineers, who travel to Old Dominion this coming Friday and Saturday, still have three home matchups left on their schedule, starting with Georgia Southern on Oct. 18 and 19. They also have home matches scheduled against Coastal Carolina (Oct. 24-25) and Marshall (Nov. 8 and 9).

The Lady Mountaineer field hockey team recently played a pair of matches at Davidson College and the USA Field Hockey field on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

After its match at Kent State on Friday night, Appalachian State still has four home matches on the schedule at the Dr. Jan C. Watson Field, starting on. Oct. 13 against the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Home matches are also slated against Ball State (Oct. 18), Longwood (Oct. 25) and Queens (Nov. 1).

Appalachian women's soccer tied Georgia State on Friday night in a home match moved to Queens University and the Queens Sports Complex.

The Lady Mountaineers match against Coastal Carolina on Thursday has been relocated to Charlotte. The contest will be played at Queens, and the kickoff will be set for noon.

No word on whether the Lady Mountaineers will be able to host matches at the Ted Mackorell Soccer Complex the remainder of the Fall.

In addition, App State still has home matches left to play against Arkansas State (Oct. 20), which was recently rescheduled, Texas State (Oct. 27), and Old Dominion (Oct. 31).

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Zach Colburn, 'Mountaineer home games currently in limbo, pondering options', *Watauga Democrat, The*(online), 8 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C160F724031208



Misinformation, hoaxes cloud storm recovery - After the deluge, the lies: Misinformation and hoaxes about Helene cloud the recovery

October 8, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC)

Author: DAVID KLEPPER Associated Press | Section: A | 989 Words

Page: 2 OpenURL Link

WASHINGTON - The facts emerging from Hurricane Helene's destruction are heartrending: Businesses and homes destroyed, whole communities nearly wiped out, hundreds of lives lost, hundreds of people missing.

Yet this devastation and despair is not enough for the extremist groups, disinformation agents, hucksters and politicians who are exploiting the disaster to spread false claims and conspiracy theories about it and the government's response.

According to Republican former President Donald Trump, the federal government is intentionally withholding aid to Republican disaster victims. Far-right extremist groups warn on social media that officials plan to bulldoze affected communities and seize the land from residents. A tale straight from science fiction asserts that Washington used weather-control technology to steer Helene toward Republican voters in order to tilt the presidential election toward Democratic nominee Kamala Harris.

The claims, according to experts and local officials dealing with disaster response, say less about the reality of the widespread damage from Helene than they do about America's fractured politics and the fear and distrust shadowing an election year marked by assassination attempts and escalating global tension.

As rescue work continues and authorities try to separate fact from fiction, the conspiracy theories are not helping. Elected leaders from both parties have had to set the record straight and urge people not to give into fear and rumor.

"If everyone could maybe please put aside the hate for a bit and pitch in to help, that would be great," posted Glenn Jacobs, the retired professional wrestler known as Kane, who is now the Republican mayor of Knox County, Tennessee. His post was intended to rebut rumors that workers from the Federal Emergency Management Agency were seizing relief supplies from private citizens.

Many of the conspiracy theories focus on hard-hit North Carolina, a state key to winning the White House.

Rumors circulated that FEMA was raiding storm donations and withholding body bags, forcing hospitals in the state to stack the bodies of victims. One claim suggested federal authorities would condemn the entire town of Chimney Rock and prohibit resettlement in order to commandeer a valuable lithium mine nearby.

Elon Musk, owner of Tesla, X and SpaceX, posted that private relief flights to North Carolina were being blocked by the Federal Aviation Administration, a claim Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg dismissed as false.

Despite the tradition of Democrats and Republicans putting aside politics for disaster response, many conspiracy theories suggest Democrats such as President Joe Biden or North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper are intentionally withholding aid from Republicans. Trump pushed the claim, as has North Carolina's lieutenant governor, Mark Robinson, the embattled GOP nominee for governor.

"They're being treated very badly in the Republican areas," Trump told Fox News, ignoring reports and photo and video evidence of recovery efforts underway throughout the region. "They're not getting water, they're not getting anything."

Conspiracy theorist Alex Jones endorsed Trump's fact-free allegation. Jones, founder of InfoWars, popularized the idea that the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Connecticut that killed 20 children in 2012 was faked.

"Exclusive: Victims of Hurricane Helene Confirm The Federal Government is Purposely Blocking Rescuers and Stealing Aid In an Attempt to Keep Deep Red Areas From Voting," Jones posted Thursday on X.

State-run media and disinformation campaigns run by China and Russia amplified false and misleading claims about the response to the storm. Both countries used social media and state news stories to criticize responses to past U.S. natural disasters, part of a larger effort to stoke division and distrust among Americans.

State and local officials from both parties condemned the conspiracy theories as rumors, saying the focus should be on recovery, not political division and hearsay.

Responding to the hoaxes is taking up time that should go toward assisting victims, said North Carolina state Sen. Kevin Corbin, a Republican who urged his constituents not to give in to hoaxes.

"Friends can I ask a small favor?" Corbin posted Thursday on Facebook. "Will you all help STOP this conspiracy theory junk that is floating all over Facebook and the internet ... Please don't let these crazy stories consume you."

After Robinson, the GOP candidate for North Carolina governor, posted that state officials had not prepared for the storm, a spokesman for the governor accused Robinson of mounting "an online disinformation campaign." North Carolina officials say the response to Helene is the largest in state history, including thousands of members of the National Guard and other recovery workers, millions of meals, dozens of aircraft and more than 1,000 chainsaws.

Trump has tried to tie the hurricane's aftermath to immigration, a leading issue of his campaign. He falsely claimed that FEMA had run out of money because all of it had gone to programs for undocumented immigrants.

The agency's funding for disaster aid is stretched, but that's due to the many parts of the country dealing with the effects of hurricanes, wildfires and other calamities. Disaster aid is funded separately from other Department of Homeland Security programs that support immigration-related spending.

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Restaurants plan fundraiser for relief efforts - Winston-Salem restaurants plan fundraiser for Helene relief efforts

October 8, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC) Author: Michael Hastings Staff reporter | Section: A | 425 Words Page: 7 OpenURL Link

More than a dozen local restaurants will be raising money to help Hurricane Helene relief efforts in western North Carolina.

A handful of restaurants have loosely organized, pledging to donate profits from either Oct. 8 or 9 to the relief efforts. People can help simply by dining at those restaurants at that time.

Restaurants have individually chosen what organizations they will give their donations to. Many, such as Camino Bakery and The Porch, have said they plan to donate to World Central Kitchen, an international organization that provides fresh meals in response to humanitarian, climate and community crises all over the world.

WCK has been working in the N.C. mountains for more than a week, bringing in 6,200-gallon tanker trucks of fresh water and partnering with local chefs, such as Curate's Katie Button, to provide hot meals and sandwiches to families in need.

Other restaurants, including Six Hundred°, will be donating with Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina, which already has held food drives for western North Carolina, and is collecting donations to provide more food.

"I feel what is needed is money, and moral support - like Winston-Salem has got your back," said Claire Calvin, owner of The Porch, East of Texas, and Alma Mexicana.

"My thought is if a lot of restaurants do it, then there's a public show of support. Just go out to eat - anyone in Winston-Salem can help."

Other participating restaurants and bars include Village Tavern (both locations), Tate's Craft Cocktails, Easy Talk (Wednesday), Slappy's Kitchen, Alma Mexicana, Miss Ora's Kitchen (Wednesday), Sweet Potatoes (Wednesday), Mozelle's Fresh Southern Bistro, DiLisio's, West End Café, Full Moon Oyster Bar, Dough Joe's, Piedmont Aviation Snack Bar and Bygood Coffee.

Restaurants are using a Night Out for North Carolina graphic on social media to advertise their participation, so people can check your favorite restaurant's social media posts to see if they are participating.

People also can make direct donations to help feed people affected by Helene in western North Carolina.

For more information, visit, wck.org or secondharvestnwnc.org.

In addition, the N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association has a lot of information on ways people can help, including donations to the NC Hospitality Workers Relief Fund, which is set up to provide direct assistance to restaurant and other hospitality workers affected by Helene. For more information, visit recovery.ncrla.org.

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Michael Hastings; Staff reporter, 'Restaurants plan fundraiser for relief efforts Winston-Salem restaurants plan fundraiser for Helene relief efforts', *Winston-Salem Journal* (online), 8 Oct 2024 7 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C13F4DD9DE8730>



Helene cast a pall over the Blue Ridge Mountains - Kathleen Parker: Helene cast a pall over the Blue Ridge Mountains

October 8, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC) Section: A| 793 Words Page: 5 OpenURL Link

CAMDEN, S.C. - "Chill" is the word that comes to mind when thinking of Asheville, N.C., the center of Hurricane Helene's devastation. A hub for musicians, artists, writers, chefs, animal lovers and entrepreneurs nestled among the Blue Ridge Mountains at a temperate 2,134-foot elevation, Asheville today is bordering on a nervous breakdown.

So is the Southeast, generally. For generations, the Blue Ridge Mountains have provided a summer refuge for people from all around the Deep South. My family has been among the fortunate who could escape to higher climes during insufferably hot and humid summers. Mornings there were often cool enough to justify building a fire. (This is rarely true now, as the world becomes warmer.)

It seems almost everyone knows someone who lives in "the mountains," and nearly everybody else spends time there. We expect hurricanes and tropical storms to visit our coastline and Lowcountry, but who could have imagined that one could become a threat to towns hundreds of miles from the ocean.

Helene was a tropical storm by the time it reached the Carolinas, but it was still so big and so powerful. Its lashing rain and winds reached South Carolina's Midlands, and people across the region are feeling the storm's pain.

When Mark Edens, a friend and part owner of a popular antiques store here in Camden saw me the day after the storm, he skipped any greeting and went right to, "How bad are you hurting?" His despair was palpable. "You know, I physically live here," he said, "but my soul lives in the mountains. It was just too much. It broke me."

"Soul" is another word that fits the Blue Ridge. Something about the mountains nourishes the soul. It's the cooler air as you climb higher with each turn of the road. It's also the aroma of millions of trees that remind you of Christmas. Some might say when you're in the mountains, you're closer to the angels.

Asheville's fortunate location at the junction of two rivers, the French Broad and the Swannanoa, proved to be its undoing when Helene blew through and the waters rose to depths of massive destruction.

If there were an apocalyptic film named "Helene," the soundtrack would have to be Rhiannon Giddens' "Swannanoa Tunnel." The song, sometimes called "Asheville Junction," was first sung in the late 19th century to the sound of hammers pounding steel. It tells the story of the railroad tracks built by wrongfully imprisoned Black people who were labor for the Western North Carolina Railroad.

Towns along that rail line, including Swannanoa, Black Mountain, Ridgecrest and Old Fort, were almost destroyed by the storm. In Asheville, little was spared - certainly not the River Arts District, a mile-long oasis for artists and collectors that includes galleries for 240 artists and 23 converted warehouses offering art, food, music, breweries and what's understood as the Asheville vibe. Artsy, laid-back, cool and dog-friendly, it's a flannel-and-flip-flops mecca for hikers, mountain bikers, foodies and culture connoisseurs.

One of my favorite haunts was the Marquee, a 50,000-square-foot emporium of fantasy and over-the-top sensory stimulation. Architectural elements, paintings, vintage furniture, jewelry, clothing, olive oil - it's all there. Or was. On one of my frequent visits, I fell in love with a 1950s-era television set that was converted into a terrarium. I'm sorry I didn't buy it. Another time, I broke down and bought a blue Huffy Nel Lusso cruiser bicycle that I was able to ride throughout the gallery. All gone now.

In the immediate wake of the storm, the Asheville vibe was fully engaged, as neighbors and strangers helped one another by any means available. My son, John, who lives in Asheville, saw people going out of their way to share what others needed. But the novelty of shared catastrophe cannot last forever.

"A week later, now that so many have cleared out, the neighbors-helping-neighbors vibe has subsided somewhat," he texted me, "and it just feels like one of the bleakest places I've ever been." I asked him what the area smells like, because the mountains usually smell so fresh and clean.

"Mildew," he said. "It's not so much the smell as the ambiance. It feels like a bomb went off."

Businesses are closed, except the odd gas station or grocery store with lines outside. Many people are going without power and water.

It's hard to imagine how long it will take for the Blue Ridge to recover and rebuild. At least the birds are singing, John tells me. And the bears, who had been displaced by overdevelopment, are back to wandering the neighborhoods and downtown. John saw one walking down his street Thursday morning, probably scouting abandoned houses for leftovers, but otherwise minding his own business.

Chill, it seems, isn't just for people. Let's hope it lasts.

Kathleen Parker writes for The Washington Post.

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'Helene cast a pall over the Blue Ridge Mountains Kathleen Parker: Helene cast a pall over the Blue Ridge Mountains', *Winston-Salem Journal* (online), 8 Oct 2024 5 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?
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Concert for Carolina to benefit NC - Church, Combs, Taylor and Strings headline benefit concert for North Carolina

October 8, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC)

Author: LISA O'DONNELL Staff Reporter | Section: A | 317 Words

Page: 1 OpenURL Link

Four of the biggest names in music - all of whom have ties to North Carolina - will headline Concert for Carolina, a fundraiser for relief efforts in the Carolina region, hard hit by Tropical Storm Helene.

Country stars Eric Church and Luke Combs, bluegrass sensation Billy Strings and folk singer James Taylor will headline the concert at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte on Oct. 26.

Three of the stars, Church, Combs and Taylor, lived in North Carolina for years and are closely tied to the state, with Taylor's song, "Carolina in My Mind," a sort of unofficial state song. Strings is a rising bluegrass star who has found inspiration from the music of the North Carolina mountains. He played Winston-Salem's Joel Coliseum in 2023 for a Doc Watson tribute.

Tickets go on sale Thursday at 10 a.m. Visit www.concertforcarolina.com.

Proceeds will go to Chief Cares, Manna Foodbank, Second Harvest Foodbank and Samaritan's Purse.

Church announced on his Instagram page last week that he was donating the publishing royalties of a new song, "Darkest Hour," to relief efforts. Church grew up in Granite Falls in Caldwell County.

Since Hurricane Helene's landfall, the death toll in North Carolina is up to 115 people as of Friday. The nationwide toll is at 227, making Helene the deadliest U.S. hurricane since Katrina in 2005 and the fourth deadliest to make landfall on the mainland since 1950.

President Joe Biden visited the Carolinas on Wednesday, taking an aerial tour to assess the widespread damage in Asheville following the deployment of up to 1,000 active-duty U.S. soldiers to support North Carolina National Guard members in the state's recovery efforts.

"I'm here to say the United States - the nation - has your back," Biden said at an emergency command center in Raleigh. "We're not leaving until you're back on your feet completely."

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LISA O'DONNELL; Staff Reporter, 'Concert for Carolina to benefit NC Church, Combs, Taylor and Strings headline benefit concert for North Carolina', *Winston-Salem Journal* (online), 8 Oct 2024 1 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C13F4CD9140B40>



State orders evacuations ahead of new hurricane - State orders evacuations ahead of new hurricane

October 8, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC) Author: Associated Press | Section: B | 177 Words Page: 4 OpenURL Link

BELLEAIR BEACH, Fla. - Milton strengthened rapidly Monday into a Category 5 hurricane on a path toward Florida, threatening the densely populated Tampa area with a potential direct hit and menacing the same stretch of coastline that was battered by Hurricane Helene less than two weeks ago.

The center of the storm could come ashore Wednesday in the Tampa Bay region, which has not endured a head-on hit by a major hurricane in more than a century. Scientists expect the system to weaken slightly before landfall, though it could retain hurricane strength as it churns across central Florida toward the Atlantic Ocean.

That would largely spare other states ravaged by Helene, which killed at least 230 people on its path from Florida to the Appalachian Mountains.

As evacuation orders were issued, forecasters warned of a possible 8- to 12-foot storm surge in Tampa Bay and widespread flooding from 5 to 10 inches of rain in mainland Florida and the Keys, with as much as 15 inches in places.

Much of Florida's west coast was under hurricane and storm surge watches.

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Associated Press, 'State orders evacuations ahead of new hurricane State orders evacuations ahead of new hurricane', *Winston-Salem Journal* (online), 8 Oct 2024 4 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?
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Tuesday's letters: What kind of person would joke abiout the televised execution of a former president? - Tuesday's letters: What kind of person would joke abiout the televised execution of a former president?

October 8, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC) Section: A | 724 Words Page: 5 OpenURL Link

THE READERS' FORUM

How is this funny?

The Oct. 6 article by Lisa O'Donnell, "Morrow: Post about executing Obama was a joke," states that Michele Morrow (GOP candidate for state superintendent of public instruction) said she was joking when she posted on social media that "money could be made from televising an execution of President Barack Obama."

A joke? What kind of person would find the televised execution of a former president something to laugh at, however one may disagree with his politics?

Morrow's excuse doesn't make sense, nor does it ring true. As reported by CNN, Morrow's social media posts referenced QAnon. Her call for the executions of Obama and other Democratic politicians are part of the QAnon worldview.

According to this false and dangerous conspiracy theory, prominent Democrats and other globalist elites form the "deep state," a gang of Satan-worshipping pedophiles who run a global child-sex trafficking ring in which they murder children in ritual sacrifices to harvest a supposedly life-extending chemical from their blood.

Do we want someone brainwashed by QAnon who is advocating violence in charge of North Carolina's public schools? Mo Green, Morrow's opponent, is as clear-headed and qualified as Morrow is out of touch with reality and dangerous.

Character and soundness of mind count, especially when it comes to our kids.

Flizabeth Carlson

Winston-Salem

Weaponized weather?

According to CNN, some Republicans believe the government is creating Hurricanes to attack red states. I wish everyone had their IQ tattooed on their forehead.

Christine Fricke

Rural Hall

Trump could've helped

Met up with a former colleague of mine at Smith Reynolds Airport yesterday. He owns his own plane and has been flying supplies for the last three days to aid flood victims from collection points to remote landing strips in Western North Carolina.

It occurred to me that what a great publicity coup it would have been for Trump to have a picture of his private jet landing with supplies for flood victims.

Of course, for that to have happened, he would have had to think about helping others.

Mike Rodda

Winston-Salem

Trump vs. democracy

The basis for our democracy is legitimate elections by the people. Today we have a major candidate who refuses to agree to abide by election results. Mr. Trump's stance today (as it was in 2016 and 2020) is "If I win, it's legit; if I lose, it's rigged."

When he lost in 2020, he was willing to foment violence in pursuit of keeping power. Whatever one thinks of specific policy proposals, the need to ensure peaceful, legitimate elections and the orderly transfer of power is paramount.

Vote for candidates who support the exercise of democracy.

Sheila Roher

Winston-Salem

I like the comics

I, for one, am thrilled with the comics you brought back. They are so much better than the newer comics I find hard to relate to.

Like a dear, old friend or a soft, dependable blanket, they warm my heart and put a smile on my face. Thanks so much!

Bill Horton King

Climate and weather

The science is clear - fossil fuel emissions are the primary driver for climate change. Articles from Friday's Journal remind us of the enormous costs in human health ("Study: One hurricane kills thousands over years") and threat to people's homes, education and livelihood ("After Helene's destruction, Boone wonders what's next").

Earlier last week, the Journal also reported that the U.K. closed its last coal plant; unfortunately, the U.S. has more than 200 coal plants in operation and is ranked among the highest per capita carbon emitters in the world.

The article "Fighting Misinformation" in Friday's Journal highlights some of the distortion of truth that has contributed to the U.S. falling behind in clean-energy transition. Some politicians have contributed by stating that climate change is a "hoax" or that any phasing-out of fossil fuels must be economically unfavorable.

In fact, more than 40 governments worldwide have adopted some form of market-based carbon pricing, an approach overwhelmingly favored by economists that can stimulate the economy and move us toward energy independence. Not only should this not be a partisan issue, it is also essential that perspectives from different backgrounds and perspectives be considered, so that solutions are as favorable and sustainable as possible for all Americans.

I urge everyone to consider this at the polls and vote for candidates who accept clear facts so we can move forward with effective climate solutions that will benefit us now and for generations to come.

Michael McCrory Winston-Salem

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