

# Opinion

**goto** journalnow.com  
click on **opinion**

## Wake Forest Innovation Quarter

# We're glad it's here to stay

We're admittedly impressed with the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter. It has successfully revitalized a part of Winston-Salem's downtown that was effectively lost, increased our city's status as a biotech hub, created jobs and increased business opportunities, and is just plain fun and pretty to walk through.

The leaders of the quarter are working on a master plan for growth, the Journal's Fran Daniel reported recently, and it relies heavily on community outreach and collaboration.

"We're not an island," Eric Tomlinson, president of quarter and the chief innovation officer for Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, told the Journal. "We are part of the fabric of the city, so we look to support the city and its communities, as well as seek their support for what we do."

That's wise; if the rest of the community is invested in its success, everyone will work together for that shared outcome.

"The intent is to provide interesting things the community wants to participate in and to use those interesting things to widen the scope of our engagement with the community," Tomlinson told the Journal. Toward that goal, the quarter has offered a variety of events and programs that include networking, lunches and discussions.

There was also a recent community concert produced in conjunction with the Winston-Salem Symphony in Bailey Park and, currently, a film series produced with Aperture Cinema. And work is expected to start this year on a new greenway trail that will connect the quarter with the Salem Creek Greenway and Salem Lake; that will bring in more traffic.

The quarter has created more substantial partnerships by providing facilities for Forsyth Technical Community College and Winston-Salem State University, as well as, of course, the Wake Forest School of Medicine.

"It's really the first time we've had some really first-class space to serve our business and corporate clients that we provide training for," Gary Green, Forsyth Tech's president, told the Journal.

But they're nowhere near done; quarter officials are now turning to the second phase of the quarter, the area between Third Street and Business 40, which is largely vacant, but ready for development.

Tomlinson told the Journal that he expects to discuss the quarter's plan for developing the land with various community groups. "We're trying to do so in a way that's considerate of the city and the county, and the neighborhood's needs," he told the Journal.

David Mounts, the chairman and chief executive of Inmar, which has 900 employees in a facility in the quarter, has experienced its commitment to collaborative growth. He expects the borders between downtown and the district to become blurred over time.

"In 15 years, we will experience the most vibrant innovation Winston-Salem has ever seen, inspired by its past and driven by its current opportunity," Mounts told the Journal.

We can see it happening. The people behind the innovation quarter are visionaries, and we're glad to have them here.

## WINSTON-SALEM JOURNAL journalnow.com

<b>Kevin Kampman</b>	Publisher	kkampman@wsjournal.com
<b>John Railey</b>	Editorial Page Editor	jrailey@wsjournal.com
<b>John X. Miller</b>	Managing Editor	jmiller@wsjournal.com
<b>Gail Whiting</b>	Vice President of Sales	gwhiting@wsjournal.com
<b>Tommie McLeod</b>	Circulation Director	tmcleod@wsjournal.com
<b>Frank B. Clayton</b>	Production Director	fclayton@wsjournal.com
<b>David H. Stanfield</b>	Controller	dstanfield@wsjournal.com

**“W**e stand firmly with Winston-Salem and our region. We'll demand accountability and vision from our leaders, and we'll try to provide you, our readers, with the same. We'll advocate, celebrate, commiserate, berate and sometimes aggravate. But we will never hesitate in voicing our opinion of what's best for Northwest North Carolina.”

— The Journal Editorial Board



## The Readers' Forum

### Sum It Up

On Sunday we asked our readers: Should South Carolina have taken down the Confederate flag at its capitol?

◆ ◆ ◆

I am the great-granddaughter of a Confederate officer. The Virginia battle flag had no place flying on public property in South Carolina or anywhere. I don't know what my ancestor would have thought, but I understand that Gen. Robert E. Lee did not want it flown at his funeral.

MARY LOU MOORE

◆ ◆ ◆

No. The Confederate flag is part of our nation's history. It represents the lives of people who suffered on both sides of the war. We cannot rewrite history, but we can use it to make better choices in the future.

TERRENCE J. O'FLAHERTY

◆ ◆ ◆

South Carolina should definitely have removed the Confederate flag from its capitol! The flag is supposed to represent all the people and not part of the people! We are the United States of America, not the long-gone Confederacy!

DEBBIE ANDERSON LOCKE

◆ ◆ ◆

Sure, and look what it caused ... hundreds have now sprung up in the beds of pickup trucks. This ain't over, is it?

KAM BENFIELD

◆ ◆ ◆

Yes. It should not have gone up to begin with. The view that the Civil War and that flag had absolutely nothing to do with slavery is laughable.

STEVE LAWSON

◆ ◆ ◆

Of course. Removing this symbol of oppression isn't "denying history," as if only the flying of a flag kept history alive. Nothing could be further from the truth. Giving the flag of our foe any place of honor is a distortion of history; it's tacit support for an evil cause.

The U.S. went to war against England in 1776, but you don't see anyone hanging the English flag from state capitols to "keep history alive."

History belongs in history books and museums; not flying above state capitols.

JANE FREEMONT GIBSON

◆ ◆ ◆

Yes, about 48 years ago.

HELEN ETTERS

South Carolina did the right thing. The flag is just some colored fabric sewn together to make a flag. It has some historical meaning, but has been turned into an in-your-face symbol of division. Both sides used the flag as a weapon; I am glad it is gone.

Maybe our president should have used this logic before he turned the White House into a billboard of gay pride.

KEN HOGLUND

◆ ◆ ◆

While the Confederate flag holds a place in history it's just that, history. Even the nickname, "Rebel flag," connotes what it really stands for in the eyes of its beholders, white supremacy. South Carolina

should have taken it down a long time ago.

SUZANNE CARROLL

◆ ◆ ◆

I think it should have been voted on by the people of South Carolina instead of being rammed through as was done. I think some of those politicians will pay for this in their next election.

I do think taking it down was the right thing to do because I think the American flag and state flags should be the only flags flown.

HAROLD DYSON

◆ ◆ ◆

Yeah. People can talk "heritage, not hate" all they want, but I noticed no one bothered to lower it to half-staff as the American and state flags were, even for a fellow member of the S.C. legislature.

I feel it should be removed from all government facilities and reserved for private property, museums and history books.

KIM HINSHAW

◆ ◆ ◆

Should South Carolina have taken down the Confederate flag at the capitol? A flag of that design and colors? Yes. Absolutely.

Why? Because ever since the morning of April 9, 1865, the Confederate flag has been plain, unadorned and white.

KENNETH SCALF

◆ ◆ ◆

It is not a question of "should" but "why does it take so long to come down?"

There might be other contributory causes to the Civil War, but unquestionably the main cause was about the abolition of slavery or the retention of the institution.

The Confederacy fought to retain slavery and therefore the flag symbolizes thereof. To glorify the flag now is to affirm slavery instead of freedom, white supremacy instead of equality for all, hate instead of fellowship, racial segregation instead of integration.

BOON T. LEE

◆ ◆ ◆

However appropriate was South Carolina's removal of the Confederate flag from capitol grounds, is that removal merely the beginning of the left's larger quest to extinguish all of America's so-called "offensive" history and traditions? Because, incredibly, some agitators are now calling for the removal of Civil War monuments and Confederate soldiers' graves.

What, pray tell, will be deemed "offensive" and "hateful" next? Will it be the Christian cross? The Star of David? Or the Bible itself?

Indeed, on the current trajectory, those symbols and that book will eventually be banned in this country.

Besides seeking the wisdom of Scripture for such a time as this, I recommend embarking on a fresh read of other such classics as Brave New World, Fahrenheit 451 and George Orwell's 1984 — before they're banned, too.

DEB PHILLIPS

### When You Write

The Journal encourages readers' comments. To participate in The Readers' Forum, please submit letters online to Letters@wsjournal.com

For more guidelines and advice on writing letters, go to journalnow.com/opinion/submit\_a\_letter.

# What same-sex couples should know about family rights

BY VANCE PARKER  
Guest columnist

**A**lthough the North Carolina state ban on same-sex marriage was struck down by the U.S. District Court on Oct. 10, 2014, the U.S. Supreme Court decision on June 26, 2015 unquestionably cements same-sex marriage as the new law of the land, fully protected by the U.S. Constitution. Going forward, marriage should provide these couples with the same legal family rights enjoyed by straight couples for many years, including health insurance benefits, joint property rights, joint state and federal tax benefits and child-rearing benefits.

But there will likely be continued attempts by opponents to test the legal waters. It will take time before same-sex unions become something that all citizens embrace. In the meantime, same-sex married partners may

continue to face opposition from family members over issues such as who should inherit assets or assume guardianship of children. Anyone — straight or gay — who dies without a will leaves the door open for intense family arguments and even litigation that may thwart the deceased partner's intention.

After the Supreme Court decision, same-sex couples should understand how the following family rights are affected:

◆ **Adoption.** North Carolina has maintained discriminatory laws against "second parent adoptions," meaning only one parent was allowed to adopt each child in a same-sex parent family, leaving the other non-adoptive parent with no legal right to raise and make decisions for the children. Although the Supreme Court decision should strike such laws down for good, adoption is a complex legal area. Same-sex adoptive

parents should consult with a good family law attorney when making these decisions.

◆ **Health-care decisions:** Traditionally, physicians and other health-care providers consulted with close family members (including spouses and parents) of ill people when making medical decisions. In states where same-sex marriage was not recognized, or where health providers had religious or personal objections against gay people, health-care providers may have looked only to genetic family members to make health-care decisions for ill family members. Although marriage should protect same-sex couples in this situation, durable power of attorney and living will documents assure that each spouse gets to choose who will make his or her medical, legal and business decisions in case of incapacity, or at the end of life. Recognized in all 50 states, these documents convey

health care choices with much greater predictability and legal certainty than relying on marriage alone.

◆ **Premarital agreements:** Same-sex couples anticipating marriage are now free to enter into "premarital" or "prenuptial" agreements. Such agreements, if drafted properly, can protect either or both parties' property in case of later separation or divorce.

◆ **Domestic partners:** To be safe, unmarried domestic partners, both gay and straight, must complete estate planning documents. Unmarried partnerships, even when the couple has lived together for years, are not well protected in North Carolina. A complete and valid will allows an unmarried domestic partner to give assets to the other partner with a legally enforceable document.

Even when married, a complete and valid will for each

spouse is very important. A will allows each person to specify in detail how his or her assets will be passed down, and to whom; to choose a guardian for his or her children; and to set up a family trust to care for minor children financially over an extended time period. Perhaps most important, wills help preserve the peace within a family and can reduce arguments about the deceased person's intentions.

In short, the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision in Obergefell v. Hodges is cause for celebration for same-sex partners who have longed for the legal recognition and protections of marriage. But just as heterosexual couples have been warned for decades about the need for wills and other estate planning documents, such measures are even more crucial for same-sex partners.

Vance Parker is an elder law and estate planning attorney in Winston-Salem.