

Commentary

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EDITORIAL

MAP International using resources to aid local people

It is no secret that we have many unique organizations in our community with impacts that stretch far beyond the confines of the Golden Isles.

The Christian medical aid nonprofit MAP International is a perfect example. For 63 years, MAP, which is headquartered here in Brunswick, has been sending medicines and other medical aid to all corners of the world, wherever there is a need. In 2017 alone, the numbers are eye opening. According to information in MAP's 2017 Global Impact statement, the organization served more than 14 million people in 93 countries with more than \$627 million in medicines delivered. About \$81 million of that went to people affected by hurricanes in the U.S. and the Caribbean, flooding in Serra Leone, earthquakes in Guatemala and Mexico and famine in East Africa. Other than those places, MAP's impact covered much of the continents of South America and Africa and spread into India and China, just name a few more.

All this comes from a warehouse and facility out on Glynco Parkway in Glynn County.

We are proud to know an organization with such a big heart and

wide reach calls our community home.

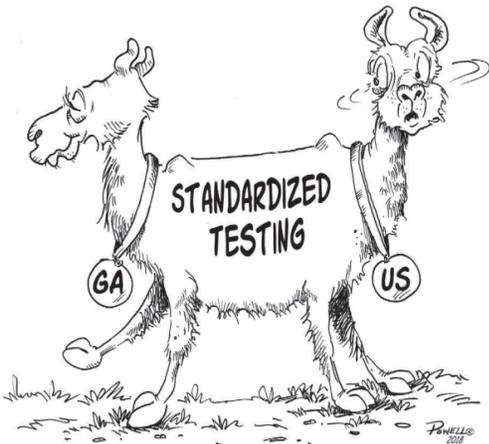
We are also thankful in the last couple of years, it has begun to look out its own windows when searching for places in need of aid. MAP's Saving Lives with Medicine program, a collaboration with the Southeast Georgia Rotary District 6920, began providing medications in Brunswick and Valdosta to treat hypertension, asthma, high cholesterol and diabetes to clinics that treat indigent patients. This means local folks and people in Valdosta who might not otherwise be able to afford it are getting the medication they need to treat potentially dangerous and life threatening conditions.

So far, the program has supplied medicine to treat 350 patients in Brunswick and 140 patients in Valdosta. It is great to see a large organization like MAP using its resources right here at home to impact the lives of more than at least 490 people. We applaud their effort and thank the members of the 63 Rotary Clubs around Southeast Georgia, including those in Brunswick, Camden County and on St. Simons and Jekyll Islands, for using their time to pack the boxes of medicine that go out locally and internationally.

OTHER VIEWS / GARY VARVEL



JIM POWELL



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send letters on topics of general interest to readers in Southeast Georgia by:

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Letters should be no more than 250 words in length and may be edited for clarity. Letter writers will be limited to one letter every two weeks

You must include your name, address and phone number.

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COLUMN / MICHAEL GERSON



Billy Graham was consumed by grace

God used the reverend remarkably, just as he was, and he made an indelible mark on the world.

WASHINGTON
Billy Graham was easily the most influential evangelical Christian of the 20th century — a man at home in the historical company of George Whitefield and John Wesley.

But this would be hard to tell from reading his sermons, which even close associates described as ordinary. His books are hardly more memorable. So what was it that compelled hundreds of millions of people to attend and watch his evangelistic “crusades” and to find personal transformation in his words?

Graham's global ministry was the triumph of complete sincerity, expressed with a universally accessible simplicity. “There is no magic, no manipulation,” said publicist Gavin Reid. “The man just obviously believes what he says.” Graham could display charisma in meetings with presidents and queens. In the pulpit — the place of his calling from an early age — he was nearly transparent, allowing a light behind him to shine through him. He had the power of a man utterly confident in some other, greater power.

American fundamentalism from the Scopes monkey trial to the 1950s was traumatized, marginalized and inward-looking. Graham's achievement was to turn the face of fundamentalism outward toward the world — shaping, in the process, a distinct religious movement. His evangelicalism was more open and appealing, more intellectually and culturally engaged. Graham took his fellow evangelicals from the margins to the center — from the sawdust trail to the White House. He managed to be winsome without being compromised. And evangelical Christians felt grateful to have a public representative who

— through his integrity and consistency — brought credit to their faith.

There was initial resistance to Graham's work among mainline Protestants. As Graham announced more and more crusades, theologian Reinhold Niebuhr was not amused. Graham, Niebuhr warned, would “accentuate every prejudice which the modern, ‘enlightened’ but morally sensitive man may have against religion.” Graham responded: “I have read nearly everything Mr. Niebuhr has written and I feel inadequate before his brilliant mind and learning. Occasionally I get a glimmer of what he is talking about ... [but] if I tried to preach as he writes, people would be so bewildered they would walk out.”

Nearly 2 million people walked into Graham's 16-week, New York crusade in 1957. And Graham was joined one night at Madison Square Garden by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

There was also resistance among some fundamentalists.

I grew up in a theologically conservative Calvinist church in which the reformation was refought on a weekly basis. The man who would become my father-in-law — blessed with a fine voice — decided to sing in the choir at a Billy Graham crusade that came into town. Afterward, he was hauled in front of the elders of the church to be questioned. They were upset at this participation because Graham — when people would come forward during the altar call — would refer them back to their home churches, including Catholic churches.

In fact, the tone of Graham's public voice changed over the years, becoming more ecumenical, less harsh and nationalistic. Some of this he credited to broader exposure to the world. “I

think now when I say something, ‘How is this going to sound in India? How is it going to sound to my friends in Hungary or Poland?’” But this also involved a theological shift. “I used to believe that pagans in far countries were lost if they did not have the gospel of Christ preached to them,” he reflected in 1978. “I no longer believe that.”

His faith in the essentials of the Christian gospel, however, never changed. And it made him into a busy builder of institutions that still carry the Christian message. Graham was instrumental in the founding of Christianity Today, the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He was a major supporter of the National Association of Evangelicals and Fuller Theological Seminary.

As in any long, public life, there were low moments, particularly when Graham came into contact with political figures such as Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. But he also had a powerful, positive influence in the life of the young George W. Bush and countless others. And this much is clear. For Graham, faith was not the instrument to some other end; it was the prize itself. He had no ulterior motives. No trace of cynicism. He was consumed by grace, and spoke in gratitude.

For a Christian, it is not a small thing for a man to talk about Jesus Christ, face to face, to more people than anyone has ever done. Or to see how remarkably God used his servant Billy, just as he was.

Michael Gerson is author of “Heroic Conservatism” and co-author of “City of Man: Religion and Politics in the New Era.” Contact him michaelgerson@washpost.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Impact fees should be used on St. Simons Island

Thank you Brunswick News, for reporting several mainland commissioners' negative response to the idea of charging impact fees to developers of the north end of St. Simons Island.

Those of you on the mainland, please push your commissioners on this. If the developers don't pay for the \$300 million in infrastructure needed to accommodate SSI development, then all of us who live in Glynn County will pay.

Commissioner Booker: Charging developers impact fees “could hurt the people who need (help) the most” by discouraging development on the mainland. Response: Implementing a tax-free enterprise zone on the mainland would eliminate that problem.

Commissioner Stambaugh: This is “a big, full blown program. We don't have the staff to run it and could not pay for it”. Response: Other counties can handle it. So can we. If you charge the developers on SSI enough, the program should pay for itself.

Commissioner Strickland: “If we had a lot of development going on, then impact fees could be a part of it”. Response: There is a lot of development happening on SSI and yes, impact fees should be a part of it.

Commissioner Mike Browning: Impact fees to “stymie growth” on St. Simons Island? “That's not what they are (intended) for.” Response: But, they will do this job. Impact fees and enterprise zones may not build a library, but they will redirect who pays the \$300 million that is going to be needed to build out the north end of SSI. It's better than another SPLOST.

Frank Cullen
St. Simons Island

Time to give FBI authority to another agency

FBI (feeb-les) are now apologizing for their mess up with the Florida high school shooter. 17 dead. What about Orlando, San Bernadino, Chattanooga, New York City, Boston or the thousands dead from 9/11. Trump needs to deep-six the whole agency and give all law enforcement authority it has to DHS/ICE. Shame on “the bureau.”

Frank Klonoski
St. Simons Island

We want to elect people who care about community

As one of many outside the “vermillion-red” contingent of Glynn County, I appreciate that our existence was acknowledged by the paper of record last week. I also appreciate that your article about Julie Ann Jordan underlined, whether intentional or not, a crucial issue in the upcoming election.

While noting that Ms. Jordan is running for the State House in District 179, you stressed that she doesn't yet have a lot of money to promote that candidacy, certainly not as much as incumbent, Don Hogan, or for that matter the two others holding local legislative offices. For many of us who support Ms. Jordan and others running against the ingrained establishment, that is exactly the point. These women, and they all are women, are not raising funds from Atlanta or Washington PACs or from state house leaders attempting to consolidate and maintain their power.

Competing with the war chests assembled by incumbents won't be easy for Ms. Jordan or any of the other five

running for local and district offices. But those of us who are sick of our voices being ignored intend to support them with local dollars, shoe leather and a lot of energy. We are going to elect candidates who understand and care about the concerns of the citizens of Glynn County, not of political action committees pushing their own interests and agendas.

Jann Swanson
Brunswick

Coast Guard beach plan is shameful

I was horrified to see that in the latest iteration of plans for the Old Coast Guard Station, the St. Simons Surf Sailors were potentially totally omitted. This is a historical club that is unique on the eastern coast of the U.S. Since the club is self sufficient and receives no federal, state or county monies, it cannot be any sort of burden on the county.

Many of us support Glynn County by having our boats moored in the county, shopping in the county, paying county taxes and generally financially supporting the county. We have also promoted the county as a progressive and tourist friendly coastal county.

We all agree that change is good, mostly. But not at the expense of something as unique and cost free as the St. Simons Surf Sailors. We cannot support this proposed change and will advise people to bypass this county if this poor decision becomes the law. Whatever were y'all thinking to have come up with this?

Shame on y'all!

Bruce MacGregor Whyte
USCG Merchant Captain