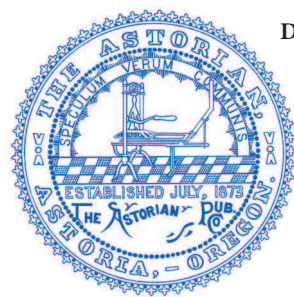


THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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OUR VIEW

Celebrate the success stories in local health care

Two articles in last Friday's edition of The Daily Astorian and some stories sure to appear in coming months tell of some remarkable developments in local and regional health care — advances that make our lives better.

A front-page story detailed the experience of Ronald Paapke of Lewis and Clark, who was saved from a potentially deadly or disabling stroke in September by his diligent wife, Jane Leino, and fast teamwork by medical professionals. Stricken at home by a sudden onset of paralysis, Paapke was being strangled by a large blood clot in his carotid artery between his neck and brain.

Fast action by Leino, the Lewis and Clark Fire District, Medix, Columbia Memorial Hospital, Life Flight Network and Oregon Health & Science University delivered Paapke into the care OHSU interventional neuroradiologist Dr. Hormozd Bozorgchami. Soon after, Bozorgchami withdrew the clot. Paapke experienced an almost immediate and complete recovery.

The ability to use a telemedicine electronic link between Columbia Memorial and OHSU — an increasingly common technology in rural hospitals — in essence gave Paapke access to top stroke experts within the short window of time when lasting damage from the stroke could be avoided. Our photo of him sitting at his dining table is an amazing testimonial to how far stroke care has come in recent years. A generation ago — perhaps even a few years ago — Paapke's family might have attended his funeral or at least would have faced a hard time tending to his needs.

On our Weekend Break page, Laura Snyder gave an annual update on her life with metastatic breast cancer. It was a beautiful, angry and brave report from the front lines of a war that appears to be seriously mismanaged on a variety of levels.

Snyder is grateful to be alive and certainly makes no effort to play the "victim card." Every day she deals with pain, discomfort and knowledge that would leave many people in a melted puddle of despair. But she makes no bones about the fact that the nation's estimated 155,000 current sufferers of metastatic breast cancer — in which tumors spread to other organs — are being neglected by a health care and fundraising system that has different priorities.

Delaying game

Good news about some cancers has allowed us to become overly optimistic about the fates of all cancer patients. For many like Snyder, there is delaying game versus death, one that depends in part on just how long patients are able to withstand the rigors of chemotherapy.

For Snyder, Cancer Awareness Month in October is at least partly a sham, substituting shallow awareness for a much more focused and serious effort to fund research into why cancers spread and how to more effectively combat them once they do.

"I guess I believe the dire and fatal breast cancer situation needs to change, quickly, using every resource that can be mustered. This does not mean wearing a pink sweatband while you work out, or eating chicken from a pink bucket of KFC. ... Please be certain the dollars you give are not for stuff that will end up at a landfill or the Goodwill but for research," she wrote. She recommends direct donations to Metavivor, the Metastatic Breast Cancer Network and Breast Cancer Action.

Differing outcomes for local stroke and cancer patients are a result of many factors, not least the incredible complexity of cancer. It's not one disease, but many. Considering there probably will never be a single "cure" for all these cancers, it's significant that patients like Snyder now manage to live years beyond their initial diagnosis. Although some genuine gains have been made in converting cancer into a chronic illness instead of an immediate death sentence, we need reminding that we are far from the finish line.

Real change

That we are able to share stories like Paapke's and Snyder's is itself a sign of how much things have changed in local medicine and our society. Their willingness to share their triumphs and struggles is a real change from not so long ago, when there wasn't as much good news to report. Although our area still is remote in some ways, it's nearly routine to expect advanced medical care here, with relatively strong links to the internationally famous care available in the Pacific Northwest's growing cities.

On this theme, future stories will have much to say about the new Columbia Memorial Hospital-OHSU Knight Cancer Collaborative in Astoria. The partners assert the cancer center is a game-changer for cancer care in our area. This seems likely to be more than hyperbole. The ability to obtain additional therapies that once required patients to make many arduous trips will ease suffering and save lives.

We can all feel proud of how far local health care has come, even while we push for better answers for diseases like metastatic breast cancer.



How Trump opened the door to Moore

By MICHELLE GOLDBERG
New York Times News Service

In 2002, the Alabama Supreme Court issued a ruling in a child custody battle between a lesbian mother and an allegedly abusive father. The parents had originally lived in Los Angeles, and when they divorced in 1992, the mother received



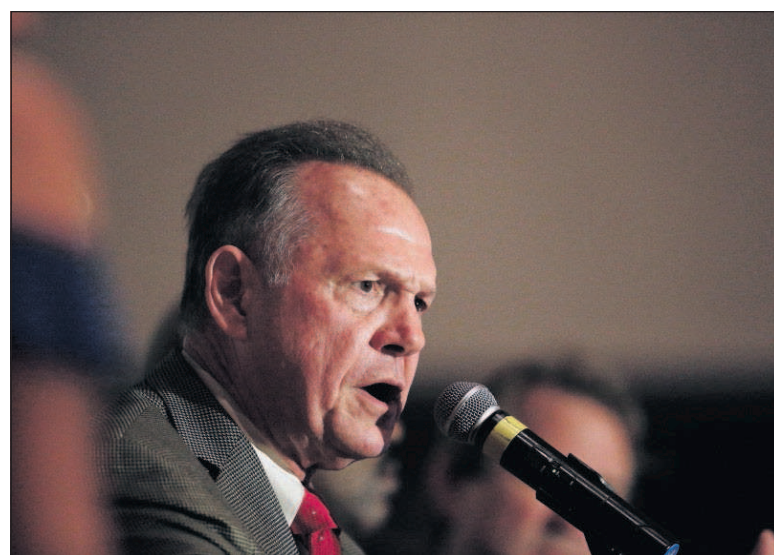
primary physical custody. But she was an alcoholic, and in 1996, she sent her three children to live with her ex-husband, who'd since moved to Alabama, while she went to rehab. Her lawyer, Wendy Brooks Crew, told me they had an understanding that the kids would stay with their dad for a year, but he refused to return them to their mother because she was living with a woman.

There was evidence that the father was abusing the kids, who by 2002 were teenagers. He acknowledged whipping them with a belt and forcing them to sit with paper bags over their heads. He refused to send the younger children to summer school, even though their grades were bad. When the kids called their mother, their father taped the conversations. By the time the case got to the Alabama Supreme Court, a lower court had ruled in the mother's favor. The Alabama Supreme Court reversed the ruling, with then Chief Justice Roy Moore writing in a concurring opinion that a gay person couldn't be a fit parent.

"Homosexual conduct is, and has been, considered abhorrent, immoral, detestable, a crime against nature, and a violation of the laws of nature and of nature's God upon which this nation and our laws are predicated," wrote Moore. He added, "The state carries the power of the sword, that is, the power to prohibit conduct with physical penalties, such as confinement and even execution. It must use that power to prevent the subversion of children toward this lifestyle, to not encourage a criminal lifestyle."

The man who wrote those words is now the Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate from Alabama. In some ways, this is an embarrassment for Donald Trump, who heeded establishment advice to support Moore's opponent, sitting Sen. Luther Strange, in the primary. But Moore's victory is also a victory for Trumpism, a populist movement that has eroded normal limits on political behavior.

On the surface, Trump and Moore couldn't be more different. The president is a thrice-married former casino owner who let Howard Stern call his own daughter a "piece of ass." Moore is a fundamentalist Southern Baptist who writes rhyming verse denouncing wanton sex. "Your children wander aimlessly poisoned by cocaine/Choosing to indulge their



AP Photo/Brynn Anderson

Former Alabama Chief Justice and U.S. Senate candidate Roy Moore speaks during his election party Tuesday in Montgomery.

lusts, when God has said abstain," he wrote in his sarcastically titled poem "America the Beautiful." Trump described himself, during his campaign, as a "real friend" of the LGBT community, even if he hasn't behaved like one in office. Moore has said that gay sex should be illegal.

But read the rest of "America the Beautiful," and you start to see where Trump and Moore's worldviews overlap. Both see a nation in apocalyptic decline, desperate for redemption. Whereas Trump spoke of "American carnage" in his dystopian inauguration speech, Moore calls the country a "moral slum" awaiting God's judgment. Like the president, Moore is a conspiracy theorist who demonizes religious minorities; he once wrote that Keith Ellison, a Democrat from Minnesota, should not be allowed to serve in the House of Representatives because he is Muslim.

Moore's success is bound to encourage more candidates like him.

I met Moore over a decade ago, when I was researching my first book, "Kingdom Coming: The Rise of Christian Nationalism." By then, Moore had been forced off the bench for refusing a federal judge's order to remove a 2.6-ton Ten Commandments monument he'd installed in the state judicial building. This martyrdom made him a cult figure on the religious right. A group of retired military men had taken the monument on tour, holding over 150 viewings and rallies; at an event in Austin, Texas, one of them spoke bitterly to me about the outsized power of American Jews. (Moore would later be re-elected to his seat,

only to be suspended for the rest of his term in 2016 for ordering judges not to comply with the Supreme Court decision overturning bans on gay marriage.)

In trying to understand the movement I was reporting on, I turned to scholars of authoritarianism and fascism. If their words seemed relevant then, they're even more so now. Fritz Stern, a historian who fled Nazi Germany, described the "conservative revolution" that prefigured National Socialism: "The movement did embody a paradox: its followers sought to destroy the despised present in order to recapture an idealized past in an imaginary future."

His formulation helps explain the overlapping appeal of Trump and Moore, who thrill their supporters with their distinctly un-conservative eagerness to destroy legal and political norms. What Moore's critics see as lawlessness, his fans see as insurgent valor. Trump's most prominent nationalist supporters, including Steve Bannon and Sebastian Gorka, lined up behind Moore, describing him as part of the Trumpian revolution. Nigel Farage, a right-wing British politician and Trump ally, flew to Fairhope, Alabama, to speak at a rally for Moore, saying on stage, "It is getting someone like him elected that will rejuvenate the movement that led to Trump and Brexit."

Whether or not that's true, the movement that led to Trump has brought us to a place where Moore will probably soon sit in the U.S. Senate, something I could hardly have imagined when I first encountered him. Back then, anti-gay prejudice was far more acceptable than it is today, but Moore's messianic denunciation of a lesbian mother was still shocking. Trump is not a pious man, but by destroying informal restraints on reactionary rhetoric, he's made his party hospitable to the cruelest of theocrats. Moore's success is bound to encourage more candidates like him. The Republican establishment's borders have been breached. Its leaders should have built a wall.

LETTERS WELCOME

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Letters should be fewer than 350 words and must include the writer's name, address and phone numbers. You will be contacted to confirm authorship.

All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar and, on occasion, factual accuracy. Only two

letters per writer are printed each month.

Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand and, rather than mentioning the writer by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a

respectful manner.

Submissions may be sent in any of these ways:

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