

The Bristol Press

It takes a newspaper to build a community

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OUR VIEW

Please sign, Gov. Malloy

It's been almost two weeks since the state Legislature passed a bill outlining the regulatory framework for the sale of Bristol Hospital, as well as hospitals in Waterbury, Manchester and Vernon, to the for-profit Tenet Healthcare Corp. but hospital leaders are still waiting nervously to learn whether Gov. Dannel P. Malloy will sign it.

On the last day of the session, the General Assembly passed in one bill provisions impacting the acquisition of medical practices, medical foundations and the conversions of not-for-profit hospitals, but the key part of the legislation — as far as Bristol is concerned — is the section that allows for-profit hospitals to establish medical foundations. These are basically the entities that employ physicians who work at hospitals. That provision was included in a similar bill last year — which was also passed by the House and Senate — but which was vetoed by Gov. Dannel Malloy.

Now Bristol leaders are lining up to let the governor know just how important a positive response from him is to the city's future.

Kurt A. Barwis, the hospital's president and CEO, claimed "the right of the Bristol community to deter-

mine its own health care future ... Bristol Hospital did our due diligence, studying the impact of acquisition on other community hospitals across the country," before saying yes to Tenet, he said.

Moreover, Barwis argued, "Tenet Health is not asking for any state incentives; in fact, Tenet-owned hospitals would pay property taxes to the communities in which they are located."

Jim Albert, president and CEO of the Central Connecticut Chamber of Commerce, has said that this partnership "is the best way to preserve the viability of Bristol Hospital" — no exaggeration since, in 2013, Connecticut's hospitals lost a combined \$175 million and 1,400 jobs were eliminated.

And that's an important consideration for us, too. The hospital is second only to ESPN in the number of people — more than 1,500 — that it employs.

Finally, preserving a community hospital in their midst is important to the residents of Bristol, who prefer turning to their neighbors during moments of crisis.

With these thoughts in mind, we join with city and hospital leaders in urging the governor to sign this bill and protect this important community institution.

Our past does not equal our future!

Some people tend to remember the past as the good old days, others remember the past as anything but good.

In considering our future progress, neither way of remembering the past is ideal because our past doesn't equal our future.

Our past should not be forgotten, but it is in our best interest to remember our past and appreciate it for what it is... our past. If we're trying to build our best possible life, then our past should not dictate our future.

If we are constantly thinking about our past, then it probably means that right now we're living in the past instead of the present. It also probably means that we're resting a little too much on our

laurels or past achievements. My granddaddy once told me that the good old days weren't always so good, and tomorrow ain't as bad as it seems.

We should appreciate yesterday, but we should also let go of it so we can reach for the gold that tomorrow has to offer with both of our hands. If we don't have both hands free while trying to reach tomorrow's opportunities, we may end up letting great opportunities slip through our grasp.

In contrast, if we only remember the failures of yesterday and don't believe in the good old days, then we are going to miss some of the golden opportunities of tomorrow.

Just because we couldn't do something yesterday, it doesn't mean that we won't be able to

do it tomorrow. There was a time when we were babies and couldn't walk upright on our own two feet. The small fact that we couldn't stand upright without falling forward didn't stop us from eventually standing tall and running forward, full-speed ahead.

Now teens, go learn, lead, and lay the way to a better world for all of us. Remember that our past does not equal our future. So go ahead and create a new incredible future for yourself, and subsequently for your loved ones too.

And once again, thanks in advance for all that you do, and all that you will do...

GRANDDADDY'S SECRETS



Daniel Blanchard

Daniel Blanchard is a social studies teacher at New Britain High School, has published two teen leadership books, and is available for speaking engagements. See more Granddaddy's Secrets to success at: www.GranddaddysSecrets.com

YOUR VIEW

Disputes councilor's stand on out-sourcing

TO the Editor:

This is in response to Calvin Brown's opinion piece in the May 14 edition of The Bristol Press. I wish to address two of the charges in this highly inflammatory letter regarding privatization of school cafeteria works.

First, Councilor Brown claims that Republican members of the school board did not bargain in good faith. This is clearly inaccurate or the various union challenges to the board's decision to move forward with a contract to hire an outside firm to provide cafeteria services would have been stopped. It has not and, to the benefit of all Bristol tax-

payers, cafeteria services will now be provided to our school children much more cost effectively than had been the case when such

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services were provided by city employees.

Second, Councilor Brown claims that "Republicans on the board see only dollar signs" and "do not know what it takes to care for our kids." He conveniently

forgets that Republican board members are parents and grandparents with a personal interest in the quality of the educational experience for all Bristol school children. The children in Bristol's schools don't just come from families who are Democrats; they come from families of all political persuasions and, yes, Councilor Brown, that includes kids from Republican households too.

It is sad to see a city councilor take the low road when he can't debate the issue on its merits. It is a tactic that has no place in Bristol politics.

Peter Del Mastro
Bristol

DOONESBURY by Garry Trudeau

