

# OPINION

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### OUR VIEW

## Grins and groans

### Grin

To a job well done.  
Marie McKee, president of the Corning Museum of Glass, may be retiring at the end of the year, but she will long be remembered.  
Under her watch, the main museum was renovated and the Rakow Research Library expanded, and a “Make Your Own Glass” program was launched at The Studio.  
The museum introduced hot glass shows and the popular 2300 degrees event. New exhibits and acquisitions help keep tourists and locals coming back.  
And then there’s the \$64 million project currently underway to expand the North Wing, set to open in December, with a 26,000-square-foot new contemporary glass gallery and a 500-seat theater.  
Most importantly, attendance grew from 220,000 to 420,000 at a time when the struggling economy hurt tourism in many areas.  
We wish McKee well in retirement and at the same time, welcome her replacement Karol Wight, currently CMOG executive director.  
Wight has big shoes to fill, but we’re confident the museum will continue to be successful.

Museum officials credit Wight, who joined the staff in 2011, with increasing focus on science and technology exhibits and programs, among other improvements.  
**Groan**  
To doing the minimum. Have you driven down Chestnut lately?  
If you haven’t, don’t. Your car will appreciate it.  
If have because you can’t avoid it — you have our sympathies.  
It sure is a bumpy ride. We don’t know if Chestnut Street — located on the Southside not far from Carder Elementary — will be on this year’s road repair list, but we know it won’t be cheap to fix. Nor will many other roads in the city.  
And that’s a problem. The City Council voted to include only an extra \$100,000 in funding toward road repairs in the budget approved last week. That’s not enough.  
We realize spending more on road work means paying more in taxes at a time when assessments just went up for many residents. However, it’s pay now or later — at the mechanic — if you’re forced to drive down one of the almost impassable city streets.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

#### Ramblers Rest a ‘haven of comfort’

TO THE EDITOR | Every community has its unsung heroes and heroines. Fortunately, Painted Post is no exception. For over two generations, the small restaurant, Ramblers Rest, has been a haven for hard working individuals and busy families who can get a “home-cooked” meal, a smile of recognition and a caring that goes beyond the meal of the moment.  
In the process of moving to Painted Post, while in rented rooms with limited

kitchen facilities, we often enjoyed the soup of the day and the cheerful smile of owners Suzie and Mike. We knew it was a special community when Mike left one day to deliver a meal to a sick resident who was a “regular”. Individuals find a kind of home in this unique restaurant with a home atmosphere and good cooking.  
Thank you, Susie and Mike and now daughter, Sara, for the haven of comfort you provide for our community.  
**Marjorie and Gordon VanVleet**  
Painted Post

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### WEEKLY COLUMN | SEN. TOM O’MARA

## Preserving our dairy farms

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in a report earlier this year, New York reclaimed its place as the nation’s third-largest milk-producing state in 2013 — surpassing Idaho, and trailing only California and Wisconsin.  
That’s a good reminder at the start of “Dairy Month,” which New York State observes throughout June. It’s a testament to the perseverance and the toughness of our dairy farmers and farm families, who year after year, generation after generation, have kept their farms going in the face of enormous economic, fiscal and regulatory burdens and challenges.  
In the words of New York Farm Bureau President Dean Norton, “New York Farm Bureau congratulates the hard working dairy farmers in New York for their continued success. It is because of their consistent quality and superb animal care that we have once again claimed the third spot among the largest dairy producing states. It bodes well for the state’s agricultural economy.”  
Thanks in large part to New York’s booming yogurt industry and its huge demand for milk, New York’s milk production increased for the fourth consecutive year in 2013. As the state’s leading agricultural sector, the dairy industry accounts for more than one-half of New York’s



SEN. TOM O’MARA

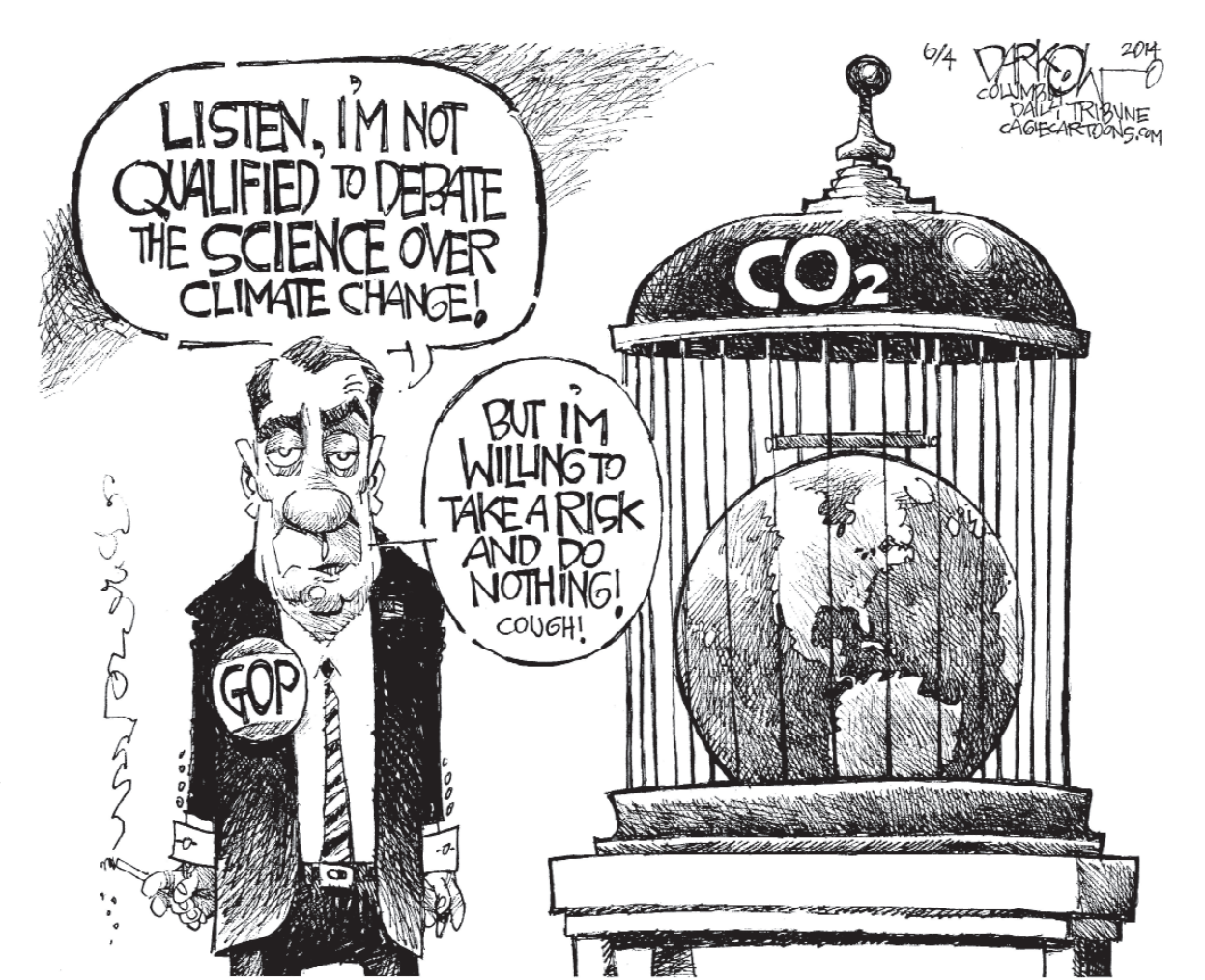
total agricultural receipts.  
Mostly, it’s a good news story. But it’s not enough to just celebrate it. It’s critical to keep working at it.  
Over the past several years many New York State farms, especially family farmers, have struggled with extremely low commodity prices that, combined with high energy and feed costs, labor shortages and flooding, have had a hard-hitting economic impact on many milk producers.  
Additionally, many farmers have struggled with low milk prices, an outdated federal price control system and the escalating costs associated with running family farms.  
Energy costs are particularly burdensome. And that’s why the Senate has approved, with unanimous, bipartisan support, legislation to establish a “Dairy Farm Improved Energy Efficiency Loan Fund.”  
The proposed new loan fund would be administered by the New York State Energy and Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) and provide state grants and low-interest loans to help dairy farmers undertake energy

efficiency projects and purchase cutting-edge energy technologies.  
It’s a critical step for the industry’s future. Energy is one of a dairy farm’s most burdensome expenses. Dairy farmers are particularly hard hit by high fuel and other energy costs. This program could help some farmers enhance energy efficiency or take advantage of new technology. It would be another wise investment in the future of upstate New York dairy farms, businesses and communities.  
The proposed new Dairy Farm Improved Energy Efficiency Loan Fund would provide state assistance to help more farmers utilize high-efficiency lighting, pumping and cooling equipment, and other energy management systems, and could result in significant energy savings and increased milk yields. It would also help accelerate the development of New York’s energy services industry, providing new and expanded job opportunities.  
Utilities have a harder time servicing farms because of their remote locations at the end of the electric grid infrastructure. Supporters of the proposed fund, including me, believe strengthening the energy systems of individual farms and developing micro-grids in remote areas will enhance the overall reliability of the system.  
But first it has to be

approved by the State Assembly, and then signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo. So far, Assembly approval hasn’t been easy to come by.  
The Assembly leadership, a New York City-oriented group of legislators, hasn’t always been as responsive as some of us would like to upstate New York’s key challenges and crises. This legislation, for example, has been approved by the Senate for several years only to die in the Assembly. So those of us who represent communities and regions where the dairy industry must remain a cultural and economic bedrock, keep coming back — and we keep pushing for upstate-friendly initiatives like this one.  
New York State’s dairy industry has reclaimed its rightful place as one of America’s top three milk producers. We can never forget that our farmers have long been and must endure as the foundation of so many upstate, rural communities and economies. We have to always keep working and stay committed to the growth and prosperity of our farms. Plain and simple.

*State Sen. Tom O’Mara, R-Big Flats, represents New York’s 58th Senate District, which includes Steuben, Chemung, Schuyler and Yates counties, and part of Tompkins County.*

### ANOTHER VIEW



### OTHER VIEW | THE KANSAS CITY STAR

## A shameful rush to judgment on Bergdahl

All that the good people of Hailey, Idaho, wanted to do was welcome a son of their town back home. But this is America, the land of hot air and small minds and legions of relentless naysayers who bullied one small town into backing away from a good deed.  
Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl had spent five years in enemy captivity after leaving his post in Afghanistan. Yes, he might eventually and

convincingly be characterized as a deserter, as so many of his military colleagues and others who are quick to judge want to put it now.  
But Bergdahl’s episode — the story of a possibly troubled young man in the midst of a troubling war — is still clouded by a profound lack of answers and of humanity.  
We know very little about Bob and Jani Bergdahl, the soldier’s parents, who have every right to reunite with their son and receive their community’s warmth and prayers. And, yes, of course, it remains very tragic if other parents’ sons died in the wake of Bergdahl’s disappearance.  
Still, too many people right now want to convict Bergdahl of those deaths and deny his parents any good feeling. And they seem to want us to be a nation that would have left Bergdahl in enemy hands or worse.  
“What’s unfortunate is that many people have

spoken out about this episode without having all the facts,” Sen. Claire McCaskill said this week. “And this rush to judgment is frankly un-American. Especially considering that this is somebody who signed up and said: ‘I’m willing to die for my country.’ And was held in captivity for five years.”  
Good for her and for others in the blogosphere who advise that we all

SEE BERGDahl, A5