

GUEST EDIT | SCOTT OSBORN,
President, New York Wine Industry Association

Cuomo's stance hurts wine industry

New York state is losing millions of dollars and thousands of jobs just to protect the liquor industry from competition. Since 1979 the State Legislature has debated allowing the sale of wine in food stores only to fall, each time, to the liquor lobby's demands that the state continue to limit the retail store sale of wine to a monopoly – the liquor stores.

The recent response by Gov. Andrew Cuomo saying, "nothing has changed. I'm not supporting it" is disappointing because so much has changed.

In 1976 there were 4,500 liquor stores in New York State through which 19 New York wineries could sell their wine. In 2011 there are only 2,800 liquor stores in New York State through which more than 300 New York wineries hope to reach consumers. And of those 2,800 stores fewer than 900 carry any New York wine! Given these statistics how does New York State expect the small, family-owned vineyards and small-business wineries to survive?

Recent studies show that more than 5,000 new jobs will be created in New York after the state allows the market to open and wine be sold where food is sold. Recent polls show the majority of New York residents think wine should be sold where food is sold.

The 2011 legislation allowing wine to be sold in food stores also allows liquor stores to sell new, high mark-up products including New York produced cheese. This means another sales outlet for the product of dairy farmers. In states that allow wine sales in grocery stores liquor stores thrive as more consumers go to liquor stores for selection and service.

Every state with a major wine producing industry allows the sale of wine in food stores. Those states gain more revenue because when a product is convenient to purchase more of it is sold. And a national study shows no correlation between driving and underage drinking in states that allow wine sales in grocery stores than in states that do not.

Over the last 20 years New York wines have gained a leading reputation for quality with consumers so they now successfully compete in any market environment. This is proven every day through the sales successes of New York wines, in grocery stores, in states that allow wine to be sold there.

If New York wants to remain a leader in grape and wine production – it is fast falling to Washington State and Oregon since both allow wine to be sold in food stores – NYWIA urges Governor Cuomo and State Legislature to allow the sale of wine in food stores in 2012 and also allow retail liquor stores to better serve their customers through the sales of other New York food products and services.

The New York Wine Industry Association is a statewide organization of grape growers, wineries, allied manufacturing companies and hospitality providers.

LETTERS POLICY

- Letters should be typed or neatly printed.
- Letters must be signed and include an address and phone number. No letters will be published unless verified with the author in person or by telephone.
- Letters may be edited for space considerations.
- The publication of any letter is at the discretion of the editor.
- All letters become the property of *The Leader* and cannot be returned to sender.

Mail your letter to: **Fax your letter to:**
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (607) 936-9939

THE LEADER
PO BOX 1017
CORNING, NY 14830
Email your letter to:
sdupree@the-leader.com

The LEADER

The Leader (ISSN #10501983)
The Leader is published daily at
34 West Pulteney Street,
Corning, New York 14830

by Liberty Group Corning Holdings, Inc.
Periodical postage paid
at Corning, New York 14830-0817.
USPS code | 0586-160
Postmaster:
Send address changes to
The Leader, West Pulteney Street,
Corning, New York 14830
Publisher: Dennis Bruen

ON THE FRONT PAGE
Corning clocktower by artist
Larry Barone

CIRCULATION
Elmer Kuehner | Circulation director
936-4651, Ext. 320

EDITORIAL
Stella DuPree | Managing editor
936-4651, Ext. 361
sdupree@the-leader.com

ADVERTISING
Classifieds (607) 936-4651, Ext. 651
Retail (607) 936-4651, Ext. 653
Adv fax (607) 962-0782

Kurt Bartenstein | Ad director,
936-4651, Ext. 388
kbartenstein@the-leader.com

POSTAL RATES

	STEUBEN COUNTY	ELSEWHERE IN USA
One month	\$28.60	One month \$36.85
Three months	\$85.80	Three months \$110.55
Six months	\$171.60	Six months \$221.10
One year	\$308.88	One year \$397.98

ARTIST'S VIEW

POLITICS | SEN. TOM O'MARA

Season of giving

The state's Venison Donation Coalition sums up the core of its mission this way, "With the downturn of the economy, budget cuts throughout the country, and increased layoffs, more and more Americans are feeling the crunch and being left hungry. Those going hungry are families, children and single parents and the donation of venison can help feed these people."

It couldn't be timelier to issue a reminder on the Coalition's admirable efforts. First, and most strikingly, recently released census figures reveal that the state's poverty rate is the highest it's been since 1998. More than three million New Yorkers live below the official poverty level. That's the highest total in 12 years. One anti-hunger advocate noted that this new data means "that if New York State residents in poverty all held hands, they could create a line that would run from Times Square to the Golden Gate Bridge." A reminder's in order, as well, because of the fast approaching holiday season, a time of giving, and, more directly, with the regular deer hunting season opening across our region and throughout the Southern Zone this Saturday, Nov. 19, at sunrise.

(A brief side note: this year's regular deer hunting season marks the implementation of new laws that I sponsored this year with local assemblymen Phil Palmesano and Chris Friend that permanently authorize rifle hunting in Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben and Yates counties. Deer hunting is a mainstay of the regional and statewide recreational economy, by some estimates accounting for \$2 billion worth of economic activity and 28,000 jobs, and rifle

hunting has proven beneficial to local counties.)

But back to the Venison Donation Coalition. It's a foundation supported by sportsmen's organizations, of course, but also by corporations, government agencies, civic and religious groups, and individual citizens. I'm glad for this chance to call attention to its meaningful work. In government, particularly in an era like the current one defined by limited resources to address seemingly infinite demands, we're always searching for ways to encourage individual citizens to contribute to the overall quality of our communities.

It was 18 years ago when an area "Hunters for the Hungry" program was prepared to donate 400 pounds of venison for distribution to the needy and discovered that state law prevented them, and other similar groups operating in central and western New York, from doing so. The law in 1993 deemed it illegal to distribute, for public consumption, meat from animals that were not slaughtered under qualified supervision to ensure that the meat was safe to eat. As a result, "Hunters for the Hungry" programs operating throughout New York at that time were being told they couldn't donate over 10,000 pounds of venison to food banks and other organizations providing meals to the unemployed, shut-ins, senior citizens and other needy citizens.

It just didn't make any sense that hunters weren't allowed to donate perfectly healthy, nutritionally sound food to those who needed and would appreciate such a good meal. So the Legislature quickly acted to establish a program to address the appropriate health concerns and allow the donations to be made before

the meat spoiled.

The venison donation program that resulted is now a broad-based partnership that includes a range of area supporters. It's facilitated the donation of venison to food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens and additional not-for-profit organizations and charities that feed the poor. Sportsmen and sportswomen were provided the opportunity to demonstrate to their concern for the state's neediest citizens, and their response has been overwhelming. Today the Venison Donation Coalition operates in most of the state's 62 counties. Countless citizens have enjoyed nutritious meals as a result. Since 1999, in fact, the Coalition has coordinated the processing of over 337 tons of venison—equal to more than 2.7 million servings of highly nutritious, low-fat, high-protein meat.

It's an admirable effort. While it may not readily come to mind as a community development mainstay, it surely is. You can't underestimate the spirit of commitment and giving it encourages. We will continue to develop infrastructure, promote tourism, improve schools, protect citizens, and do anything and everything possible to enhance our economic standing, but along with these fundamental responsibilities is a responsibility to the quality of life for everyone. That's what's important, appropriate and meaningful about the ongoing work of the Venison Donation Coalition.

For more information, visit the Venison Donation Coalition web site at www.venison-donation.com.

■ **Tom O'Mara is a state senator from Big Flats.**

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ready to serve once again

TO THE EDITOR |
Thank you, Corning City 6th Ward residents. The trust and honor you bestowed upon me Nov. 8 will forever be cherished and remembered. I am truly grateful to so many relatives and friends who contributed to the largest

margin of victory I ever experienced. Be assured I will honor my commitments and priorities as your representative on City Council.

Throughout my political career, I have always been available and accessible to the public and demonstrated an ability to deliver untiring constituent service. I am anxious to once again renew

my ambition to represent the people's best interest.

Finally, thank you Betty for your years of dedicated service to the 6th Ward. I will continue your efforts to make our great city, the city we love, a better and safer place to live. Our citizens deserve nothing less!

Frank Coccho
Corning City councilman-elect
6th Ward

Sorry, Joe: No excuses for cover-up

Why didn't anyone call the police?

There's no justifiable answer, of course, as to why no one bothered to call 911 when Penn State defensive coordinator Jerry Sandusky was allegedly caught sexually violating a 10-year-old boy in a coaches' locker room shower.

Mike McQueary told his father as well as head coach Joe Paterno, and Paterno

told his boss ... who told his boss ... who told his boss ... but that's as far as it went. Sandusky was told not to bring kids to cam-

pus anymore, but no one called the cops. No one. For the love of God, why not?

How could these men protect Sandusky? He didn't commit the usual "crimes" associated with college football – he didn't buy cars for players or plane tickets for parents. He didn't sell jerseys or footballs or championship rings. He didn't bet on the game.

He allegedly raped a boy in a locker room shower. And Penn State University condoned it. They covered up his alleged crimes and turned a blind eye.

All for the love of a stupid game. A game!

God help us, that is most likely the reason. Instead of protecting children, the university chose to protect Paterno and its sacred football program.

What does it say about us when we treasure a game more than our children?

How many boys did Sandusky rape elsewhere after Penn State "punished" him? We'll never know.

It makes me sick. No one involved in this cover-up is without blame, including Paterno, and he and his staff deserved to be sacked. It amazes me anyone could believe otherwise.

The students who demonstrated last week on behalf of their fallen hero should be ashamed. Paterno condoned what Sandusky allegedly did. No football record or reputation can excuse that.

Hopefully, Sandusky will pay for his alleged crimes with a nice, long stay in prison, and the boys he ruined can recover with the help of therapy, support and their faith.

...

One of the things I enjoy most about my job is election night. Not the waiting part, but when the results come in – especially if there are upsets and close races. Tuesday's election didn't disappoint – no one in the office predicted a Democratic sweep of contested City Council races or Dennis Morris defeating Joe Fazzary to take the judge seat in Schuyler County.

The Democrats now own a 5-4 majority of council seats, and it will be interesting to see how newly elected legislator Hilda Lando balances that job while also serving on the City Council. Lando says she'll keep both positions. She'll have to be careful of appearances of conflict of interest when issues arise that affect the city directly.

In Schuyler, even Morris

SEE DUPREE | 5A

■ **Stella DuPree is managing editor of *The Leader*. She can be reached at sdupree@the-leader.com.**