

OPINION

GUEST VIEW | MIKE MORRONGIELLO

Why break your silence now?

The Corning Leader ran a guest editorial from former Hornell mayor and Steuben County Democrat Chairman Shawn Hogan entitled "Silent No More."

It's a factless screed against President Trump, full of the usual Democrat talking points: he's a racist, he's incompetent, yadda yadda.

The article begged the question: as a former party chairman and mayor, when was Hogan ever silent? The answer is: when Democrats were in charge.

Hogan is very worried about our democracy; putting on his best "bipartisan" face, he writes, "This is not about Republican and Democrats, this is about the survival of our Democracy."

Oh, really? Think back to March 2010, when Democrat Eric Massa resigned from Congress, a special election was needed to find his replacement and Republican newcomer Tom Reed was the favorite. Obamacare was being debated in Congress and Democrats, then as now, ran New York State Democrat Governor

Patterson delayed calling a special election while Democrat county chairmen (including Hogan, Steuben County's Chairman) "vetted" candidates.

The time between Massa's resignation and the special election set a state record that may never be broken for the longest time to a special election.

When Obamacare was voted on, Democrats made sure we were unrepresented in Congress.

Why? Because Tom Reed would have voted against Obamacare, and the Democrats couldn't risk another "no" vote. Denying people representation is a direct threat to our democracy, and Hogan went along with it and never said a word, the people of Steuben, Chemung and Schuyler Counties be damned.

To sell Obamacare, President Obama served up the now-familiar lies to the American people: "If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor...if you like your plan, you can keep your plan."

It wasn't true, and anyone who read the plan knew it,

but Obama said it some 30 times. Millions were kicked off health care plans they liked, and lost their doctors too. Hogan was silent, and never said a word about Obama's whoppers on a subject as personal and important to the people as their health care.

Obama said immediately following his election that "We are days away from fundamentally transforming the United States of America."

Hogan never raised a peep. He never questioned why Obama wanted to remake a country he claims to love.

Hogan never complained about the Democrat-sponsored tax, regulate and spend policies out of Albany that are killing Upstate. I don't recall him "breaking his silence" about the massive population losses upstate, nor about the Cuomo corruption trial over the Buffalo billion.

Hogan reserves his very selective outrage for Republicans only.

• Mike Morrongiello is the former Chairman of the Corning City Republican Committee

ANOTHER VIEW



COMMENTARY | STATE SEN. TOM O'MARA, R-BIG FLATS

Take it page by page this summer

Numbers help tell every story.

For example, many studies over the years have made the case that children who read during the summer make greater academic gains in the following school year than children who do not. In fact, the statistics on the "summer slide" jump right off the page, including that:

- > students can lose up to 25 percent of their reading level over the summer;
- > children who don't engage in summer reading lose approximately two months of instructional time, or roughly 22% of the school year; and
- > by the end of the sixth grade, children who lose reading skills during the summer are, on average, two years behind their peers.

So the numbers help tell the larger story. But words themselves can help deliver the most meaningful testimony of all.

The late Dr. Carl Sagan, the popular American scientist and Cornell University professor of astronomy and space sciences, said, "One of the greatest gifts adults can give - to their offspring and to their society - is to read to children."

President Thomas Jefferson stated, "I cannot live without books."

The author William Faulkner exclaimed, "Read, read, read." Summer reading is a lifeline and I am grateful this summer to collaborate with the New York State Library and public libraries statewide, including so many throughout the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, on the "Summer Reading at New York Libraries" initiative.

For my part, I offer an online summer reading program. To participate, students and parents can visit my Senate website, www.omara.nysenate.gov, and click on the "Libraries Rock" logo near the top of the home page. Among other

features, the site includes a recording journal, opportunities to share books with other family members and friends, and a series of popular summer reading lists.

At its most fundamental level, summarizing the range of research on the importance of summer reading for students is straightforward: it is all about getting books into the hands of kids. According to Scholastic, a few of the keys to successful summer reading are letting young readers choose the books they want to read (91% of children say they're more likely to finish a book if they've picked it out themselves), encouraging kids to read four or more books and, maybe most importantly, providing easy access to books.

The underlying importance of access points directly to the critical role our public libraries play to encourage students and their families to read.

See O'MARA, A5

AUCTION REMINDER!! 2018 STEUBEN COUNTY AUCTION OF DELINQUENT TAX PARCELS

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OBITUARIES & NEWS

OBITUARIES



Donald R. Stewart

STEWART, Donald R. Age 86 of Lawrenceville, PA passed away Fri. June 22, 2018.

Don was born in Pittsburgh, PA to the late Harry and Genevieve (Delo) Stewart.

He was predeceased by his wife Shirley in 2003 and is survived by his son and daughter,

D. Scott (Marcie) Stewart of Niceville, FL; Shyrl Lynn (David) Yoder of Elmira, NY, Grandson, Cameron Stewart and several extended family members. Don was also predeceased by his sisters, Evelyn Kostenbauder and Genevieve Wilma Sampson.

Don was retired as a Furnace Construction Supervisor working at Corning Inc.. He was also

a veteran of the US Army. Service will take place privately in Woodlawn National Cemetery in Elmira. Those wishing may remember Don with memorials to Habitat for Humanity PO Box 3110 Elmira, NY 14905. Condolences at www.barberfuneralhome.com.

Jan Sylvia (VanKurin) Crooke

Mrs. Jan Sylvia (VanKurin) Crooker, of Caton, New York, born on November 14, 1934 in Corning, New York, to the late Gladys Wellington and the late Glenn VanKurin, passed away at age 83 on June 25, 2018 in Elmira, New York. Jan was the beloved wife of Carley. She is survived by her son, Douglas Crooker; daughter, Charmaine Crooker; brothers, James Wellington, Maynard Wellington, and Ken VanKurin; sister, Evelyn Gridley; and grandchildren, Breanna Phalen, Nick Weinstein, Jake Weinstein, Liz Weinstein, and Kate Weinstein.

In her spare time, Jan enjoyed crocheting, sewing, refinishing and reupholstering furniture, baking, and spending time with her family. Her family paid this tribute to her, "Jan (Bema) was

one of the most selfless and kind people you could ever meet. She always put everyone's needs above her own. Her sense of humor and love of family will be dearly missed."

The graveside service will be private.

Edward T. Wright

Addison, NY | Edward T. Wright, 89, of Farnham St., Addison, NY, passed away on Saturday, June 30, 2018 at Corning Hospital.

Ed was born in Painted Post, NY on September 2, 1928, the son of the late Ellsworth and Elizabeth O'Shay Wright. He grew up on the Orr Hill area of Addison. Ed served his country in the US Army in the period between the end of World War II and the beginning of the Korean Conflict.

On January 1, 1949, he and Margaret H. Sullivan were married in Addison. Ed was employed by the Ingersoll Rand Co. and later Dresser Rand where he worked for over 40 years as a machinist. He and Margaret had attended the First Baptist Church of Addison but were presently attending the Curtis Baptist Church.

Surviving Ed is Margaret Wright, his wife of over 69

years, living in Addison, his children and their spouses, Rose and Frank Demonstoy of Addison, Paul and Jeannie Wright of Horseheads, Barbara Wright of Addison and Linda Knapp of Corning, his grandchildren, Michael (Holly) Seeley, Brian (Becky) Stratton, Jeffrey (Amber) Fuller, Rebecca Mott, Eugene (Jennifer) Demonstoy, Kyle Wright. Katie (Brian) Porter, Cassandra (David) Fish and Dana Knapp, 11 great grandchildren, his sisters, Mary Rice and Vivian Stiles, both of Painted Post, his brother, Robert Wright of Savona, and several nieces and nephews.

Ed was preceded in death by his daughters, Betty Wright and Helen Mott, his granddaughter, Andrea Cornell and his brothers, John Wright and Raymond Wright.

Friends and family may call on Tuesday, July 3, 2018 from 1 to 3 pm at the H. P. Smith & Son Inc. Funeral Home, 1607 Main St. Woodhull, NY. Funeral services will be conducted there at 3 pm with Rev. Dale Ingraham officiating.

Burial will follow in Addison Rural Cemetery with military honors observed.

DEATH NOTICE

Raymond S. Karkowski

Raymond S. Karkowski, 86, of Bath, died Thursday, June 28, 2018 at Taylor Health Center.

Calling hours are noon-2 p.m. and 5-7 p.m. Thursday at

Fagan's Funeral Home, 31 W. Morris St.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 12:30 p.m. Friday at St. Mary's Church, Bath.

Graveside services will be held at 2 p.m. Friday in Bath National Cemetery.

COMMENTARY | BENJAMIN F. EDWARDS & CO. AND DAVID W. DAVIES

Collecting your Social Security benefit

If you're close to retirement age, you may be thinking of taking your Social Security benefits soon. After so many years of seeing part of your paycheck deducted to fund that federal program, you may be eager to cash in. But should you? It's complicated.

There are many factors that go into not only whether you should take it, but even when you're eligible. Your "full retirement age" depends on what year you were born. For example, those born between 1943 and 1954 can get "full" retirement benefits when they are 66 years old, but anyone born after 1960 has to wait until age 67.

You can collect Social Security as early as age 62, but you'll collect a lesser amount. Conversely, you can delay collection until you're past the full retirement age and collect a higher amount.

So how do you decide whether to take your Social Security now or later? While there is no one-size-fits-all approach, it is an important and multi-faceted decision that should take into consideration your and your spouse's health, income need, income sources, income taxes and the assets you have accumulated for retirement.

How the numbers work

There's a somewhat complex formula for determining what you'll collect. But to simplify, imagine that you are able to collect in full at age 66. If you started collecting at 62, you'd lose 25 percent of what you otherwise would get.

On the other hand, if you waited until you were 70 to collect, you'd get 32 percent more than you would have at 66 (you get an extra 8 percent for each year you delay past full retirement age, up to age 70).

The break-even point

Of course, if you start taking your Social Security payments at 62, you're collecting money that otherwise you wouldn't have. But that smaller amount remains smaller for the rest of your life. At some point, the larger amount that you'll collect by waiting will be worth more than what you were able to take right away.

There are calculators that can help you figure that out when that

day comes, but roughly speaking you'll have to live into your late 70s or early 80s to come out ahead. Of course, everyone wants to live as long as possible, and you don't want to bet on your own death. But if you're in poor health, it might be worth considering taking the payment now rather than waiting.

One spouse takes it early, the other delays

Some couples decide to have one person take the retirement benefit early, while the other waits. This strategy depends in part on which spouse earned more.

If the spouse with the lower earnings files for benefits early, the calculation is based on how many months before full retirement age he or she took it – as long as the higher-earning spouse hadn't yet filed for benefits. If the higher-earning spouse files for benefits, the lower-earning spouse would be entitled to an amount equal to 50% of the higher-earning spouse's full retirement amount or the lower-earning spouse's own benefit, whichever is greater. Reductions still apply for receiving benefits before full retirement age.

There are other approaches that couples may want to consider. Suffice it to say the decision is complex – for couples, as well as for everyone else. Given how important it is to your financial future, you may want to talk to your accountant or a financial advisor to decide what's best for your personal situation.

This article is provided by David W. Davies, Managing Director – Investments at Benjamin F. Edwards & Co. in Corning, NY, and was prepared by or in cooperation with Benjamin F. Edwards & Co. The information included in this article is not intended to be used as the primary basis for making investment decisions nor should it be construed as a recommendation to buy or sell any specific security. Benjamin F. Edwards & Co. does not endorse this organization or publication. Consult your investment professional for additional information and guidance. Benjamin F. Edwards does not provide tax or legal advice. Benjamin F. Edwards & Co., Member SIPC and FINRA 2016-2068 EXP 10/31/2018

Evangelical leaders downplay potential Roe v. Wade reversal

By Steve Peoples

Associated Press

NEW YORK — For evangelical Christian leaders like Jerry Falwell Jr., this is their political holy grail.

Like many religious conservatives in a position to know, the Liberty University president with close ties to the White House suspects that the Supreme Court vacancy President Donald Trump fills in the coming months will ultimately lead to the reversal of the landmark abortion case Roe v. Wade. But instead of celebrating publicly, some evangelical leaders are downplaying their fortune on an issue that has defined their movement for decades.

"What people don't understand is that if you overturn Roe v. Wade, all that does is give the states the right to decide whether abortion is legal or illegal," Falwell told The Associated Press in an interview. "My guess is that there'd probably be less than 20 states that would make abortion illegal if given that right."

Falwell added: "In the '70s, I don't know how many states had abortion illegal before Roe v. Wade, but it won't be near as many this time."

The sentiment, echoed by evangelical leaders across the country this past week, underscores the delicate politics that surround a moment many religious conservatives have longed for. With the retirement of swing vote Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, Trump and his Republican allies in the Senate plan to install a conservative justice who could re-define the law of the land on some of the nation's most explosive policy debates — none bigger than abortion.

And while these are the very best of times for the religious right, social conservatives risk a powerful backlash from their opponents if they cheer too loudly. Women's groups have already raised the alarm for their constituents, particularly suburban women, who are poised to play an outsized role in the fight for the House majority this November.

Two-thirds of Americans do not want to see Roe v. Wade overturned, according to a poll released Friday by the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation. Among women of reproductive age, three out of four want the high court ruling left alone. The poll was conducted before Kennedy's retirement was announced.

"The left is going to try very hard to say this is all about overturning Roe," said Johnnie Moore, a Southern Baptist minister who was a co-chairman of the Trump campaign's evangelical advisory board. The more significant shift on the high court, he said, would likely be the help given to conservatives in their fight for what they call religious freedom.

Tony Perkins, who leads the socially conservative Family Research Council, said abortion was simply "a factor" in evangelicals' excitement over a more conservative Supreme Court. He suggested that public opinion was already shifting against abortion rights, although that's not true of the Roe v. Wade ruling, which has become slightly more popular over time.

Perkins agreed with Moore that the broader push for religious freedom was a bigger conservative focus.

Many evangelicals, for example, have lashed out against Obama-era laws that required churches and

other religious institutions to provide their employees with women's reproductive services, including access to abortion and birth control. Others have rallied behind private business owners who faced legal repercussions after denying services to gay people.

Yet sweeping restrictions to abortion rights are certainly on the table, Moore noted.

"There is a high level of confidence within the community that overturning Roe is actually, finally possible," Moore said. He added: "Evangelicals have never been more confident in the future of America than they are now. It's just a fact."

In Alabama, Tom Parker, a Republican associate justice on the state Supreme Court who is campaigning to become the state's chief justice, explicitly raised the potential of sending cases to Washington that would lead to the overturning of key rulings, including Roe v. Wade.

"President Trump is just one appointment away from giving us a conservative majority on the U.S. Supreme Court," Parker said in an interview on the radio program Wallbuilders Live. "And they are going to need cases that they can use to reverse those horrible decisions of the liberal majority in the past that have undermined the Constitution and really just abused our own personal rights."

Despite Trump's struggles with Christian values in his personal life at times, skeptical evangelical Christians lined up behind him in the 2016 election, and they remain one of his most loyal constituencies.

The president's standing with white evangelical Christians hit an all-time high in April when 75 percent of

evangelicals held a favorable view of Trump, according to a poll conducted by the Public Religion Research Institute.

The unlikely marriage between the thrice-married president and Christian conservatives has always been focused on Trump's ability to re-shape the nation's judicial branch.

On the day she endorsed candidate Trump in March 2016, the late iconic anti-abortion activist Phyllis Schlafly first asked him privately whether he would appoint more judges like the conservative Antonin Scalia, recalled Schlafly's successor Ed Martin, who was in the room at the time. Trump promised he would.

The president followed through with the appointment of Neil Gorsuch less than a month after his inauguration, delighting religious conservatives nationwide. And the Trump White House, while disorganized in other areas, made its relationship with the religious right a priority.

The first private White House meeting between evangelical leaders and senior Trump officials came in the days after the Gorsuch nomination, said Moore, who was in attendance. He said the White House has hosted roughly two dozen similar meetings since then in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building adjacent to the White House.

A senior administration official such as Jared Kushner, Ivanka Trump or Kellyanne Conway — if not Trump himself — has always been present, Moore added. Each meeting featured a detailed briefing on the administration's push to fill judicial openings.

"The courts have been at the very center of the relationship," Moore said.

Schuyler, Steuben and Yates counties. The members of the Finger Lakes Library System, including Tompkins County, are online at www.flsl.org.

Last year, according to New York State Library officials, over

two million young people statewide participated in the summer program. We hope it will be more this year. More information on "Summer Reading at New York Libraries" is online at <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/>.

There are plenty of ways to help children get summer off to a great start — and to then make it meaningful and memorable.

A reading list is one of the best ways of all.

O'MARA

From Page A4

Libraries are the gateway for making books and other reading materials

and programs available throughout our communities. Our region is incredibly fortunate to have an outstanding network of public libraries providing access to books and other reading activities, materials, and opportunities.

So keep in mind that our local libraries sponsor a variety of summer reading activities and events. Visit the website of the Southern Tier Library System, www.stsls.org, for links to member libraries in Chemung,