

OPINION

SHAWN VARGO | FROM THE EDITOR

Well that escalated quickly



Shawn Vargo

Consider the 2018 Congressional race for the 23rd District officially off and running. No, a series of debates between incumbent Tom Reed and Democratic challenger Tracy Mitrano have not been scheduled. Instead, folks from Reed’s camp have had a Corning man arrested and charged with petit larceny for taking a Reed campaign sign with a hidden GPS tracker, recently. Personally, I was hoping for a couple of weeks of calm before the attack ads began running on television and social media, but no such luck. My plans are to be at the Corning Town Court on Monday to watch the proceedings unfold. I’ll be the one with the Cracker Jack - unless I cannot get it past security.

Well, I haven’t been to the Town Court for a couple of years, since a little “misunderstanding” about my car’s inspection sticker ... but that’s a story for a different day. I’m sure the ensuing drama will be a part of both candidate’s campaigns in the coming months. Meanwhile, I will continue to roll my eyes and shake my head slowly. Now, in the immortal words of boxing referee Mills Lane “Let’s get it on.”

Uber or ambulance

In February, I slipped on some ice, fell down my concrete porch steps and fractured four vertebrae. Once that was determined at Corning Hospital, I was immediately taken to Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre by ambulance. I was treated wonderfully during the ride, but faced a bill of more than \$1,900. I recently heard that more people are turning to Uber for their trips to the hospital, due to the cost of ambulances. I wish that our elected officials could see what the ever-increasing costs of healthcare is doing to the population in terms of decisions being made with their lives - whether it be using Uber or not being able to afford needed medications. I think it was a campaign promise for someone in Washington D.C. - maybe he can look into it after a round of golf that he promised he wouldn’t do as much as the previous occupier of his office.

Taste of Summer

I hope local residents took advantage of the nice day that occurred during the recent Taste of Summer on Bridge Street. My family and I took several laps around the festivities, enjoyed the music, as well as the food and fun. Well done Gaffer District. *Shawn Vargo is the Executive Editor of The Leader and can be reached at svargo@the-leader.com.*

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

Ignoring soil health at our own peril



Tom O'Mara

Eighty years ago, during the height of the Dust Bowl of the 1930s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote in a letter to America’s governors, “The Nation that destroys its soils destroys itself.” That statement remains as true today as when it was written in 1937. Last week in Albany, farmers, researchers, policymakers and other experts gathered for New York State’s first “Soil Health Summit” hosted by, among others, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University. It is a rapidly evolving modern-day scenario getting the attention it deserves, and demands. It is simply one of the most alarming and critical challenges facing farmers and the agricultural industry overall throughout New York State, the nation and the world. Last year the Nature Conservancy released a report, “rethink Soil:

A Roadmap to U.S. Soil Health,” examining how over the past century agricultural technology improvements have helped farmers continue to feed a world population that has soared from under 2 billion to over 7 billion. At the same time, however, it is taking a toll on America’s agricultural soils. The report estimates that “the annual societal and environmental costs of the status quo are up to \$85.1 billion annually through unintended effects on human health, property, energy, endangered species, biodiversity losses, eutrophication, contamination, agricultural productivity, and resilience.” The Senate and Assembly Environmental Conservation Committees also hosted a panel discussion last year, “From the Ground Up: Why Soil Health is Key to Sustainable Food Production.” The discussion focused on soil health and resiliency, giving it the attention it warrants and encouraging action on the development of a New York State Soil Health Management Network modeled after the successful federal Soil Health Network.

Furthermore, last year’s state budget included funding from the state’s Environmental Protection Fund for a “Soil Health Initiative” at Cornell University. The initiative works to facilitate ongoing soil-related research and guide additional efforts toward the establishment of the state-level Soil Health Management Network. The envisioned network would be a public-private extension and education consortium. Last week’s Soil Health Summit continued to advance the next steps. You can read more at <http://www.summit.newyorksoilhealth.org>. We have witnessed firsthand in the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions over the past several years how soil health and resiliency have such a significant impact on farm productivity, profitability and sustainability. The same is true statewide. The ability of soils to resist drought, flooding and other impacts continues to emerge as a critical conservation, economic growth, environmental protection and food quality challenge in New York State, as well as across the nation and world. The bottom line is clear: the sooner the better on

developing and implementing a comprehensive, state-level response. As always, Cornell CALS is at the forefront of the emerging research and response strategies. The fundamental, underlying importance of this challenge – and the necessary pursuit of forward-thinking programs and policies to tackle it – is highlighted in a recently released book by author David R. Montgomery from the University of Washington, who was a keynote speaker at last week’s New York Soil Health Summit. In “Growing a Revolution: Bringing Our Soil Back to Life,” he echoes FDR’s warning from eight decades ago when he writes, “Unlike other environmental problems such as dwindling water supplies and loss of forests, the degradation of soil fertility has gone relatively unnoticed. It happens so slowly that it rarely becomes the crisis du jour. Therein lies the problem. The once-Edenic, now-impooverished places that spawned Western civilization illustrate one of history’s most underappreciated lessons: societies that don’t take care of their soil do not last.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Steuben County Fair entries due

To the Editor, It’s time to get entries in for the Steuben County Fair, to be held this from Aug. 14-19. All entries should be on file at the Bath Fair Office by Friday, July 27. Fair entry booklets listing the various categories to enter are available by calling the Fair Office at 607-776-4801 or can be downloaded online at www.steubencountyfair.org/premium-book. Members of the Steuben County Agricultural Society are encouraging people to enter in the Fair if they have a craft, vegetable, canned good, baked good specialty, needlework, photograph, painting, flower or floral arrangement that they are especially proud of. The more entries that are on display, the better the exhibits will be. Monetary, as well as the ribbon prizes will be

awarded in the various categories. The Bath Fair Office is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. through 4 p.m. For further information, phone the Fair Office at 607-776-4801 or contact Jo Ann Brundage at 607-776-6410 or Martha Bigelow at 607-776-3761. **Jo Ann Brundage Bath** **Reed cannot be silent** To the Editor, I send this message to Representative Tom Reed. On Monday President Trump embarrassed himself and defamed the country he is nominally in charge of by embracing Vladimir Putin's denials regarding Russian interference with the 2016 election over the conclusions of his own intelligence agencies. Regardless of whether one agrees with the outcome of the election, an American citizen and

government official MUST be outraged by the documented efforts of a rival nation (one currently lead by a former KGB official) to influence the outcome of a national election. Voting is sacred in this country, and to have it meddled with by our country's recent enemy is an offense we must all resist. Why then is our government's leader -- our president -- publicly embracing the views of our nuclear adversary rather planning a cogent response to cyber-attacks on our country, based on the evidence provided by his own intelligence agencies? Why is he attacking our country's historical allies while embracing the leader of a country known to invade its neighbors, and imprison and poison its critics? Why is he demeaning the efforts of the prosecutors who have effectively passed indictments on the Russian agents involved in the cyber-hacking of our

nation's election? And where is your voice on this matter? You may remain agnostic on whether the president or his campaign directly colluded with the Russians and still feel outrage at his public rebuking of your country's intelligence and legal community. Silence cannot be an option; it's an endorsement. While it has always been clear that you are a supporter of President Trump, political support should not equal blind allegiance to a man whose action threaten our electoral security. How is embracing Vladimir Putin making America great again?

Roger Hecht Spencer **Make Russia Great Again – Vote Republican**

To the Editor, Today was a sad day for our country and a great day for Vladimir Putin and Russia.

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PG HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 3:SUMMER VACATION IN 2D	1:35	7:10	9:25	
PG HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 3:SUMMER VACATION IN 3D	4:15			
PG-13 MAMMA MIA! HERE WE GO AGAIN	1:15	4:20	6:50	9:20
PG-13 JURASSIC WORLD: FALLEN KINGDOM 2D	1:20	4:10	7:00	9:35
R THE FIRST PURGE	1:45	4:35	7:15	9:45
PG-13 SKYSCRAPER	1:10	4:00	7:00	9:30
PG-13 ANTMAN AND THE WASP	1:30	4:15	7:20	9:40
PG INCREDIBLES 2	1:25	4:00	6:45	9:15

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Canisteo Wind Energy Center
COMMUNITY MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Visual Impact Assessment – Working Session

Jasper – Troupsburg Junior – Senior High School
3769 State Route 417, Jasper, NY 14855
August 2, 2018
Session 1 - 4:00pm | Session 2 - 5:30pm | Session 3 - 7:00pm

Invenergy is developing the Canisteo Wind Energy Center in Steuben County and requests your help identifying important visual resources. Please join us to learn how visual impacts will be reviewed, recommend locations that you consider important vantage points where turbines may be visible, and review proposed locations where photographic project simulations will be prepared. This meeting is an important step in the overall permit application.

We will host three identical sessions on August 2, come to any session and share your insights.

Visit the project website for more information: <https://canisteowind.com/>
Learn more about the Article 10 permit process at the New York State Department of Public Service: <http://www.dps.ny.gov/>

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(Adam Sandler, Andy Samberg, Fran Drescher) PG (1 Hr 37 Min)

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Sat. 7/21	3:15, 6:15, 8:15
Sun. 7/22	3:15, 6:15, 8:15
Mon. 7/23	3:15, 6:15
Tues. 7/24	CLOSED
Mon. 7/23	3:15, 6:15

ANT-MAN & THE WASP
(Paul Rudd, Evangeline Lilly, Michael Peña) PG-13 (1 Hr 58 Min)

Fri. 7/20	3:30, 6:30, 9:00
Sat. 7/21	3:30, 6:30, 9:00
Sun. 7/22	3:30, 6:30, 9:00
Mon. 7/23	3:30, 6:30
Tues. 7/24	CLOSED
Mon. 7/23	3:30, 6:30

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