

OPINION

FRANK ACOMB | GUEST VIEWPOINT

Duane Eddy snub uncalled for



Frank Acomb

Duane Eddy is a Rock and Roll Hall of Fame member, Musicians Hall of Fame member, and Corning native.

In March of this year, I nominated Mr. Eddy to be inducted into the Steuben County Hall of Fame.

Since he is such an obvious first ballot choice, I was stunned to learn he was not included in the class of 2019, but I was even more disheartened when I discovered that he apparently did not have the qualifications to make it past the very first committee.

A Rock and Roll Hall of Fame member and a Musicians Hall of Fame member could not pass the scrutiny of the Steuben County Hall of Fame. That statement is mind-boggling.

Does the committee feel that an international rock and roll star is not prestigious enough for the Steuben County Hall of Fame?

If Mr. Eddy does not qualify on the first ballot, what exactly are the lofty qualifications to make it into the hall?

As a resident of Steuben County, think of the missed

opportunities for our community, such as: his potential appearance, or perhaps performance at the induction ceremony.

Since he recently sold out numerous performances in London, I am not exaggerating when I say our county missed the national and international media coverage that would have ensued from his induction, not to mention the crowds that would have attended the ceremony to see a living legend.

But the real reason I am upset and baffled by this shortsighted decision to not include the 81-year-old, Grammy winning, creator of the "Twangy" Guitar sound into the Steuben County Hall of Fame is because of Mr. Eddy's lifelong pride in his hometown, and our apparent blasé attitude.

Mr. Eddy has spent an entire legendary and groundbreaking career proudly promoting the fact that he was born in Corning, NY. Mr. Eddy never forgot where he came from.

Whether in promotional material, album covers, etc. he has always made a point to recognize his birthplace, and we as a community have done next to nothing to recognize him.

Can you imagine how other communities throughout the country would seize on a rock and roll pioneer being born in their county? Yet

we have no sign, no plaque, his original home still stands but goes ignored and as we learned last week, there's not even a place for him in the Steuben County Hall of Fame?

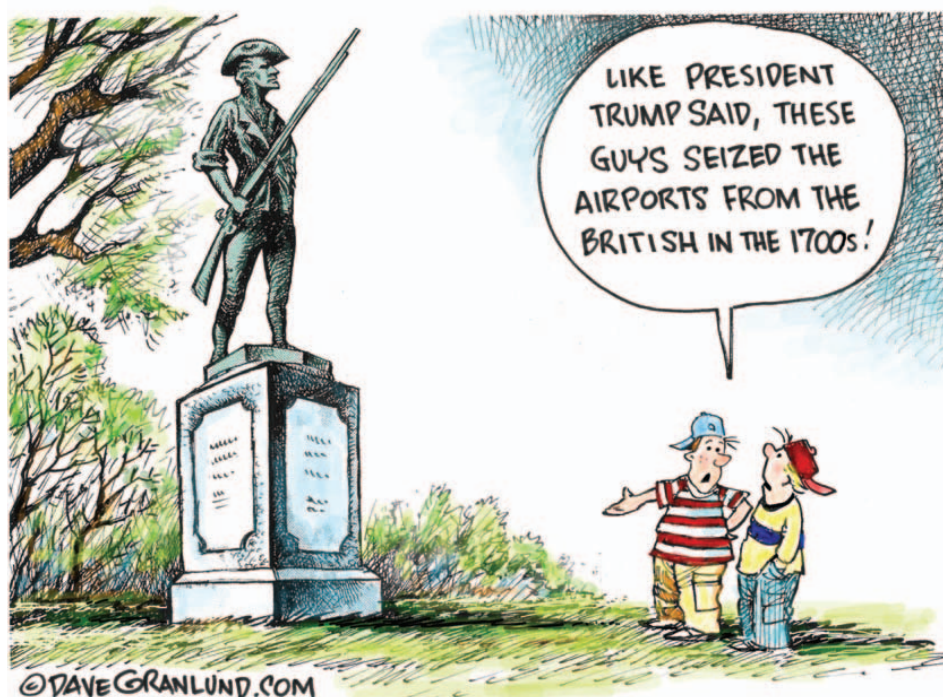
I do not have the space in this column to list all of Mr. Eddy's accomplishments and accolades but I would encourage you at the very least to listen to "Rebel- 'Rouser" — which sold over 3 million copies, and then think about the fact that the man who created that iconic sound is not worthy of a first ballot induction to the Steuben County Hall of Fame.

I'll conclude with this, in 1958 as the album "Have Twangy Guitar Will Travel" was on its way to selling over 6 million copies, and in the process of staying on the charts for 82 weeks, the first promotional biography was written about Duane Eddy.

It began like this, "Perhaps the town of Corning, New York is unaware that rock & roll star, Duane Eddy, was born there in 1938" and because of the decision of the Steuben County Hall of Fame Committee, that 61-year-old statement remains true today with the one exception that it should omit "perhaps."

Frank Acomb is the host of 'Frankly Speaking' on News/Talk 1230 & 1450 WENY

ANOTHER VIEW



TOM O'MARA | 58TH DISTRICT

Restoring some sense to state government



Tom O'Mara

Many are applauding the 2019 legislative session for its responsiveness to a political agenda near and dear to the hearts of those with a far-left idea of government.

I don't share their enthusiasm. I especially do not share the same ideas of what constitute priorities for state government. In fact, I have been outspoken in my opposition to many of the new laws approved this year.

Nevertheless, one action finally taken on the last night of this year's session was critical. Specifically, the restoration of \$65 million in state "Extreme Winter Recovery" funding to assist counties, towns, and villages regionally and throughout New York maintain and repair local roads and bridges is one of this session's few (in my opinion) highlights.

This funding, allocated annually over the past several years through the state's Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Programs (CHIPS), was left out of the 2019-20 state budget enacted by Gov. Andrew Cuomo and the Legislature's Democratic majorities in late March. This year's final budget included no additional funding for CHIPS base

aid AND cut the \$65-million "Extreme Winter Recovery" allocation that has become invaluable to municipalities.

Together with area Assemblyman Phil Palmesano, I denounced the cuts. Over the past decade, we have worked closely with county and town highway superintendents to help build the "Local Roads Matter" advocacy campaign. We appreciate and understand how critical this funding has become to localities across New York.

Moreover, we fought for its restoration and once it was finally put back in place, we said, "The elimination of this year's 'Extreme Winter Recovery' allocation pulled the foundation out from under local roads and bridges throughout this state. We are glad it has been restored because it is the absolute right thing to do. In a state budget allocating billions of dollars, including billions of dollars alone for downstate mass transit, local roads and bridges should always be a top priority. One of state government's fundamental responsibilities is the improvement and maintenance of local roads and bridges.

This 'Extreme Winter Recovery' restoration is critical but now we need to get back to work on building the case that this state needs to make a stronger investment in local transportation infrastructure for the sake of local communities, economies, motorists, and property taxpayers.

We look forward to

continuing this work."

We do look forward to this ongoing work. In March, over 600 local highway superintendents and highway department employees representing nearly every region of the state rallied in Albany as part of the annual "Local Roads Matter" effort.

Phil and I have helped lead the campaign in the Legislature since 2013 and have delivered significant funding over the past decade for local roads, bridges, and culverts. It must continue.

In a March 4 letter to the governor and legislative leaders, we made the case for stronger state support, "Local governments, for the foreseeable future, will continue to struggle to address budgetary demands in the face of the state-imposed property tax cap, rising pension and health care costs, and unfunded state mandates, among other burdens.

Furthermore, despite the state's increased commitment to CHIPS since 2013, base aid has remained stagnant over the past seven years.

There is clearly a compelling case for New York State to take these proposed steps to address urgent local transportation and infrastructure shortcomings, and we believe it is simply the right thing to do.

In order to meet the critical investment level needed to maintain and improve local roads, bridges, and culverts, a stronger state-local partnership is the only answer."

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

An outrageous administration

To the Editor, Each day of the Trump Administration presents a new outrage, not only for Americans but for people around the world who are compassionate and work hard to make reality-based decisions.

The memories of the dark days when George Bush and Dick Cheney manufactured arguments for invading Iraq after 9/11 seem today like distant, bad dreams compared to the nightmare of the "reality" Donald Trump has continually manufactured since he first began running for President.

No one doubts the Russians undermined the 2016 national election. Who could then imagine our President smiling and joking with Vladimir Putin and saying,

"By the way, stay out of our elections?" Trivializing an effort to destroy our democracy should have no place in the mind of our President.

We have a well-documented humanitarian crisis on our border with Mexico. Few people reading this cannot even begin to comprehend the terror and desperation that would motivate a parent to walk two thousand miles with children with only the dream of a better life. To characterize these migrants as "bad people," continually chant "build the wall" and then separate parents from children when they arrive is such a cruel and inhumane response, it is difficult to imagine a more terrible devastation.

And most recently in the news, our President took twenty steps into North

Korea for a two-minute photo op with North Korea's brutal dictator and then sang praises for Kim Jong Un and himself because now "the groundwork has been laid for real weapons reduction discussion."

The United States' diplomatic efforts have been turned upside down. Our President praises dictators and saves his name-calling and most disrespectful, language for the press, immigrants, and Congressional Democrats and 2020 Presidential candidates. Reports of a rising stock market and decreasing unemployment do little to console those living in the real world of a Trump nightmare. There are no words to describe how these actions are making America great.

Gary McCaslin, Corning