

OPINION

LETTERS POLICY

- Letters should be typed or neatly printed.
- Letters must be signed and include an address and phone number.
- 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: LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, THE LEADER PO BOX 1017 CORNING, NY 14830
Fax: 607-936-9939
Email: sdupree@the-leader.com

Online at www.the-leader.com/opinions

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor,

I have just sent the following letter to the President, the Attorney General, the Governor of North Dakota, the US Army Corps of Engineers and others regarding the Dakota Access Pipeline:

"The situation at Standing Rock is an embarrassment to the United States.

It is appalling on many levels:

- The Paris accord calls for a lowering of greenhouse gas emissions. Building new pipelines perpetuates the status quo and does nothing to help the US meet its commitments

- Pipelines under major waterways are a disaster waiting to happen.

- All the arguments that applied to the Keystone XL pipeline apply to the DAPL as well.

- The US is once again ignoring its treaties with indigenous peoples and the sovereignty over their tribal lands.

- Perhaps worst of all, peaceful protesters are being subjected to brutal treatment by local law enforcement and PRIVATE security forces.

As a very recently naturalized American, I find this unacceptable.

Elizabeth Whitehouse
 Corning

To the Editor,

After any presidential election, there is the peaceful transfer of power and calls for unity.

This is a natural viewpoint to insure the preservation of some form of democracy. But in the wake of the election of Donald Trump,

we must be reminded that the divisions of the campaign season can not be immediately erased.

The problems of income inequality, climate change, police brutality, neverending war, and the erosion of civil liberties still exist.

And there is no evidence that a Trump presidency will address these issues in order to heal our nation. It is impossible for a member of the elite 1% such as Trump to challenge in any way the political and economic establishment in this country.

The real challenge to the status quo comes from the Green Party, Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter, and the Native Americans currently protesting the pipeline at Standing Rock.

Trump preached a false populism that lured people into accepting an ideology of sociopathic behavior, political and economic hierarchy, and calls for law and order that have historically been the first steps toward fascism. A Trump presidency will scapegoat marginalized people rather than address the real threat to America from Wall Street and corporations.

It is therefore imperative that there be no passive acceptance of this regime in the name of national unity. The last words of the labor organizer Joe Hill were "Don't mourn, organize.". That is the next step to truly preserve democracy. The face of the enemy is now clear.

Darin Robbins
 Corning

SHAWN VARGO | FROM THE EDITOR

CCC's lockdown handled very well

When you are a student, a fire drill is almost so routine - it becomes "just another fire drill."

It doesn't mean it's not just as important as the last one - or the last 10 of them.

They all have a purpose - keeping students and staff safe, just in case a real emergency occurs.

Thankfully, the lockdown that occurred at Corning Community College Friday resulted in what can best be described as a false alarm - but it also served a purpose. It showed that in a real-time public safety situation - everyone that had a job to do - did that job to the best of their ability until the

all-clear was sounded.

From text alerts to students, to teachers keeping students in their rooms, to folks in the dorms keeping students inside - what took place at the college was handled as quickly and efficiently - and as thoroughly - as possible.

And most of all, there were no reports of injury as a result of what happened.

At this time, I'd also like to give a shout out to the officials at Corning-Painted Post High School, which went into lockdown mode during the CCC situation. As the parent of a high schooler, I received an auto-call when the lockdown occurred and when it was lifted.

At no time did I feel any unease. I trusted that the situation was being handled to the best of the school's ability.

From my desk at The Leader, I was at a mini-ground zero for incoming phone calls, texts, Tweets and a variety of "did you hear what's going on" from all sorts of sources.

I am pleased that rumors did not take root and spread, for that is how a controlled situation, which we had Friday, could have evolved into something a lot worse.

Let's hope that we never have to live through a horrific episode that has become almost a commonplace in this country.

But should something ever come to be, let's hope that all involved can follow their training and keep as many souls as safe as possible.

And for teachers and administrators at all of our area schools, let this be a reminder that the fire drills and lockdown drills that you do - have a valuable purpose - and in the long run, will ensure more students and staff will come away safely should an emergency arise.

Always treat them seriously.

—Shawn Vargo is the executive editor and can be reached at svargo@the-leader.com.

THOMAS O'MARA | STATE SENATOR

Cuomo says no to commonsense actions

They weren't exactly "happy holiday" messages Governor Andrew Cuomo delivered last week when he vetoed more than 70 pieces of legislation in one day.

Unfortunately, his vetoes included rejecting the following measures which I sponsored, fought for, and that were overwhelmingly approved by both houses of the Legislature with strong bipartisan support to:

1.) establish a new "Upstate Transit Funding Board" within the state the Department of Transportation (DOT).

For several years now, I've been at the forefront of this critical issue for the future of rural public transportation and I was hopeful that this action would mark an important turnaround. We need to take steps to ensure the long-term operation and viability of public transportation systems throughout the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, and across upstate New York.

Right now, because of new state rules that began to be implemented in 2013, numerous Upstate public transportation systems have been put at risk. For thousands upon thousands of Upstate residents, these systems provide critical links to jobs, medical appointments, school, shopping destinations, and other necessities.

Our public transit systems also stand as cornerstones of regional transportation



THOMAS O'MARA

networks vital to economic development, job growth, anti-poverty and housing initiatives, energy and environmental conservation.

The legislation (S8045/A8202) was unanimously approved in the Senate and by a vote of 134-2 in the Assembly;

2.) provide a tax credit of up to \$5,000 to farmers who donate fresh produce to food banks and other emergency food providers, what's commonly known as the "Farm to Food Bank" legislation.

I was proud to co-sponsor and strongly support what in my opinion would be a commonsense law to support food banks and farmers, and combat hunger. It would have enhanced and strengthened the ability of the Food Bank of the Southern Tier and their counterparts statewide to access nutritious, fresh, high quality, locally produced food.

Our farmers are already extremely supportive of our food banks, and this tax credit would provide another worthwhile incentive for farmers to donate even more. Equally important, it would have helped provide this healthy food for more and more children and families in need. It would be a meaningful addition to the goal of hunger-free

communities.

The legislation (S7833/A10854) was unanimously approved by the Senate and Assembly in June. The governor also vetoed the legislation last year, however after addressing the administration's concerns many of us were hopeful that it would become law this year.

In the Southern Tier, 72,650 people live below the poverty line, including one in four children. For many people living in poverty, fresh fruits and vegetables are difficult to afford. The Farm to Food Bank law would help fill a critical need by increasing the amount of produce available to people struggling with hunger. At the same time, it would support local agriculture and reduce food waste by re-distributing food that might otherwise go uneaten; and

3.) require periodic inspections by licensed professional engineers to ensure the safety of parking garages.

Aging infrastructure needs to be regularly inspected to ensure public safety. That's just common sense and it's been lacking in New York State when it comes to parking structures.

This legislation was developed with input from construction and engineering professionals and experts. We believe it would have been an effective oversight response.

I introduced the legislation earlier this year with Southern Tier Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo following a number of structural safety accidents and incidents with parking garages within our respective legislative districts and across

the state.

The legislation (S7669/A9614), which was endorsed by the American Council of Engineering Companies of New York, was approved unanimously by the Assembly and by vote of 61-1 in the Senate in June.

They're all disappointing vetoes, to say the least, and I regret that Governor Cuomo did not see fit to enact these bipartisan legislative actions into law. But it's a reminder of the realities of the legislative process. We're coming out of a campaign season where voters heard from candidates that if you "send me to Albany" or "send me to Washington," I'll change things overnight.

It simply doesn't work that way. These vetoes are a reminder: our legislative process demands persistence and perseverance. In New York State, enacting a law requires the cooperation and support of the Senate, Assembly and the Governor.

So when Governor Cuomo disrespects, like he's done here, it means one thing: time to get back to work.

That's exactly what we'll be doing when a new legislative session gets underway in January. We'll examine the governor's reasons for saying no. The legislation will be reintroduced. We'll get back to the work of legislating and urge Governor Cuomo to reach a different conclusion next time.

—Thomas O'Mara is a Republican member of the New York State Senate, representing New York's 58th Senate District.

QUALITY PRUNED CHRISTMAS TREES
 Open Fri-Sun 9am-5pm

NITSCHKE TREE FARM

Douglas Fir, Balsam Fir, Concolor Fir, Fraser Fir, White And Blue Spruce, Live Potted Trees And Wreaths. Pre Cut Trees Also Available.

ENJOY A "FAMILY DAY" THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON WHILE CUTTING YOUR OWN SPECIAL CHRISTMAS TREE AT OUR FARM

Take Route 15 South to the Presho exit. Turn left at top of ramp and then turn right onto Route 115. (This is the OLD Route 15). Go thru Lindley and turn right across from the Green Shingles Restaurant onto Watson Creek Road. Go up 4.5 miles.

The Leader Staff

The Leader (ISSN #10501983)
 The Leader is published daily at 34 West Pulteney Street, Corning, New York 14830
 by Gatehouse Media, LLC.
 Periodical postage paid at Corning, N.Y. 14830-0817. USPS code | 0586-160
 Postmaster: Send address changes to The Leader, 34 West Pulteney Street, Corning, New York 14830

Business Office
 Becky Post | Administration
 936-4651, Ext. 306
 bpost@the-leader.com

Classifieds 936-4651, Ext 651
Retail 936-4651, Ext 653

Postal rates

Steuben County	
One month	\$39.12
Three months	\$117.36
Six months	\$234.72
One year	\$469.44
ELSEWHERE IN USA	
One month	\$49.47
Three months	\$148.41
Six months	\$296.82
One year	\$593.64

Home delivery subscriptions reflect basic subscription rates before additional charges. Due to the added value of special editions there will be an additional charge for each special edition which will accelerate the expiration of your subscription. There will be no more than 12 special editions per year.

Publisher
 Rick Emanuel | Group Publisher
 936-4651, Ext. 303

Editorial
 Shawn Vargo | Executive Editor
 936-4651, Ext. 361
 svargo@the-leader.com

Circulation
 Corinne Mulligan
 Customer Service/ Sales Manager
 936-4651, Ext. 328

Advertising
 Heather Falkey | Ad Director
 936-4651, Ext. 347
 hfalkey@the-leader.com

50# Black Oil Sunflower Seed Only \$19.99 + tax

Wade's Farm & Home Inc.
 94 Front St., Addison • 607-359-2424

JUMBLE
 Answer :
 AWAKEN ORNERY WISDOM
 VACANT ADRIFT STITCH
 It's easy to skip rocks on a pond when the pond is a —
STONE'S THROW AWAY

PALACE THEATRE
 Note the Reader's Choice Awards Favorite Movie Theatre since 2013
 Show Schedule for Fri. 12/2 thru Thurs. 12/8
 ****NOW ACCEPTING ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS****

MOANA
 (Disney Animation, Alan Tudyk, Auli'i Cravalho) Rated PG (1 HR 53 Min)

Fri 12/2	6:15, 9:00
Sat 12/3	3:00, 6:00, 8:30
Sun 12/4	3:00, 6:00
Mon 12/5	6:15, 9:00
Tues 12/6	6:15
Wed & Thurs	*Spirit of the Season 6:00

FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM
 (Walden Media, Ezra Miller) Rated PG-13 (1 HR 13 Min)

Fri 12/2	6:15, 9:00
Sat 12/3	3:15, 6:15, 9:00
Sun 12/4	3:15, 6:15
Mon 12/5	6:15
Tues 12/6	*Spirit of the Season 6:15
Wed & Thurs	6:15

HOLIDAY CHARITY EVENTS
 Come join in the holiday spirit and help those in need!

SPRIT OF THE SEASON Tuesday December 6th 2016 at 7pm
 Choose either "The Polar Express" or "It's a Wonderful Life"
 Admission is 4 Nonperishable food items per person to benefit the local food pantry.

2ND ANNUAL PROSTATE CANCER FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER
 Presented by The Witch's Stitches
 Showing "Miracle on 34th Street" (1947) Tuesday December 13th at 7pm
 General admission \$8.50
 All tickets sales go to the Prostate Cancer Foundation

17 W. Market Street (In Corning's Gaffer District)
MOVIE PHONE: 607-654-7393

NOW OFFERING: ONLINE TICKET SALES!!!
 Check our website: www.corningpalacetheatre.com for details and skip the line wait!

SCHEDULE YOUR HEAT CHECK OR TUNE UP

CAC
 Comfort Is Our Business
 Corning Appliance Corp.
 Service, Heating, Cooling, Fire Place, Water

\$89.95 plus tax

1/2 PRICE WITH ANY OTHER CHECK SERVICE (ie FIREPLACES). OFFER EXPIRES 12/31/16.

Call 936-4328 Ext. 299 EPA CERTIFIED TECHNICIANS SERVING THE TWIN TIERS

Your Pre-Season Tune Up Includes:

- Check Pilot & Ignition System
- Check Thermostat or Primary Controller
- Check Secondary Controller • Check Motors & Bearings
- Check Belts, Couplers, Filters
- Check Condition of Wiring
- Check Condition of Vent Pipe & Gas Pipe
- Check Flu Gas Analysis
- Check Reading of Chimney Draft
- Check Amp Draw of Motor • Check Manifold Pressure Reading
- Check Input Rating Plate Timed CF/HR