

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

‘Linda’s Story’: It’s a small world

TO THE EDITOR | My daughter Linda, who lives in Seattle, told me this event in a phone conversation. I like to call it “Linda’s Story.” She was returning from a visit to Arizona and usually would have someone meet her at Sea-Tac Airport.

This time she decided to take the light rail. She said there were several cars.

She could have chosen any one. There were three people on the one she picked. She talked to a man who said he was a lawyer and that his office was right across Lake Union from Linda’s house.

Then she talked to the couple who were from England. Their names were Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ellis. My daughter Jan, in Brockport, is married to Bob Elis, so Linda has a sister and brother-in-law named Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ellis.

The lady asked Linda, “Have you always lived in Seattle?”

Linda said, “No, I’m from back East.”

The lady said, “Where back East?”

Linda said, “New York.”

The lady said, “Where in New York?”

Linda said, “Oh, a little town called Bath.”

The lady said, “I was a Foreign Exchange student. I spent my Senior year at Haverling and I lived with Judge Finnerty.”
—**Hazel Rittenhouse**, Bath

Election-time behavior appalling

TO THE EDITOR | For what it is worth, I am ashamed and appalled of the actions over the past 4 or 5 months of fellow residents here in the town of Corning.

As we come upon election time, the childish and immature mentality has grown into criminal action. As for childish, and immature, we have a current board member up for re-election, who feels that our residents are not equipped to handle “too much information”, and feels the less said the better in effort not to “confuse them”.

As well he feels that by asking questions, and holding our board members accountable, there are those of us who he charges with being “on a witch

hunt” and “obsessing”.

Then comes the mud-slinging and smear campaign launched under the cover of darkness and using the mail to instill lack of confidence in potential electives. If a concern would be legitimate, would you not expect to see the face and know the name of those leveraging the accusations? Stand in the light of day, for all the world to see and hear. Stand behind your “truth”.

Today it has come to my attention, and that of local law enforcement, that election signs are being stolen/removed from areas both public and private that rightfully belong to Beth Prentice who has been front and center/instrumental in the past few months in holding our standing board accountable and who is running for Town Board, in hopes of replacing those who have shown a lack of commitment to our residents.

Not only is it theft of personal property, but also criminal trespass according to officials. If there are those intent on sabotaging and manipulating the local election process, please be very careful of the votes cast in your town.
—**Maggie Cavallaro Lott**, Town of Corning

Welles represents ward poorly

TO THE EDITOR | I am adding more comments on the article about Corning City Council member Lee Welles.

She’s been missing council meetings and she hasn’t met the tenants of Dayspring Apartments.

People do not know Lee Welles and she is not familiar with our concerns.

How hard is she trying to live in our ward?

I feel that if she continues on this trend that someone else should be voted in her place to represent our issues in our ward.

—**Judith L. Wright**, Corning

Election letter deadline set

Editor’s note | Letters to the editor regarding the Nov. 3 general election must be received by Oct. 27.

Please email your letters to Stella DuPree at sdupree@the-leader.com

POLITICS | SEN. TOM O’MARA

Barely a load of gravel

Arriving now is the latest evidence of how things can get out of whack in New York state government.

I’m talking about the recent agreement between Governor Cuomo and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio that will deliver a new, \$8.3-billion infusion of state funding to the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) to upgrade the downstate mass transit system -- with no mention of any similar fair share for the local roads and bridges across the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, and throughout the rest of the state.

No mention of upstate parity, in other words, despite the fact that the state created a Dedicated Highway and Bridge Trust Fund decades ago that was supposed to deliver a steady flow of transportation dollars to local roads and bridges, but that hasn’t nearly kept pace with what’s been delivered downstate to the MTA since 2010. According to the New York State Association of Town Superintendents of Highways (NYSAOTSOH) and the State County Highway Superintendents Association (NYSCHSA), the “fees and taxes paid by drivers exceed over \$6 billion annually yet only about a third of these revenues are dedicated to maintaining our transportation infrastructure.”

Specifically the groups recently noted that the state collects approximately \$6.2 billion in motorist-related taxes and fees annually, but only \$2.2 billion of this amount is dedicated to local highways and bridges statewide. They estimate that nearly \$4 billion that the state annually collects in motorist fees and taxes, which are supposed to be kept in the state’s dedicated trust fund, are being diverted to other, non-transportation related purposes.

It’s not right. For the past three years,



TOM O'MARA

I’ve joined Assemblyman Phil Palmesano in organizing a bipartisan group of state legislators in the Senate and Assembly (last year we gained the support of 114 legislators), together with county and town highway superintendents and other local leaders from across New York, to call for increased state support for local roads, bridges and culverts through the Consolidated Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) and other state investments.

Beginning with the 2013-2014 state budget, CHIPS funding has been increased by approximately \$125 million to an overall level of \$488.1 million. As a result, area counties, cities, towns and villages have seen funding increases. But keep in mind that the latest Cuomo-De Blasio agreement on state funding for downstate transit comes in at \$8.3 billion, and I don’t have to highlight the fact that this three-year

CHIPS funding increase is nowhere near approaching a fair share for state investment in roads, bridges and culverts locally and statewide.

Despite the fact that estimates from the state comptroller show that there will be \$89 billion in unmet local infrastructure needs over the next 20 years.

Despite the fact that this governor’s already committed another \$8 billion (at least) to two New York City-area projects alone to rebuild the Tappan Zee Bridge and LaGuardia Airport.

And despite the fact that numerous studies have pinpointed thousands of miles of local road deterioration and hundreds of local bridges practically falling down. In fact, 32 percent of local bridges are deficient and 40 percent of local road pavements are rated fair or poor. It’s costing New York motorists an additional \$20.3 billion statewide annually – nearly \$2,300 per driver in some areas – due to higher vehicle operating costs, traffic accidents and congestion-related delays.

Go figure.

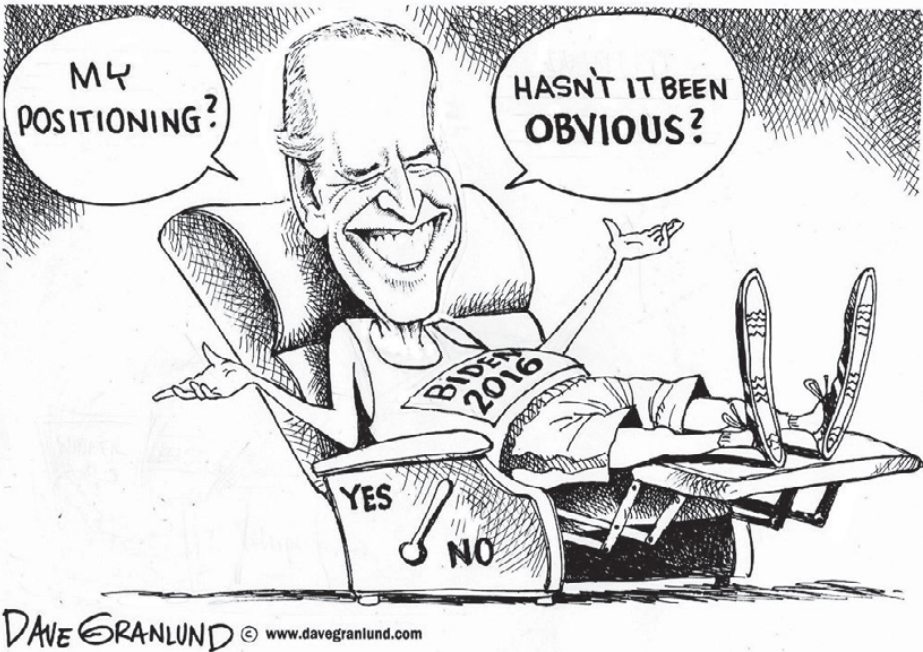
Following the recent Cuomo-De Blasio handshake on MTA funding, the transportation advo-

cacy organization Rebuild NY Now responded this way, “Like the Governor, who noted last year that 6,000 of our bridges and 60 percent of our roads are in need of repair, we know upstaters and their fragile economy. They are even more dependent on their highway system than downstaters are on the MTA. We hope that as next year’s budget discussions begin, the Governor and Legislature will show the same leadership for millions of upstate New York drivers who are paying to support the MTA’s capital program through their gas taxes. We need to return to parity between highway and transit funding, part of an historic agreement that has been repeatedly broken since 2010.”

It means that we head into the next legislative session continuing to make our pitch that “local roads matter.” That effort begins this week in Corning, and then we’ll take it up the road to Albany beginning in January.

—*State Sen. Tom O'Mara represents New York's 53rd Senate District, which includes Steuben, Chemung, Schuyler and Yates counties, and a portion of Tompkins County.*

ANOTHER VIEW



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Change needed in Schuyler County

TO THE EDITOR | Due to my first-hand 21-year experience as a former County employee, it is my opinion that some Schuyler County agencies are making a regular practice of harassing and firing senior and valuable employees.

It is a generally accepted idea that hiring new employees requiring training is expensive as is losing the well of expertise that experienced workers offer. Two other issues come into play also.

One is the expense of legally protecting the county against suits resulting from such practice, and the other is human cost when such degrading tactics are used.

A general atmosphere of mismanagement and unethical practices is occurring in the higher levels of Schuyler County government including other imprudent actions

such as not putting a sprinkler system in a new county building. That poorly conceived attempt at cost-cutting has actually accounted for many thousands of dollars being spent on increased insurance costs.

Residents of Tyrone and Orange have the opportunity to vote for a new legislative candidate, Sandra Rhodes who has the knowledge that comes with having been a former employee. I would urge residents of that district to vote for the change she could help bring to our county government.
—**Charlotte Dickens**, Burdett

Still much work to be done in city

TO THE EDITOR | As the election is fast approaching, I believe that it is important to not only talk about new ideas, but about how they fit into the history and society of Corning. For whoever wins the election

will not only have to introduce new ideas, but continue with ongoing projects and issues.

The two areas of mayoral duties are not mutually exclusive. The future has to build on the past. Much has been done in recent years, but there is still more work to do. We have a new Transportation Center, but we still need to increase accessible public transportation and try to reintroduce passenger rail to Corning.

We are in the process of converting two schools into housing, but we still need to have more affordable co-op housing in the city.

We have a new advanced hospital, but we still need an emergency care center inside of our city limits to make sure that the blunder of transporting the hospital outside of Corning can be rectified.

We have an economic development program that gives startup loans to locally owned businesses,

but we still need to go further and require that those startup loans go to worker owned businesses.

We have had a continuing debate over whether to raise or lower taxes, but we still need to expand the debate to include all taxpayers in the budget-making process.

If new ideas are ignored, especially ideas that are working in other parts of the country, then we as a community are standing still. That means that the status quo is maintained and the influence of Corning Incorporated is increased at the expense of the people.

As the Green Party candidate for mayor, when I say that the residents of the city are the co-owners of the city I explicitly state that the city’s political and economic structures must work for all of us. That is what I am committed to, and I hope that voters will consider me in November.
—**Darin Robbins**, mayoral candidate, Corning

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, N.Y. 14830-0817.
USPS code | 0586-160

Postmaster:
Send address changes to
The Leader, 34 West Pulteney
Street, Corning, New York 14830

Publisher

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

Editorial

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

Circulation

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

Advertising

Adam Mingos | Ad Director
936-4651, Ext. 388
amingos@the-leader.com

Classifieds 936-4651, Ext. 651

Retail 936-4651, Ext. 653

Postal rates

Steuben County
One month \$33.50
Three months \$100.50
Six months \$201.00
One year \$402.00

ELSEWHERE IN USA

One month \$43.00
Three months \$129.00
Six months \$258.00
One year \$516.00

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 subscrip-
tion. There will be no more than
12 special editions per year.