

**COLUMN | JANET LARUE**

# Awareness key to overdose prevention

Today is International Overdose Awareness Day. This is a day when people from all over the world come together to recognize the growing global problem of overdose. We as a nation, can come together to help individuals, families, health professionals, and communities recognize the signs and symptoms of overdose and know how to respond so lives can be saved. Fatal drug overdose now ranks as the leading cause of accidental death in the US, surpassing motor-vehicle accidents.

What is an overdose? An overdose means an individual has too much of a drug (or combination of drugs/alcohol) for the body to be able to function normally. The central nervous system is slowed as well as breathing and heart rate. Too much of any one substance or combined with another drug can kill or cause permanent brain damage. Signs of depressant drug overdose are: Shallow breathing or not breathing at all, snoring or gurgling sounds (this means that the airway is partly blocked), blue lips or fingertips, floppy arms and legs, no response to stimulus, disorientation, or unconscious. Alcohol poisoning is also a depressant and falls into this category. Signs of alcohol intoxication to the point of overdose include: Disorientation, loss of coordination, vomiting, seizures, irregular or slow breathing (less than eight breaths a minute), blue tinged or pale skin, low body temperature, stupor (being conscious but unresponsive), unconsciousness (passing out). Stimulant overdose is an overdose on amphetamines such as "speed" or "ice". This overdose type increases the risk of heart attack, stroke,

seizure, high temperature (overheated but not sweating), difficulty breathing, agitation and paranoia, hallucinations, unconsciousness.

There is a drug used by paramedics and hospitals that can revive people who have had an opiate or opioid drug overdose. This is called Naloxone or Narcan. However, since it has a short half-life, someone could overdose for the second time after being revived. The prescription drug, Suboxone, is given to help wean people off heroin and other opiates. Trinity offers Suboxone treatment and will be trained to properly administer Narcan in the near future.

International Overdose Awareness Day is a day where the world tries to raise awareness of drug overdose and reduce the stigma that is associated with it. It can happen to anyone: a father, mother, sister, brother, wife, husband, child, and friend. This day helps to spread the word that these deaths can be preventable if we all become aware of the symptoms and signs that a loved one may exhibit.

Trinity of Chemung County would like to invite the community to write a tribute for someone who is struggling with addiction or for someone who was lost to drug overdose. You can also write about your own personal struggles, trials, and tribulations. This can be done on our Facebook account or at Trinity where we have a memory box in our waiting room for your personal tributes to be placed. This box will be sealed and displayed in our lobby. We will also have buttons and information available on substance abuse.

*Janet LaRue is a Community Prevention Specialist with Trinity of Chemung County.*

**COLUMN | TIMOTHY D. FOURNIER**

# Disaster tax relief bill long overdue

At a time when Congress cannot agree on much, Congressman Tom Reed has introduced and garnered support for something significantly important for our region in particular and the country generally: A national disaster tax relief bill.

One of the primary functions of government is to protect its citizens and this is especially true in the wake of a natural disaster. In the past, Congress has routinely provided tax relief to communities after a natural disaster – they did so after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and they did so again in 2008 to assist the Midwestern states struck by severe drought as well as regions impacted by Hurricane Ike.

Yet, despite this clear legislative history, Congress has failed to act to provide similar assistance to the dozens of communities, including ours, hit by presidentially declared disasters over the past several years, despite the demonstrated continued need.

Congressman Reed,

working across the aisle with Senator Schumer and in partnership with the New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSFAH), introduced legislation in June that would help individuals, small business, and housing recover in our state from the devastating floods this spring, as well as damage sustained from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee in 2011.

The legislation waives the high threshold for individuals to claim losses to their personal property, such as damage to their homes and cars, from these natural disasters. It allows increased expensing and bonus depreciation for businesses in disaster impacted regions, allowing them to make repairs, restock lost inventory, and reinvest in their communities. Additionally, it allows states to issue disaster recovery bonds to finance rebuilding in a public/private partnership at a fraction of the cost of traditional recovery programs. Finally, it

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**POLITICS | SEN. TOM O'MARA**

# Labor Day highlights key issue: jobs

Right around Labor Day last year, an Albany-based, labor-backed think tank put out a report that targeted what I believe remains the key issue facing communities, governments, employers – and workers and their families – throughout upstate New York. The report's central finding was that upstate's rate of total job growth was 1.2 percent in the previous four years, while the nation saw a growth rate nearly three times higher.

A stagnant upstate economy isn't a revelation to anyone who's spent a lifetime living, working and raising a family in a region like the Southern Tier or Finger Lakes. We don't need another report to tell us what we already know about job losses and their impact on our communities.

More recently, according to an analysis from the Empire Center based upon the latest monthly employment report from the state Labor Department, downstate New York (i.e., New York City and its suburbs) "accounted for 88 percent of New York State's private sector job growth during the 12 months ending in July." Translated: There's been little or no private-sector, upstate New York job growth.

Go back a few weeks, a year, four years or even a decade, and that's been a consistent message. Several years ago, in releasing yet another report on the sad condition of the upstate economy, the head of the state Business Council said, "Upstate



**TOM O'MARA**

New York is locked in a profound economic crisis."

It's little wonder, then, that one of the time-honored flare-ups in New York state politics – one that we're hearing again heading into this year's elections -- is the call for secession. Split New York into two states along an upstate-downstate boundary, the idea goes – we'll leave downstate to its resources, and we'll take care of our own.

While there's no denying the obvious political appeal and power of the idea, the reality of secession is a little far-fetched. But more to the point, the undeniable energy underpinning the idea could be channeled into more productive and achievable purposes. In fact a decade ago, the Business Council's educational and research arm, the Public Policy Institute, may have put it best when it remarked on upstate-downstate secession: "Secession would be impossible, and the last thing New York needs is some kind of destructive Upstate-Downstate showdown. But given the prolonged lag in Upstate's economy, it is time to think seriously about whether there is a way of restructuring the relationship to give Upstate the opportunity – indeed, the freedom – to reduce some of the disadvantages that are smothering its

economy."

Every new report about upstate's decades-long struggle to reclaim any sort of meaningful and sustained economic foothold in this modern economy reinforces the reality that it's not happening. Every new report, including the most recent statistics from the Labor Department showing the upstate economy largely dead in the water, serves up another hard-to-hear but critical-to-know diagnosis.

So as I continue looking ahead in this column at the key challenges facing the State Legislature approaching the start of the 2015 legislative session, this one falls right in line: the need for upstate-oriented regulatory reform. It's not secession, but it does recognize the need for the powers that be in state government to more effectively recognize and act on upstate's unique challenges and concerns like they've never been recognized or acted on before.

The Business Council diagnosis a decade ago was that state government needed to undertake a restructuring to give upstate "the opportunity and the freedom" to address the disadvantages that smother our economy. This still-needed restructuring can start with badly needed regulatory reform. Too much costly and unnecessary red tape still keeps the upstate economy going nowhere. And until we seriously address it, we're going to keep right on seeing reports defining upstate by its economic decline. Meaningful

state-level regulatory reform has, at best, been a series of starts and stops, kind of like a badly tuned engine that keeps backfiring.

In late 2013, the Senate Majority Coalition once again staked out our intention to identify and eliminate hundreds of costly and unnecessary government regulations that strangle business and job growth, especially upstate. Advocacy groups like the Business Council and Unshackle Upstate consistently reinforce the fact that it's time to address the overregulation that keeps the upstate economy going nowhere and makes New York's businesses climate one of the worst in America.

It's long past the due date to rethink and revitalize upstate's rightful place in New York government, especially heading into 2015, which could very well evolve into one of the most challenging legislative sessions for upstate in recent memory.

Overall, the upstate economy is still in "profound crisis." Equally important, as the levers of power in state government increasingly shift downstate, upstate's place in New York government runs the risk of being shortchanged like never before, and ideas like upstate-based regulatory reform could never see the light of day.

*State Sen. Tom O'Mara, R-Big Flats, represents New York's 58th Senate District, which includes Steuben, Chemung, Schuyler and Yates counties, and part of Tompkins County.*

## ANOTHER VIEW



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Calling for change in city leadership

**TO THE EDITOR** | It's time for a change at City Hall: namely a new city manager. Mr. Ryckman, your accountability, accessibility and visibility are totally lacking. Do you ever return phone calls or respond to letters? Absolutely not.

The taxes in our city are some of the highest in the state. You seem to keep raising them in numerous ways: real estate, sewers and building permits, to name just a few. While Painted Post's keeps going down for four straight years (per The Leader article of May 8th), Corning's continue to rise.

Your handling of real estate is giving Corning another black eye with the hospital, transportation center and the ability to get permits to fix our

properties in a timely and friendly manner. Your bumbling of the hospital deal and your vindictive behavior after they chose another location is well-known. It shocks me to hear that the transportation center is costing the taxpayers \$42,000 a year to maintain. What were you thinking when you signed on for that deal?

Finally, the code office is a public relations nightmare. I've never attempted to work with such a gang of thugs who use their positions to create false arrests and illegal searches. Their demeanor is combative both verbally and physically. It is by far one of the most hostile environments in city government. This "reign of terror" must come to an end, with drug tests for all city employees, not a select few.

The sad part is that you choose to do nothing about all of this. You turn a deaf ear to the citizens of Corning. It is a shame that people such as yourself, misuse the privilege to serve that you have been entrusted with.

**Craig Early**  
Corning

### Cole would be fair, deliberate judge

**TO THE EDITOR** | Primary day gives us the opportunity to determine who will appear on the General Election ballot for the office of City Judge. Judge Robert Cole has been on the City Court bench for 23 years. He had been appointed City Judge by four mayors and became our City Court Judge when his predecessor retired. His 23 years time as judge

certainly qualifies him to continue to hold the position.

I have observed Judge Cole for his entire time on the bench, first as a Captain of Police, then as Chief of Police, and after my retirement, as a court security officer. Judge Cole has always been eminently fair in the decisions he has rendered.

I know Judge Cole would fully consider the facts presented at trial, and acting in a careful and unhurried way, make his decisions. For this reason, I believe Judge Robert Cole should remain on the bench.

**Richard T. Faulisi**  
Chief of Police Ret.,  
Corning Police Department

*Ed. note: Deadline for letters to the editor regarding the Sept. 9 primary is Sept. 1.*