

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

COLUMN | LAURA ROSSMAN

Help fight to end poverty in S. Tier



LAURA ROSSMAN

I would like a moment of your time to discuss the unpopular topic of poverty. Those of us who reside and work in Western New York are no stranger to its presence, and often hear about the great need to combat its grip on our communities. We are told that unemployment remains well above the state and national average. We are told that many quality jobs have left the area. And we are told that the number of people living below the poverty level continues to steadily increase. All of us are affected directly by these things, and we see them in our schools, our neighborhoods, our work, and our own families. We see and hear enough about poverty that many of us have on occasion become complacent with its presence in our lives. Other times, frustration over the situation has lead to finger pointing and blame, whether at politicians, their policies, or even at the poor themselves.

While achieving any kind of consensus towards developing economic stability for the region remains complicated and divisive, working with and helping the poor in our community should not be. In fact, many agencies and non-profits in our area have been working to overcome poverty right along. As the executive director of Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc., I am excited and honored to announce that 2015 marks our 50th anniversary as the Community Action agency serving our local communities. For half a century Pro Action has provided a wide array of services including early childhood education, job training and placement, energy assistance, disaster relief, programs for seniors and so much more.

Founded after the signing of President Johnson's Economic Opportunity Act in 1964, the Community Action Partnership formed as a nationwide network of non-profits dedicated to fighting poverty at a localized level. Over the next several months, Pro Action will be working towards spreading the word about

The need for the many programs Pro Action has available has never been greater, so we ask that you join us in raising awareness and in celebrating our anniversary the week of September 15, 2015

our mission and the variety of services we offer the residents of Steuben, Yates, Chemung and Schuyler counties.

The need for the many programs Pro Action has available has never been greater, so we ask that you join us in raising awareness and in celebrating our anniversary the week of September 15, 2015. More information will be forthcoming as we draw closer to the occasion celebrating our anniversary, including agency and program history, available services, and specifics regarding a communitywide events. Fifty years ago Pro Action was created for the express purpose of helping those who live in poverty. With unemployment and economic uncertainty continuing to afflict our area, I ask that you lend a hand in helping us fight poverty by directing those in need to the tremendous resource they have available in Pro Action of Steuben and Yates. We have been honored to be part of and serve this community for 50 years, and look forward to all we can achieve in the next 50. For more detailed information on what services we have available, or what you can do to make a difference, please visit www.ProActionInc.org.

—Laura Rossman is executive director of Pro Action.

POLITICS | SEN. TOM O'MARA

An upside-down view on local roads



TOM O'MARA

Not long ago I joined Assemblyman Phil Palmesano to help organize a bipartisan group of 114 state legislators – which, notably, represents more than 50 percent of the entire Legislature – to deliver a message to Governor Andrew Cuomo and legislative leaders: The state needs to invest more in local roads and bridges.

We were joined, like we have been for the past two years, by local highway superintendents from across the state. And mayors. And county executives. And many other local leaders. Collectively, we believe there's a credible case for increasing state funding for the Consolidated Highway Improvement Program, commonly known as CHIPS, the key source of state support for taking care of local roads and bridges. We'd also like to see the creation of a new, five-year "Local Roads, Bridges and Culvert Program," with funding distributed through the existing CHIPS formula and financed by a portion of the state's \$5.4-billion bank settlement surplus.

That's important to remember. The state this year has an unanticipated surplus of more than \$5 billion. We believe investing in local infrastructure would be a wise use for it, maybe the best use to achieve the broadest impact. It's simply an unprecedented opportunity to address the local transportation crisis.

mentality and bringing a lot of money back to their cronies in the district."

It's become this governor's cynical response to so many of the views he doesn't share. He himself proposes \$10 billion in what he terms "Upstate" spending – except that \$4 billion of it would go to rebuild one bridge called the Tappan Zee, located 20 miles north of New York City (not exactly what we consider Upstate around here). But mention additional CHIPS and this governor will attack it as money for cronies. Go figure.

This governor's certainly adept at tilting mirrors to create the illusions that fit his political narrative. Just because he doesn't share the same view, or prefers to do his own spending elsewhere, or because he doesn't like legislators and highway superintendents asking, or for whatever the reasons, he chooses to tilt the mirrors and send out this illusion that somehow, somehow CHIPS funding is suddenly a remnant of scandalous "pork barrel mentality."

It's so far off the road that it defeats his purpose. Go ask your local highway superintendent how critical it is, and how above board. CHIPS is a long-standing state aid program. The fact is that CHIPS is a strictly formula-driven distribution of taxpayer dollars, to every region of the state, that's been fair, effective and absolutely critical to counties, towns and villages for

years. Ironically, the "pork barrel" charge is delivered by a governor who, according to many observers, has consolidated power and control of the state's purse strings like no other governor in modern history.

So enough of that. It's not credible. It simply tilts the mirror to send out an upside-down image of government. And it's even farther from sound policymaking.

Governor Cuomo's latest comments echo his statements several weeks ago about the need for local governments Upstate to turn around our own local economies and create our own jobs so that these same Upstate cities, counties, towns and villages can "fix your own pipes." And once again, his latest statements don't hold water any better now than they did several weeks ago.

The governor keeps conveniently overlooking just a few of those nagging reasons why so many Upstate economies continue to struggle, like unfunded state mandates, state-imposed taxes and fees, and state-based rules and regulations. But hey, who needs to keep looking in that mirror?

—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



Follow us on Twitter

The Leader | @thenewsleader1
 Bob Benz | @theleaderbenz
 Stella DuPree | @theleaderdupree
 Derrick Ek | @theleaderek
 James Post | @theleaderpost
 Jeff Smith | @theleadersmith
 Shawn Vargo | @theleadervargo
 Eric Wensel | @theleaderwensel

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, 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 subscription. There will be no more than 12 special editions per year.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ready to serve Steuben County

I am announcing that I will be running for District 4 County Legislature that represents Cohocton and Wayland. Pat McAllister is the present representative. McAllister is termed out and cannot run for re-election. The present law states that a person cannot serve more than 12 years.

As I stated a couple of years ago, I am not going to run for another term as supervisor for the Town of Cohocton. As the end of this year, I will have been supervisor for 14 years. I also served 10 years on the

Wayland School Board of Education.

I have worked with many county agencies over the years to complete needed projects and am familiar with how county government works. I am also familiar with the many needs and problems facing Steuben County, including high taxes, state mandates, and the need to control spending.

During my tenure as supervisor for the town, we have cut taxes, brought in more than \$4 million in host money from the largest wind farm in the Southern Tier. We help reduce cost by engaging

in shared services with other towns. Us and 3 other towns (including Wayland) work together to decrease our cost in road construction, work with the Town of Wayland for shared services for dog control and operation of the kennel. We work together with both the village of Cohocton and Wayland to help in the water department. We are also pleased that we work with Wayland Cohocton School to have students come to our town park for their summer enrichment program. These are examples of what county, towns, villages and

schools can do together and I believe we need to do more of these type of collaborative efforts especially with the resources of the county.

If elected I will report frequently to both towns on what is happening at the county level and listen to those that I will serve. I realize as a county legislator you have a duty to not just the district that you represent but to all of the people of Steuben County. I look forward to this and to do my best for all of us.

Jack Zigenfus
 Supervisor
 Cohocton

Former highway superintendent honored



The Hornby highway garage on Dyke Road was dedicated Friday to former highway superintendent Don Divens, believed to be the longest-serving superintendent in the state. From left | Hornby Supervisor Don Borden, Sen. Tom O'Mara, Don Divens, Assemblyman Phil Palmesano and town Councilman Andy Hakes. PROVIDED TO THE LEADER

IN BRIEF

IHS to lead annual conference

The Institute for Human Services will present its annual conference from 8:30 a.m.-3:45 p.m. Wednesday at the Radisson Hotel, 125 Denison Parkway E, Corning. Presentations include "The Changing Role of Human Services to Support Rural Healthcare," "Nonprofit Organizational Best Practices Panel & Discussion," "Great Leaders, Teams, and Why People Follow," "Garden of Fire Collaboration: Quality Summer Education for Underserved Youth," "Learning How to Advocate for Change in Rural Communities" and "Access & Awareness of Verified Resources for Your Clients: Building a Relationship to Find Help." For more information, visit www.ihsnet.org.

The Stickers to perform March 28

The Stickers, a country music band of brothers, will perform at 7:30 p.m. March 28 at the Deane Center, 104 Main St., Wellsboro. The band features Jim, John and Joe Wodarek, brothers who were born and raised south of Pittsburgh. Admission is \$25 for adults and \$15 for students. For tickets, call (570) 724-6220 or visit deanecenter.com.

Chemung to honor top seniors

The Chemung County Department of Aging and Long Term Care seeks nominations for two Senior Citizen of the Year Awards, as well as the inaugural Chemung County Age-Friendly Community Award, to be awarded May 4. All qualified nominees will be

recognized. This year's theme is "Get into the Act." Senior Citizen of the Year Awards will be presented to two Chemung County residents, ages 60 or older, for their ongoing devotion of time and talent to make an impact on others without pay or compensation. The Age-Friendly Community Award will recognize a nonprofit or government organization, program or group of volunteers of any age that has shown efforts in making Chemung County a place to live and age well, enhancing the lives of older persons and encouraging active and healthy aging. Awardees will be selected by the Department of Aging Advisory Council's Older Americans Month Committee. Nomination forms are due by April 3. For more information, call 737-5520, or visit www.chemungcounty.com.

—Staff reports

BATH

'Welcome' sign gets a facelift

By Jeffery Smith
jsmith@the-leader.com

Work is underway to restore and reinstall the 89-year-old "Welcome to Bath" sign on State Route 54, near the entrance of the former Philips Lighting plant.

Sheri Nobles, a Bath Revitalization Group organizer, said Bath businesses T&R Towing and Service and Goodrich Auto Works crews removed the sign and took it to Goodrich for restoration.

"Chris and Becky Goodrich donated a tremendous of time and materials coordinating and completing this

project," Nobles said.

Haines Equipment recently rebuilt the box letters, Nobles said. Ballard's, of Elmira, replaced the chain link that included all the organizations' logos. Crystal City Signs is installing solar panels, LED lights and new channel letters.

The "Welcome to Bath" sign is the remaining of two erected along State Route 54 in the 1900s - one each for the east and west ends of the village.

Bath Gas and Electric installed the remaining sign in 1926 and space was provided in a concrete base for advertising, Nobles said.

In 1957, when automobile improvements and road conditions demanded, the other sign was removed.

In other projects, the Bath Revitalization Group has replaced street signs, initiated a Liberty Street Art Project to bring people downtown and is working with Alfred State University officials to research and glean ideas for the future of Bath.

Nobles said the sign is expected to go back up sometime this spring.

"The weather is going to have to settle down before we can install it," Nobles said.



Because your 32 teeth need to be cherished.

Eaves Family Dental Group has a top priority: to keep your permanent teeth in excellent condition. We've helped thousands of people retain healthy smiles—from preventive and general dentistry to state-of-the-art cosmetic procedures. But we not only help keep healthy smiles, we restore them for those who want to improve on nature. Our expert staff will customize a plan to fit your unique smile and your family budget. Don't wait.

Eaves
Family Dental Group
Your Smile. Our Passion.

Penn Yan | Geneva | Bath
315.536.3341 | EavesDental.com

Celebrating 32 Years of Full Service Dentistry in the Finger Lakes

Call for your complimentary consultation today!

Your life never stops moving.

**Bank Anywhere, Anytime
with Chemung Canal**

**Chemung Canal
Trust Company**

For more details:
chemungcanal.com | 800.836.3711

Member
FDIC

JOURNEY & FITNESS

**SPRING IS COMING...
SO YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS NOW!**

- ✓ Do you have uncontrolled Cravings?
- ✓ Are you struggling with weight loss?
- ✓ Do you need more energy?
- ✓ Do you want to look better when the warm weather gets here?

Then come to Journey Fitness for our **5-Day Fat Flush \$30** which includes:

- ✓ 5 Days of Unlimited Training
- ✓ 5 Days worth of meal plans
- ✓ 5 Days worth of the famous shakeology shakes

SHANNON

CALL TODAY! **607-973-2187**
32 BRIDGE STREET, CORNING, NY

607-735-0333
2084 COLLEGE AVE, ELMIRA