

Only one way to make your vote count

A few researchers once figured out that the chances that a single vote would ever decide a U.S. Presidential election was, at best, 1 in 10 million which, they noted, was still better than your odds of matching all six numbers on a Powerball lottery ticket, which they determined was smaller than 1 in 175 million.

Maybe these researchers just didn't have anything better to do at the time? But if nothing else, it can help me make a point this week about voting. And the point is pretty straightforward: it's time to vote. Too often these days, that reminder elicits a lackluster response, Why bother? Far too many citizens still think that their vote just doesn't matter. One of the truly troubling trends in American politics is the bloc of statistics showing, especially in non-Presidential election years like this one, shockingly low voter turnout.

Political scientists of every stripe offer up a whole bunch of reasons and theories for voter apathy. Take them for what you will, but there's no denying the reality of it. And yet, there are plenty of examples where a relatively small number of votes made the difference in a presidential

**TOM O'MARA**

election (think Bush versus Gore in 2000), Congress, and for so many state and local offices. And, yes, there are more than a few historical cases of elections being won by a single vote.

From my own direct experience, I can tell you that a pivotal state Senate election two years ago (a race in the Capital Region, by the way, that's being hotly contested again this year and could ultimately decide which party controls our chamber next year) by just 18 votes.

So, yes, voting matters. Set aside looking at it purely through the lens of deciding a winner or a loser. At its most fundamental level, consider it this way: it's one opportunity that is your Constitutional, democratic, patriotic right to exercise.

To share your voice. To participate in government. To speak directly to the powers that be. It gives you a say and even if your preferred candidate or issue emerges

on the short end of the win/loss column on Election Night, the outcome of a close election can still help deliver a strong grassroots message, or influence public opinion going forward. So even if, as they say, you don't have a particular horse in the race on Election Day, get informed and go vote.

Two additional thoughts. I'll stick to this year's state legislative races for one more example. As I've mentioned many times in this column over the past year, this year's state legislative races, especially for the Senate, are going to have a huge impact on the 2015 legislative session that will determine the state's direction on policies and programs that matter in the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions including but by no means limited to:

- high taxes and Upstate job creation, keeping in mind that just last week the Tax Foundation once again rated New York State as having the 49th worst business tax climate in the nation;

- providing funding to improve the condition of Upstate's local roads and bridges;

- combating the illegal drug use and drug trafficking that's invading too many of our

neighborhoods and townships, particularly heroin and meth;

- preventing any further erosions of our Second Amendment rights, beyond what's already been done through the NY SAFE Act;

- providing relief to local governments and school districts (which means, ultimately, local property taxpayers) from unfunded state mandates; and along the same lines, erasing the damaging and highly controversial Gap Elimination Adjustment enacted in 2010, which has severely impacted hundreds of school districts and millions of property taxpayers across the region, and statewide.

And so many more. Votes in this year's political races are critical to the future of government.

Finally, don't forget the statewide ballot proposals. In other words, you have an opportunity to decide proposed changes to the State Constitution, which don't always get the attention they deserve from voters mostly focused on state and local legislative contests. There are three statewide ballot proposals this year. Briefly they are:

- #1.) to reform the state's once every decade redistricting process for state legislative and congressional districts;

- #2.) to permit the electronic distribution of state legislative bills, which supporters (and I'm one) view as a common sense way to help save the state hundreds of thousands of dollars in paper, printing and recycling costs; and

- #3.) The Smart Schools Bond Act of 2014 authorizing the state to borrow up to \$2 billion to provide access to classroom technology and high-speed internet connectivity.

You can read the specific proposals on the State Board of Elections website, <http://www.elections.ny.gov>, or through a "Vote Here" link in the left-hand column of omara.nysenate.gov.

Remember, you can't make your vote count if you don't take the time to cast it. Next week, we honor Veterans Day. So I'll say it again now, very simply: voting is your Constitutional right and a patriotic duty. Don't take it lightly, because it's been hard won and is still being hard won by history's brave servicemen and servicewomen, and so many other great Americans.

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.

READER VIEW | RUTH YOUNG

Tragedy based on ignorance no joke

The "consensus" in the science community concerning climate warming is based on mathematics. It's as simple as adding positive and negative numbers together and getting a positive sum over a two hundred year period. Plotting temperature change against time on every continent does not produce a straight line ascent. Over the past 8 years, the average increase has decreased when plotted against time, but it is still increasing. This can be correlated to the "great global recession" we have been experiencing. The physical changes on Planet Earth can not be decreed by political consensus, neither left nor right. Political consensus married to greed will be the base cause of the conditions that cause the next great extinction brought on by global warming. That extinction can include our own species.

Being a conservative skeptic trained in the sciences, I would hope that we humans would take a cautious approach and treat with respect the physical laws of nature. Releasing excessive greenhouse gases by continuing the use of fossil fuels which have been stored for millions of years is like living off granny's savings account instead of living within our own biological checking account.

It's been a fun ride, but the gas gauge is nearing empty and the most recent methods of scrapping the bottom of the fossil fuel barrel are very disruptive to all life forms including our own. The amount of carbon compounds the atmosphere can bare without bringing on more than a 2 degrees Celsius increase is calculated as 350 parts per million. As of last year, we have exceeded 400 ppm, and the concentration is still rising. The rest of the fossil fuels need to remain in the ground.

I am not a neo-luddite.

I am quite aware of "The Third Industrial Revolution" and "The Hydrogen Economy" by Jeremy Rifkin. I am reading Joe Romm's latest book "Hell and High Water: Global Warming, the Solution and the Politics and what we should do", and recently I attended the lecture at Ithaca College by Dan Miller, co-founder and managing director of the venture capital firm The Roda Group. Dr. Miller tends to agree with Joe Romm and Amory Lovins in favoring a "battery approach" as the carrier process from renewable energy sources whereas Rifkin feels that Hydrogen is the better approach. We have left ourselves no time to test these theories, the problem looms on us now. An "all-of-the-above-including-fossil-fuels" approach will not work on a hot planet. Climate change based on carbon compounds in the atmosphere from fossil fuel oxidation is not a new idea. Svante Arrhenius a scientist who calculated some of the early gas laws predicted this reality in the early 1900s as the present industrial revolution was born. Now the entire scientific climate community has confirmed his hypothesis.

Unfortunately those in our governments, local, state, and federal, who are tied to the financial apron strings of the fossil fuel corporations deny there is a problem. As droughts, floods, rising acidified oceans, and explosive fires presently rip our planet to shreds, they ignore the problem exists. Are you with the climate-change deniers, or with the scientific community who are the real conservatives?

Please do not vote anyone into our congress who has taken money from the fossil fuel industry, including the incumbent of the 23rd congressional district.

Ruth S. Young is a Horseheads resident.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

McCarthy best qualified for judge

TO THE EDITOR | I have watched closely the race for Corning City Court Judge. As an attorney and former District Attorney, I have spent a lot of time in the courtroom. For a court to run fairly, effectively and efficiently, it is important to have a Judge who has the respect of his peers and those who work within the court system. That is why I have been so impressed by the overwhelming support Judge Matt McCarthy has received from the very people who work and use the court system on a daily basis. To earn the support of local attorneys, local law enforcement agencies and even Retired City Court Judge David Kahl and Retired City Court Clerk Julie Machuga is impressive. These are telling endorsements and not given out lightly and certainly speak volumes to their recognition of Matt's experience, qualifications, judicial temperament and demeanor.

Judge Matt McCarthy is the only candidate to have prosecution, defense and judicial experience. This exemplifies his broad understanding of the courtroom. In addition, judicial candidates are often rated by independent

review committees as to their qualifications for the court. For Matt to be the only candidate who was rated and found QUALIFIED by the Independent Judicial Elections Commission is another impressive validation of Judge McCarthy's candidacy.

I am confident Matt will continue to be an effective judge for the city of Corning. Vote Matt McCarthy for Corning City Court Judge.

Thomas F. O'Mara,
NYS Senator, S.D. 58

Humbled by Corning's support

TO THE EDITOR | With Election Day approaching I wanted to take a moment and thank all of the wonderful citizens of Corning that have made my campaign for City Court Judge such an enjoyable experience. From announcing my intention to seek the full-time position to having the honor of being appointed as Corning City Court Judge by Mayor Negri and being approved by the counsel, it has been a wonderful experience.

Running for office is a lot of work and I admire both of the other candidates for their dedication and willingness to sacrifice

their free time in the hopes of serving the City of Corning.

I have been humbled by the support of law enforcement, retired court personal and attorneys from the community. For the last 10 years I have worked hard to gain the experience and knowledge necessary to be Corning City Court Judge and the support of these organizations and individuals reflects that hard work does pay off. If I am fortunate enough to be elected I will continue to work hard and hold myself to the high standard the position of Corning City Court Judge requires.

My campaign started off with Jolie and me sitting at our kitchen table hand addressing envelopes and organizing walking lists. Jolie has been with me every step of this campaign as we gained support one doorstep at a time. It has been our privilege getting to know you this summer and we apologize for any sleeping children that we may have awoken and for the thousands of dogs we made bark knocking on your doors.

Win or lose on Nov. 4 this city has given us an experience we will treasure our entire lives.
Mathew McCarthy,
Corning

AFTER HOURS

Leader, C-PP team up for fun

Staff report

The Leader in partnership with Corning-Painted Post School District is proud to offer Leaders After Hours, a new afterschool program, to grades 7-12 in the Corning-Painted Post School District. We are excited to be working with students in our community to provide them with real-life professional experience in a fun, educational, hands on way that will benefit them throughout their lifetime.

Students will have the opportunity to work on the skills that make professional adults successful, such as

professional communication, responsible use of technology, time management, cooperative business planning, leadership skills and more. Students will also explore the real-life benefits and uses of strong skills in English, mathematics, art, and social studies in a state standard based curriculum designed to provide them with professional experience while they have fun!

Students will have the opportunity to win prizes, scholarship awards, be published in print and digital formats, and even apply for internships in the Summer of 2015. Leaders After Hours workshops will begin

at the high school, for grades 9-12 on Thursday, November 6 at 3:15.

Interested in learning more? Attend our recruitment pizza party event on Tuesday, November 4 at 3:15 at the High School.

Follow us on Twitter (@LAH_Corning) or check us out on Facebook at www.facebook.com/LAH14830. Also, check out our blog at leaders-after-hours.tumblr.com!

Students and their families who are interested should contact us through social media, by email at lah@the-leader.com and by phone at 607-936-4651 Ext. 339.

OBITUARY

Glenn J. Perry

PERRY, Glenn J. Age 67 formerly of Addison, NY and Worcester, MA passed away on Thursday October 30, 2014 at Elcor Nursing Home.

Glenn was born May 20, 1947 in Corning, NY the son of the late Joseph Albert Perry and Glenora Ruth Towner Perry-Martin. He was also pre-deceased by his stepfather Clarence H. Martin and his brother-in-law John H. Ungerland Jr.

Glenn graduated from Addison Central High School in 1965 and attended Corning Community College. Glenn graduated from the Machinist Apprenticeship Program at Gleason GearWorks in Rochester, NY. He later worked for Corning Inc. and Dover Instruments in Westborough, MA.

Glenn was married for 27 years to Debby Adsit Perry. Mr. Perry is survived by his daughters and sons-in-law: Julie & Anthony Giustino of Southbridge, MA, Jill & Kevin Long of Worcester, MA, and Jennifer & Staff Sgt. Michael Warrick U.S. Army of Horseheads, NY; eight grandchildren and soon to be nine; brother and sister-in-law: Gregory & Beth Perry of Fairplay, SC; sister: JoAnn Ungerland of Big Flats, NY; several nieces, nephews, cousins, and a host of caring friends. It was Glenn's wish that there be no calling hours or services. Glenn will be laid to rest in Woodlawn National Cemetery in Elmira, NY.

Arrangements are entrusted to the LYNCH FUNERAL HOME 318 WEST BROAD STREET HORSEHEADS, NY.

DEATH NOTICES

Whiting P. Lightfoot

Whiting P. Lightfoot, 95, of Caton, died Saturday, November 1, 2014 at Corning Centers for Rehabilitation and Healthcare, formerly Founders Pavilion.

Calling hours are noon-2 p.m., Wednesday at Haughey Funeral Home, Inc., 216 E. First St., Corning.

Services will be held there at the conclusion of calling hours at 2 p.m. Wednesday.

Mable H. Wood

Mable H. Andrus Wood, 57, of Horseheads, died Monday, Oct. 27, 2014.

Services were held Saturday.

Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

Arrangements are with Kalec Funeral Home.



Coming Together. Sharing the Stories.



Angela & Avery,

Just a note of thanks for all you did for our mother. You both have a gift of comfort for families during a very difficult time. You also have a great gift in helping families as well. We were so pleased with how mom looked. You allowed us a for better last memory of how mom looked, for that we will always be grateful!

God Bless you both!
Linda Golkiewicz and Debbie Green

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327 East Second St., Corning
936-9531
Aclystoverfuneralhome.com