

OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sidewalk snow removal crucial for people with disabilities

To the Editor,
As winter tightens its grip, AIM Independent Living Center would like to offer a friendly reminder of how important it is to keep sidewalks clear of snow and ice.
AIM serves many people in Corning, Elmira and the surrounding areas who use wheelchairs or have limited mobility, as well as people who are blind or have limited vision.
Snow- and ice-covered sidewalks can make the task of navigating around the city in the winter extremely challenging for people with disabilities, especially those who use canes, walkers or wheelchairs.
If sidewalks and other areas aren't cleared in a timely fashion after a storm, people with disabilities can essentially be trapped in their own homes, unable to get to work or doctor's appointments or to visit family and friends.
Messy sidewalks are also a safety concern, as slips and falls can lead to serious injuries, particularly among the elderly.
Local ordinances vary depending on the municipality, but in many cases, snow removal on the sidewalk in front of a home or business is the responsibility of the property owner or tenant.
Regardless, taking the time to shovel and sand the sidewalks in front of your home when there's been wintry weather is common courtesy. Please don't forget the curb ramps at nearby crosswalks, which often include tactile paving, those brightly colored squares with raised bumps that alert people who are blind or have low vision of a street crossing.
And if you have a neighbor who isn't able to shovel their own

See LETTERS, A5

COMMENTARY | STATE SEN. TOM O'MARA, R-BIG FLATS

From the toy store to the checkout line

The governor's annual State of the State message to the Legislature is like watching a kid turned loose in a toy store. Governors traditionally utilize this annual address, like Governor Cuomo did last week, to pack as many policies, programs, and proposals as possible into one 90-minute speech (and, this year, a 359-page book) hoping to please as many constituencies as possible.

Before you leave the store, however, you have to go through the checkout line. In Governor Cuomo's case, that means unveiling a proposed 2018-2019 state budget next week and answering the obvious question: How are you going to pay for it all? Especially with New York State facing a \$4-billion-plus deficit.

Governor Cuomo was right to focus this year's address on New York's fiscal crisis. There is no denying its seriousness. It will overshadow every

decision we make in 2018 and it will take some feat of political cooperation to right the ship.

One promise the governor failed to make in his State of the State was an outright pledge not to raise taxes to deal with the deficit. In fact, he's already thinking about tax increases, although couching it in terms of "tax restructuring."

The Business Council of New York State is clearly concerned. Council President Heather Briccetti reacted this way, "We have major concerns with a new payroll tax, and with increasing business taxes to offset reductions in federal taxes - especially since New York's 2014 corporate tax reform legislation...has finally made our business tax climate more competitive among the states."

I was hoping to hear the governor take tax increases off the table right at the start. We cannot afford to tax our way out of the deficit. Numerous New York

governors in the not-too-distant past, when faced with significant budget deficits, turned to significant cost shifts to local governments, and unprecedented increases in state taxes and fees, to balance the books. It was an era that was incredibly tough on local taxpayers, employers, workers, and families. We cannot risk anything resembling a repeat performance of those tax-and-spend years.

New York is already one of the highest-taxed states in America. High taxes remain a serious drag on our business climate and overall economy, particularly upstate. "No new taxes" will be a priority for Senate Republicans. So will state spending control and comprehensive regulatory reform. We'll also be fighting to roll back onerous state mandates, rules, and regulations in the new year.

It's equally important to keep Albany's attention focused on the

specific plight of upstate property taxpayers, upstate communities, and upstate employers.

Several sections of Governor Cuomo's recent State of the State zeroed in on key priorities, in my view. The opioid epidemic is a public health crisis that demands our vigilance. That's true as well concerning the rise of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases statewide.

I agree that workforce development is critical to upstate revitalization. Same goes for the ongoing development of broadband for unserved and underserved areas.

Investments in local transportation and water quality infrastructure - and yes, Assemblyman Phil Palmesano and I will continue our successful emphasis on local roads and bridges - are helping to rebuild local communities, economies, and environments, as well as to fundamentally reshape the state-local partnership for the benefit of local taxpayers.

That's also true for efforts to strengthen local agriculture, including one initiative I've worked closely with the governor on over the past several years: making New York State a leader in the nation's reemerging industrial hemp industry. It's an exciting and promising diversification of our agricultural economy. We've already taken critical actions to secure New York's place and we're about to take even more.

New York Farm Bureau President David Fisher said, and I agree, that the plan "to expand on industrial hemp production and processing is appreciated. There is a demand from farmers looking to diversify their operations, and this is another way to capitalize on the effort ... At the same time, New York State must double down on its efforts to reduce taxes and regulations and address labor challenges that continue to plague small businesses."

New York is already one of the highest-taxed states in America. High taxes remain a serious drag on our business climate and overall economy, particularly upstate.

COMMENTARY | DAVID BARNHILL, TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Listen to the military on climate change

Whom should we believe when it comes to national security: military experts preparing for future dangers, or politicians preparing for their next election?

Yes, that's a rhetorical question, but it deserves consideration. When it comes to global warming, national security has taken a back seat to ideology and campaign contributions.

There is little doubt, outside of Washington,

D.C., about the causes of climate change. That the planet is getting warmer due to human activity is confirmed by 97 percent of climate scientists and nearly 200 scientific academies around the world. As the American Association for the Advancement of Science has noted, science is as certain of the reality of human-caused climate disruption as it is of the link between smoking and cancer.

But an alternate reality has been promulgated by fossil fuel interests and free-market fundamentalists. These "merchants of doubt" have sought to create distrust in climate science. The tobacco industry ran a similar campaign successfully for decades.

Now we have an EPA administrator, Scott Pruitt, who wants a public "debate" on the

issue. This is like the head of the American Medical Association calling for a debate on whether smoking causes cancer.

Such efforts are working. In a recent poll, less than a quarter of Americans reported being "very worried" about global warming. But the U.S. military is very worried, and has been for years.

In 2007, when George W. Bush was president, a military board produced the report National Security and the Threat of Climate Change. It affirmed that "climate change can act as a threat multiplier for instability ... and it presents significant national security challenges for the United States."

The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report by the Department of Defense termed global warming "an accelerant

of instability or conflict." Dozens of other reports have expounded on this threat.

David Titley, a retired rear admiral who has a Ph.D. in meteorology, spoke for many in the military when he wrote in 2014: "The climate is changing. We can do something about it. For the sake of our nation and the world, we must act."

The last five secretaries of defense, starting with Bush's Robert Gates, have urged government action on global warming. In testimony to Congress in 2017, Donald Trump's Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis called climate change "a challenge that requires a broader, whole-of-government response."

Military strategists, unlike politicians, can't afford to play ideological games when it comes to national security.

They must focus on how climate disruption is creating political destabilization globally and straining the military's ability to respond to crises.

But Republicans in Congress are not helpful. In the summer of 2017, they tried to pass an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that would have prevented the Defense Department from studying the security impacts of climate disruption. Fortunately, there were enough Republicans who cared about national security to join Democrats in voting against it.

Trump, however, remains incalcitrant. His new National Security Strategy, released in December, ignores the defense experts

See BARNHILL, A5

Browning • Savage • Kimber • Colt • Ruger • Springfield • SigSauer • Remington • Glock • Smith & Wesson • Mossberg • Henry • Benelli • Beretta

PISTOL TRAINING

2 LEVELS



SGS
SENECA GUN SPORTS
the name you trust in firearms
(607) 243-7243

PISTOL SHOOTING & DEFENSIVE HANDGUN

SenecaGun.com

SCHEDULE YOUR HEAT CHECK OR TUNE UP



\$89.95 plus tax

1/2 PRICE WITH ANY OTHER CHECK SERVICE (ie FIREPLACES). OFFER EXPIRES 1/31/18.

CALL TODAY!

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

The LEADER

STAFF BOX

The Leader (ISSN #10501983)
The Leader is published daily at 34 West Putney 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 Putney Street, Corning, New York 14830

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

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

Circulation
Nichole Harrison
Circulation Manager
936-4651, Ext. 314

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

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.

JUMBLE

Answer :

SPLASH VISION UTOPIA
ENGAGE EFFORT HECTIC

The message would be over after some —

FINISHING TOUCHES

BALACE PALACE THEATRE

Voted the Reader's Choice Awards Favorite Movie Theatre since 2013

Show Schedule for Fri. 1/5 - Thurs. 1/11
*****NOW ACCEPTING ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS*****

STAR WARS: THE LAST JEDI
(Daisy Ridley, John Boyega, Mark Hamill) PG-13 (2hr 32 Min)

Fri. 1/5	6:15, 9:15
Sat. 1/6	3:15, 6:15, 9:15
Sun. 1/7	3:15, 6:15
Mon. 1/8	6:15
Tues. 1/9	CLOSED
Wed. & Thurs.	6:15

THE GREATEST SHOWMAN
(Hugh Jackman, Michelle Williams, Zac Efron) Rated PG 1 (HR 45 Min)

Fri. 1/5	6:30, 8:45
Sat. 1/6	3:30, 6:30, 8:45
Sun. 1/7	3:30, 6:30
Mon. 1/8	6:30
Tues. 1/9	CLOSED
Wed. & Thurs.	6:30

Opening 1/12/18: Paddington 2

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

NOW OFFERING: ONLINE TICKET SALES!!!
Go to www.corningpalacetheater.com for details & skip the line wait!!!