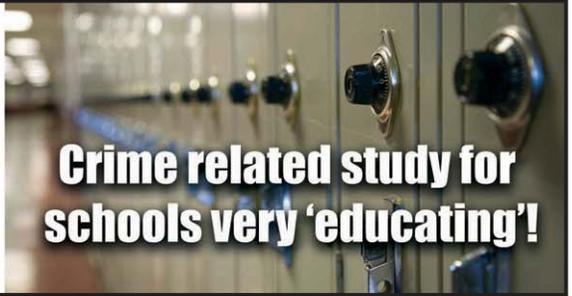




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is done.**

**And that includes
Charley Walker...**



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NIAGARA FALLS REPORTER

THE TRUTH IS ALWAYS FAIR

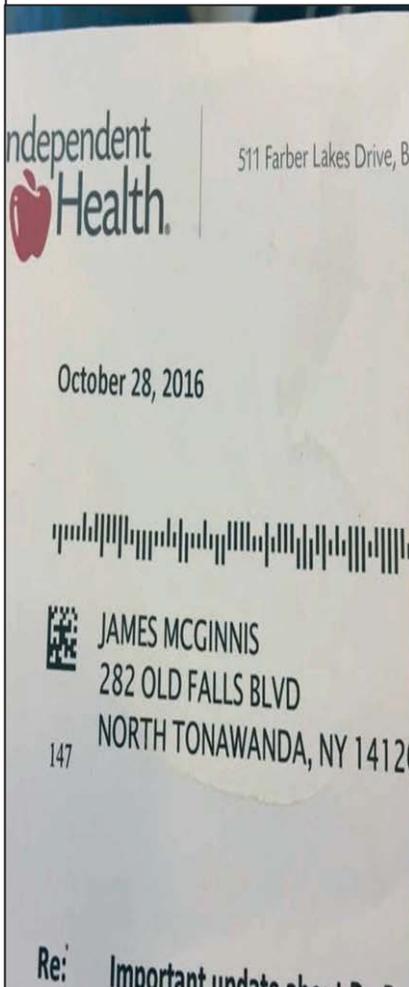
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NOV 17 - NOV 23, 2016

VOL. 17, NO. 46

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Light Pollution Ruins Natural Niagara Falls

James Hufnagel

When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie - it could be because you were outside enjoying a once-in-a-lifetime experience this week. The moon was 14 per cent bigger and 30 per cent brighter than it normally is.

A "supermoon", as its called, occurs when the moon is simultaneously full and at its perigee (when its orbit carries it closest to the earth). If you didn't see it, don't despair, next month's full moon, on Dec. 14, will also be pretty super as it will still be really close to us. But you'll have to wait another 18 years, until 2034, until the next supermoon comes around.

We thought it would be amazing to view this rare celestial event over another natural wonder - Niagara Falls - but it's difficult to do since the falls are lit up with artificial spotlights every night, this month of November until midnight. In fact, the falls are lit up every night of the year by giant spotlights, which are being presently upgraded for the first time in many decades to high tech LED jobs with the brightness of a million supermoons. Nothing says appreciation for a natural wonder like Niagara Falls in the light of a supermoon, or plain old full moon for that matter, than overwhelming the spectacle with blazing artificial spotlights - and don't forget, fireworks!

Got to have fireworks, too, because without multicolored spotlights and fireworks, nature by itself kind of sucks. Supermoons, 12-thousand-year-old waterfalls - it doesn't get more boring than that.



An 1833 woodcut depicting the Leonids meteor shower of that year over Niagara Falls.

With the tourist muggings that took place in Niagara Falls State Park earlier this year by a roving band of thugs - who haven't been caught yet - most people probably think it well-advised not to venture into the park after midnight just to see it lit up by the moon, super or otherwise.

Of course, with the ugly and obtrusive Observation Tower, or "bridge to nowhere" as locals call it, just yards away from the cataracts, and the immediate area cluttered up with coin-operated binoculars, acres of paving stones, Delaware North's sprawling food service plaza, parking lots, ziplines, helicopters, tacky manicured rock gardens and Tesla's misplaced sculpture, any semblance of nature or a natural wonder in the immediate environs of the falls is long

gone.

New York State Parks, the Albany agency that owns and operates Niagara Falls State Park and collects nearly \$20 million annually from parking lot and Maid and Delaware North contract fees alone in what was supposed to be Frederick Law Olmsted's wild and natural preserve, has a department in charge of highlighting the natural aspects of Niagara Falls and the Niagara Gorge, as well as other area parks, called "Niagara Region Park Interpretive Programs". However, like the Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation (NTCC) and the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area, in the run-up to and during the tourist season, Park Interpretive Programs spends the bulk of it on-line social

media effort, newsletter space and press releases on promoting cash cow Niagara Falls State Park and its money-making attractions such as James Glynn's Maid of the Mist, Cave of the Winds and similar tourist traps.

During the tourist off-season is when you see outreach from these outfits that actually has anything to do with nature, such as what Niagara Region Park Interpretive Programs put on Facebook the other day concerning some islands in Buffalo that have been restored to wildlife habitat using NYPA relicensing money. State Parks had about as much to do with restoration of those islands as the city of Buffalo has to do with the Power Project - opting to spend \$25 million of its relicensing money, in the form of Greenway grants, on upgrading Niagara Falls State Park instead - but it's something to post to Facebook to pick up the slack when nobody's riding the Maid.

We think it would be a great idea if, on Dec. 14, State Parks turned off the artificial lighting for just an hour so that park visitors, naturalists, photographers and others could enjoy the Falls as it looks under a supermoon. Now that would be something. Imagine bundling up your kids - or grandkids - leaving the video games and smart phones at home, and going to view, at a reasonable early evening hour, the spectacular waterfalls illuminated by a breathtaking moon. In a society in which we seem to be getting more divorced from nature, especially the children, that could be a great way to both educate and make some life-long memories.

NIAGARA FALLS REPORTER

"The Truth is Always Fair"

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Donati's Comet of 1858 is featured on an antique stereoscope slide of that era.



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Councilman Walker to answer in Court for Campaign Finance Violations

If you access the NYS Board of Elections website, click on "Campaign Finance" and then "View Disclosure Reports", and type in "Charles Walker", there's sparse information indeed on City Councilman Charles Walker's campaign finances over the years.

Serving on the city council since January of 1999, Walker is halfway through his fifth term. However, the only entries on the Board of Elections site consist of biannual July filings for the years 2009, 2010 and 2016, January filings for the years 2010, 2013 and 2016 and a little more complete data for 2013 in terms of general and primary election reports.

Of course, Walker ran active campaigns in 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2014, so his financial disclosure reports on the Board of Elections website should run as long as the phone book. Instead, the campaign filings of relatively new councilmembers Andy Touma and Ezra Scott, Jr. nearly eclipse those of Walker in terms of length and complexity.

What really sticks out, and incidentally, led to the four Class A Election Law Misdemeanors he is presently charged with, in addition to reams of missing entries for campaign contributions and expenditures, is the utter lack of information posted for 2009 and 2010, consisting simply of "No Activity" entries, as do the January, 2013 and July, 2016 filings. And the sole January, 2016 Contributor listed is none other than Charles Walker himself, who made six payments to his Friends of Charles Walker account ranging from \$170 to \$270 from August through December of 2015.

In other words, the requirement to file campaign disclosure reports, a bulwark of government accountability and necessary tool of democracy, going back nearly two decades was virtually totally ignored by Councilman Walker. Rather strange behavior for a guy who lists a Business Administration and Management degree from Bryant and Stratton on his resume'.

It was investigative reporting by this newspaper, cross-referencing campaign contributions that were listed on others' disclosure reports, aided by attorney and election law specialist Peter A. Reese which led to a complaint (filed by Reese) with the state Board of Elections, leading to the councilman being charged.

Here is a list of contributions that should have, by law, been reported but were not (there may be more that haven't been identified):

\$500 August 15, 2013 Niagara County Democratic Committee
 \$750 Sept. 4, 2013 Niagara County Democratic Committee
 \$1,000 October 19, 2013 Niagara County Democratic Committee
 \$500 October 21, 2009 Niagara Falls Fire Officers PAC
 \$200 April 30, 2013 Niagara Falls Fire

Officers PAC
 \$1,400 October 18, 2005 Niagara Falls Firefighters PAC
 \$140 June 11, 2009 Niagara Falls Firefighters PAC
 \$70 August 12, 2009 Niagara Falls Firefighters PAC
 \$790 Sept 10, 2009 Niagara Falls Firefighters PAC
 \$350 October 10, 2009 Niagara Falls firefighters PAC
 \$650 October 27, 2009 Niagara Falls Firefighters PAC
 \$1,400 October 18, 2005 Niagara Falls Firefighters PAC
 \$300 August 11, 2009 IUOE Local 463 State and Local PAC
 \$1,000 Sept. 10, 2013 IUOE Local 463 State and Local PAC
 \$100 July 28, 2004 Committee to Elect Robert Anderson
 \$100 August 5, 2004 Committee to Elect Byron Brown
 \$50 October 22, 2005 Friends for Del-Monte
 \$300 June 11, 2009 Friends of Paul Dyster
 \$50 June 17, 2009 Committee to elect Robert Anderson
 \$250 August 6, 2009 UA Plumbers and Steamfitters Local No 22 PAC
 \$35 August 9, 2009 Friends of Dennis Virtuoso
 \$35 August 9, 2009 Friends of Sam Fruscione
 \$500 August 12, 2009 Friends of Antoine Thompson
 \$500 August 24, 2009 Laborers Local 91 PAC
 \$100 August 25, 2009 Bricklayers Allied Craft Workers Local 3 Buffalo Chapter PAC
 \$500 Sept. 8, 2009 Supporters of Antoine Thompson
 \$200 October 6, 2009 Friends of Dennis Virtuoso
 \$400 October 6, 2009 Laborers Local 91 PAC
 \$200 October 16, 2009 Friends of Paul Dyster
 \$650 October 30, 2009 Friends of Paul Dyster
 \$100 August 29, 2013 Friends of Paul Dyster
 \$100 August 30, 2013 Friends of Dennis Virtuoso
 \$500 October 3, 2013 UA Plumbers and Steamfitters Local No 22 PAC
 \$100 October 5, 2013 Friends of Dennis Virtuoso
 \$1,000 October 8, 2013 Northeastern Regional Council of Carpenters PAC
 \$70 October 10, 2013 Friends of Jason Zona
 \$100 October 10, 2013 Friends of Paul Dyster



Niagara Falls Councilman Charles Walker

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Walker Will Ultimately be Judged by the Voters



Council members Kristen Grandinetti, Andrew Touma and Charles Walker as a majority have approved many spending initiatives of Mayor Paul Dyster.

Tony Farina

Charles Walker has been a member of the Niagara Falls City Council since 1999, but unfortunately he is a lawmaker who has run afoul of the election law, according to the state attorney general, and he now faces four misdemeanor counts for allegedly failing to file campaign financial disclosure

forms in 2014 and 2015 with the state board of elections.

Walker has pleaded not guilty to the charges in Albany City Court and his defense attorney, Robert Restaino, appears confident that the missing records will soon be filed with the state board, adding that there's no claim of any wrongful use of the campaign funds by Walker.

We certainly understand that people

make mistakes, and Walker seems to have the support of his colleagues on the City Council. Chairman Andrew Touma said Wednesday he hopes Walker is able to submit the proper forms to the state elections board and put the matter behind him.

But while Walker and his attorney are working hard to settle the charges filed by the Public Integrity Unit of the state attorney general's office, the matter is now public, and while he has failed to file his disclosure forms or been late in the past, this is the first time he has been formally accused of violating election law.

In the case of Walker, State Atty. Gen. Eric Schneiderman said "campaign finance laws exist for a reason--to protect voters and keep our democratic process honest and transparent." The idea, of course, is to keep track of who is giving the lawmaker money to stay in office and assess if there's any appearance of a conflict between the donors and his job performance. It is important to keep tabs on lawmakers across the board so that their supporters are not able to, shall we say, buy them without any accountability to the public.

We certainly hope Walker has learned his lesson, if indeed the charges hold up, and that going forward he complies with all of the laws on the books---campaign or otherwise---as he carries out his duties as a city lawmaker.

Of course, he will ultimately be judged by the voters who have given him five terms in office to serve their interests. Whatever the reasons, and there could be many, he allegedly has not complied with the state election law and now finds himself as a defendant while still working for the residents of Niagara Falls as a councilman.

Walker has been a deacon at the Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church, a Sunday school teacher, and a lead singer in the Male Chorus. He has been manager of the community outreach department at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center since 2007 and a board member of Urban Renewal Agency. Now he can add defendant to his otherwise positive resume.

Again, for his sake and for the sake of the city, we hope Walker can recover from his problems and try to repair his image in the community. If he wants to continue to serve as a city lawmaker, he needs to send a signal to voters that it won't happen again. If he's able to beat the charges against him, voters may give him a second chance because there's no indication he misused the campaign funds, just didn't report them as required by law.

Walker is now, so to speak, on the clock when it comes to his shelf life as a councilman. If he wants to continue as a lawmaker, he must comply with the law himself.

"Change" versus improvement



Jeff Manning
Lewiston

continues to expect from their government is improvement.

Every "change" consumes our limited resources and "change" for the sake of "change" is wasteful and unproductive.

As an example, would the "change" and activity involved in rearranging the deck chairs on the sinking Titanic have meaningfully improved the outcome? The last eight years should be enough proof that what was sold to the public as transformational "change" did not result in significant improvement for most of the American public and wasted valuable and limited resources. So newly elected officials, please stop "changing" and start improving.

Looking back at the election, one of the most overused words by candidates was "change".

Almost every candidate stated their plan to "change" some aspect of government and the implication was that these "changes" would make the world better.

However, in the world of politics, promising you will make "change" is just the latest "change" from the formerly used promise to "make a difference".

Both terms miss the mark. What the American public has always wanted and

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	Dec. 27 - Voices of Mercy Christmas Concert - 7pm

Vindicated, Carl Paladino was the Precursor of Donald Trump

Frank Parlato

When Carl Paladino lost to Andrew Cuomo, 61% to 34% in the New York State race for governor in 2010, one of the most liberal nanny states in America ejected him handily, robustly.

They didn't like his brash, self-help, be strong on your own – without dependence on government message.

While Paladino lost statewide, he won all eight counties in Western New York and propelled the Conservative Party back into third place on the ballot – for the first time since 1998.

Paladino, the founder, chairman and former CEO of Ellicott Development, the largest private landlord in the City of Buffalo, ran for governor on the non-pandering platform.

In terms of campaigning, Paladino was Donald Trump before there was the candidate Donald Trump.

Paladino was the first perfectly unapologetic, unequivocal candidate. He was "mad as hell" and "going to take a baseball bat to Albany."

He told the truth. He never minced words, feared what others might think of his words, or worried about being politically correct. He compared public service labor unions to pigs.

He called New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand "[Senior Senator Chuck] Schumer's little girl."

He said Obamacare could be more deadly than the September 11 attacks.

He announced his platform up front.

Had he been elected governor, Paladino planned to cut the state budget by 20 percent, shut off instant welfare for those who migrate here from other states, impose drug testing for welfare recipients, cut New York's Medicaid benefits, the most generous in the USA, eliminate state capital gains taxes and corporate franchise taxes, target patronage jobs, institute a merit-based pay system which would have ended automatic raises for government employees and incentivize bureaucrats to work for goals and get the able-bodied off welfare.

He planned to dissolve the state's shadow governments, which control New Yorkers' lives in secrecy, such as the Board of Regents, the SUNY Board of Trustees, the Empire State Development Corporation, the Off-Track Betting Corporation, the New York Power Authority and the Thruway Authority.

When Paladino became the New York co-chair of Trump's campaign, where Trump won a decisive primary victory that catapulted him to victory in the Republican primary, it could not help but be noticed that the two men are awfully alike.

Throughout the campaign, Paladino never backed down in his support for Trump.

In March, he wrote an open letter to Republicans in New York's congressional delegation and state legislature which he shared with 50,000 supporters.

At the time, of New York's nine House Republicans, only Rep. Chris Collins, R-Clarence, of Western New York endorsed Trump. The others stayed neutral.

He wrote, "... The press said I was trying to bully you... You made a lot of promises to your constituents and you fully intend to get around to addressing those promises after you handle all those requests from heavy donors, lobbyists and other special interests that give you money, pay for your meals and otherwise entertain you... You worked hard and sucked up with a lot of people to get into office and it's not easy playing with smoke and mirrors to get both the breadcrumbs that your leadership feeds to you to bring home so you look



good while you betray your responsibilities to your constituents... This year's political revolution is turning that sweet life upside down, isn't it? ...Your leaders and peers in Washington and Albany are really out of sorts, suffering irregular bowel movements. They ... are losing their grip on the populace ... Open your eyes. Ed Cox, Al D'Amato, Karl Rove, Mitt Romney and the other Washington and Albany elites This is our last request that you join Trump for President and try to preserve what's left of your pathetic careers in government. Whatever you do, staying neutral is not an option. Pick a horse in the race and you may salvage some of your constituents' respect for you. Not choosing paints you as a coward. The bus is leaving the station very soon. Get on, or you'll be left behind."

In April, shortly after appearing alongside Trump while he made his New York victory speech, Paladino described Obama as "a man who in every respect looks like he despises America."

"He's so into himself, he can't help himself," Paladino said. "How did a guy like this rise to that point of being president of the wonder of history and the world?"

He also likened President Obama to a "raccoon in the basement" which the media promptly labeled a racial slur.

Paladino rebutted that he didn't mean for "raccoon" to be taken as a racial slur.

"Raccoons represent thievery, they don't represent race," Paladino said. "The rest of the world hasn't interpreted it in the way you did."

Always combative, Paladino sent an email to anti-Trump Utah delegate Stefani Williams telling her she should be "hung for treason" after Williams posted an open letter on a conservative website calling on delegates to "dump Trump."

Paladino defended Trump time and again.

Paladino slammed Khizr Khan for his remarks at the Democratic National Convention for his "lack of objectivity and submission to Hillary's hideous effort to compel him to disgrace the memory of his son."

He questioned Khan's motivations, saying Clinton's staff "obviously wrote the speech."

"She even bought him the pocket constitution," Paladino claimed, "which he probably never read but also returned to the staff after the speech."

In August Paladino told the media that "there is no doubt" Obama "is a Muslim, he is not a Christian. Look at what he's done with Iran, what he's done with the Sunni-Shia thing over in Iraq and Iran, and with ISIS."

In October, after a tape was released revealing Trump talking about women in a sexually aggressive manner, many Republicans ran away from him.

Not Paladino.

He told the Washington Post that Trump's

"gutter talk" was "something all normal men do."

Following his comments, protestors gathered outside a school board meeting to call on Paladino to be removed from his school board seat because of his support of Trump.

Paladino remained defiant. He spoke with 2 On Your Side about Trump's tape and the protests.

"That's a man showing his sexual prowess," he said. "Not every man is capable of that. But many men are. And that goes on in our culture every day.... It's part of the male thing."

At the school board meeting, the school board took up a petition for Paladino's removal with 2,500 signatures.

Paladino didn't back down. Paladino told News 4 in response to Trump's comments, "You got street talk, gutter talk, whatever, most men do

it, most women do it, it's part of our culture, it's part of our society. How does that in any way rise to the felonious conduct of Hillary Clinton?"

He also said later, "For God's sakes, the guy on the street could give a [expletive] about the video. It doesn't matter to him. Trump's support didn't want one bit over that friggin' nonsense."

When the Washington Post, one of the most virulent anti-Trump publications, did a retrospect on How Donald Trump won: The insiders tell their story, Paladino was featured prominently.

"This is not your normal election," Paladino said. "This is a political revolution... They see this as the answer to something that's been festering for years and years. They know something's wrong. They know their government has not been straight with them. They know the middle class has been left behind. They also know, why do we have all these billionaires and why as a working man am I so poor?"

Finally, the question was posed, "Why does Donald Trump rise?"

Paladino answered, "Why does he rise? ... He's a guy that gets pummeled and pummeled and pummeled and he doesn't quit. The American people see that."

And that might be equally said of Paladino himself.

He was the pioneer, his approach to politics was Donald Trump's modus operandi.

Despite rejection in liberal, New York City-dominated New York State, Paladino set out the path that Trump took to win the presidency.

Consequently, Paladino looms large as one of the influential insiders of the Trump presidency.



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Finish line and timing services are being provided by Race Management Solutions. RESULTS will be streamed live to ItsYourRace.com where they can be accessed immediately following the race, or you can link to Facebook and have your time instantaneously posted to all your friends! You can also stop by our race results kiosk near the finish line to see how you did!

Join us after the race for a post race celebration including a Ploughman's

lunch inside of the fort and access to all buildings and exhibits. Plenty of free parking will be available inside of Fort Niagara State Park at/near the finish line. The race will be capped at 300 runners so register early to guarantee your spot in this historic event!



The remedy for weakness is not brooding over weakness, but thinking of strength...

~ Swami Vivekananda

Council Finishing Up Budget Work

Tony Farina

The Niagara Falls City Council finished work on the mayor's 2017 spending plan that will now count on Amtrak paying for 63 percent of the operating costs (\$172,000 a year) for the new station. City lawmakers have taken a sharp knife to Mayor Paul Dyster's proposed \$91 million budget, cutting more than \$780,000 from the plan including the hefty pay raises the mayor had proposed for top staff.

With only Councilmember Kristen Grandinetti in Dyster's corner, the council has

the super majority (four votes) to override any vetoes of their amendments by the mayor when they deliver the budget to him next week for his action. The council is also expected to further reduce the tax rate on homeowners and also lower the proposed increase in the non-homestead tax rate.

Council Chairman Andrew Touma said all of the councilmembers worked extremely hard to cut expenses and pass the savings on to the residents of the city. Touma told the Reporter that the mayor will have the council's amendments in hand late next week, and have until Dec. 1 to either approve or veto the council's work.

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CCS Cancer Patients Deeply Stressed as Loss of Coverage Looms

Tony Farina

As we reported last week, more than 500 cancer patients throughout Western New York are facing the loss of their medical insurance coverage from Independent Health if they stay with their current care provider, CCS Oncology, after Jan. 1, the date when CCS oncologists are slated to be dropped from Independent Health's provider network in a fee dispute.

James McGinnis, 59, of North Tonawanda, is one of those cancer patients who is going to have to find a whole new team of cancer doctors and care providers if the cutoff takes place as scheduled, even though he has been treated by CCS oncologists since he was diagnosed with metastatic squamous neck cancer in August of 2015 and told he may have only a few weeks to live.

"There are close to 600 people out there [cancer patients] like me who are being told to find a new cancer team," said McGinnis during an interview this week. "We're caught in the middle of this dispute and I don't know what's going to happen and I'm definitely very concerned."

McGinnis has been through 33 rounds of radiation and three rounds of eight-hour chemo sessions at the CCS treatment center on Williams Rd. in Niagara Falls while under the care of CCS oncologists Alvin Panahan and Herbert Duvivier, as well as four surgeries at Erie County Medical Center.

"I'm currently in remission, and my medical care team has done an outstanding job for me," said McGinnis who has to undergo constant screening to make sure he's still okay. "Thankfully, my doctors tell me there's an 80 percent chance it [the cancer] won't return, but now I must



James McGinnis...cancer patient victim of insurance dispute between Independent Health and his care provider, CCS Oncology

decide what to do with this threat of the loss of health insurance if I remain with my CCS team, this after paying \$579.62 a month for four years to Independent Health for my family insurance plan. The last thing I want to do now is to find a new care team with another care provider to see me through this."

McGinnis, a pastor and former chief of staff with the Niagara County Legislature and also a former personnel officer for Niagara County, has reached out to the state Dept. of Health for guidance, but was told to contact his provider.

McGinnis said he wasn't advised about the insurance cutoff until he received a letter dated Oct. 28 from Independent Health, telling him that his doctors were being dropped from the insurance network and that the health insurer would help him find a new care provider. He says his calls to Independent Health have not provided much relief other than he needed to contact another provider, even though that's not what he wants.

"I feel let down by this, after all I've been through, and I'm sure the nearly 600 other cancer patients with

CCS feel the same way," he said. He plans to meet with his CCS team on Dec. 15 to decide what to do.

As we reported last week, CCS Oncology feels it is being dropped from the Independent Health network based on flawed data that suggests it is charging more than its peers for cancer treatment. Despite repeated requests, Independent Health has refused to allow CCS Oncology to review the cost analysis data.

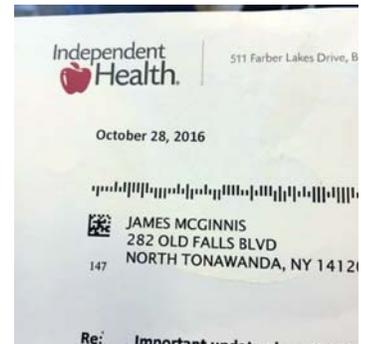
Dr. Wom Sam Yi, the CEO and chief medical examiner of CCS Oncology, says that data showing CCS's costs were as much as 50 percent higher for treatment of lung and breast cancer has to be flawed because CCS follows all the same guidelines as other local cancer treatment groups.

"We've asked them from the beginning, when the first analysis was done in the first quarter of 2015, to provide us with the data," said Dr. Yi. "We've said, give us the data and let us see... maybe we can learn from our peers. But they denied giving us the data."

A clearly frustrated Dr. Yi, who leads the CCS Oncology group with offices and treatment facilities throughout the region, has concluded "they [IH] are trying to put us out of business," and CCS will go to court within days to fight the cutoff. Dr. Yi said 30 to 40 percent of CCS's cancer patients will lose coverage from Independent Health if CCS is dropped from the network.

CCS attorney Paul Joyce of Buffalo said the health care provider will be going to court very shortly to fight Independent Health on the decision to drop CCS oncologists from the provider network.

Independent Health says its action was the result of a strategic decision "to move away from the inefficient and costly fee-for-service payment system toward a network of select on-



CCS cancer patient James McGinnis was not advised by Independent Health until Oct. 28 that he was losing coverage, effective Jan. 1, 2017

colony specialists who have agreed to a value-based reimbursement model."

Independent Health says it has been able to work with other local oncology providers but has not been able to agree on such an arrangement with CCS, which negotiates on behalf of its affiliated physicians.

It must be noted that Amherst-based Independent Health ended last year with a \$44 million loss on premium revenue of \$2 billion, including operating losses of \$49.4 million. It was a second straight year of operating losses.

While CCS Oncology prepares to go to court, the many cancer patients like Jim McGinnis who are currently being treated by CCS oncologists are not only in a fight for survival but are faced with the problem of possibly having to change doctors in the middle of that fight. As Jim McGinnis said, it is indeed a stressful time for families already under great stress from their battle against cancer.



The world is ready to give up its secrets if we only know how to knock, how to give it the necessary blow. The strength and force of the blow come through concentration.

-- Swami Vivekananda

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Niagara Falls youth contribute to, are impacted by High Rate of Violent Crime

James Hufnagel

As we reported two weeks ago, the 2015 FBI annual report "Crime in the United States", released in late September of this year, ranked Niagara Falls as being the most violent city in New York State.

Based on 555 violent crimes reported for Niagara Falls for 2015, and a population of 48,989, there was more than one chance in 100 that a resident was robbed, raped, murdered or assaulted last year.

The high violent crime rate of Niagara Falls has impacted the life of high school students in this city.

According to a November, 2015 "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey", a research program administered by the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the crisis of violence endemic to the city of Niagara Falls is not restricted to its adult population.

Compared to statewide averages, Niagara Falls High School students are at higher than normal risk in the following areas: engaging in physical fights,



including those that resulted in medical treatment; being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property; carrying a weapon; being bullied; skipping school because they felt unsafe; and being physically forced to have sex.

About one in five (19.7%) Niagara Falls High School students said they have had a parent or adult in their home hit, beat, kick or physically hurt them and 30.8% report they have witnessed someone get shot, stabbed or beaten in their neighborhood. Over a third (34.9%) revealed they have lived with someone who was alcoholic, a problem

drinker, used illegal street drugs, took prescriptions drugs to get high or was a problem gambler, while 19.8% live with someone who was diagnosed mentally ill or suicidal.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of eligible 9th through 12th grade Niagara Falls High School students completed surveys that were included in the study (1,447 of 1,970).

In the 30 days leading up to the survey, performed one year ago, 15% of high schoolers reported having carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club. Niagara Falls also exceeded state aver-

ages, over the entire year, when it came to being threatened or injured with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property (8.7% vs. 7.3%), participating in a physical fight (30.9% vs. 22.8%) that leads to an injury that requires treatment (4.3% vs. 3.1%) and getting into a fight on school property (9.1% vs. 8.1%).

Also, in the 30 days leading up to administration of the survey, one in ten (9.9%) of students (vs. 7.4% statewide) skipped school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school. The incidence of bullying on school property, physical and sexual dating violence and rape were higher than state averages.

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey also studied 7th and 8th graders at LaSalle and Gaskill Preps. At the middle school level, 59.5% reported being in a physical fight, which resulted in treatable injury 6.5% of the time. 46.8% say they have been bullied on school property, and 27% have, at one time or another, carried a weapon such as a gun, knife or club.

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A Bullet Fired at the Power Elite by the American People

Matt Ricchiazzi

Last Monday, Carl Paladino gave an interview to BBC Radio 4's Today program, an influential platform in the United Kingdom. The same day his interview was reported in The Guardian.

"I think you describe correctly the offense which is, if you don't pick up your part, as was agreed to many years ago, then there's going to be a consequence," he said. "We don't know what that consequence will be, but I think most Americans are in favor of that. They think everybody should pay their fair share. There's no reason why the United States of America has to put up with the nonsense of caring for the defense and the security of a country that doesn't pick up its fair share."

When he was asked if the Trump administration would insist on a reduction in NATO's status or role, Paladino replied: "I don't think we're changing the status of NATO, we're enforcing the agreement as it was originally drawn out. Enforcing the agreement is the intent."

"It's not to scare people. But they should, just as the United States has accommodation for its defense budget, these other countries are going to have to start making accommodation themselves. In other words, times are changing."

Later that same day, UK Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson arrived in Brussels, where he urged European nations to spend 2% of GDP on defense, as required by NATO, echoing Paladino's key demand.

"It's a good thing if everyone steps up to the plate and spends a bit more on defense themselves. One of the great things about our government is that we do spend 2% of GDP on defense," Johnson told The Telegraph. "It's important when you're setting up these EU structures that they should be complementary with NATO. You shouldn't undermine the fundamental security architecture that's looked after us for the last 70 years."

It is clear that Paladino – based much on his recruitment of the President Elect as a candidate – has earned himself enormous influence, which some have speculated could lead to a cabinet appointment.

Paladino was at the genesis of the Trump candidacy

Following his unlikely 2010 gubernatorial bid, Paladino embarked upon the task of recruiting Donald Trump to run for Governor. In many ways the two men were similar: real estate developers who were politically astute, in large part because of the entrenchments of their industry.

Paladino took many trips to New York City to meet with the Midtown businessman, and with political operative Mike



Caputo, attempted to woo him into the race with a strategy to defeat incumbent Andrew Cuomo. Trump would come to Western New York to entertain the idea, even helping local Republicans fundraise, but ultimately declined to seek the office.

Instead, Paladino convinced Trump to seek a higher office.

Paladino sees the nation's geopolitical predicament through the lens of the Rust Belt – colored by the collapse of America's manufacturing industry and the boldly unfulfilled promises that accompanied Clintonian-era promises of free trade.

It is no small coincidence that the cornerstone of Trump's candidacy is built on Rust Belt discontent and his willingness to throw off the "free trade" agreements that have decimated domestic manufacturing. Trump's appeal, from the very beginning, was to the same constituency that Paladino appealed to so heavily in 2010.

Those voters formed the genesis of Trump's candidacy for President.

That Trump would support cutting income taxes; reducing the corporate tax to 15%; eliminating the tax on repatriating funds from abroad; offer tax credits for industrial modernization; repeal existing trade agreements; and repeal Obamacare, with its costly mandates and penalties; resonated strongly with working class voters, who were mostly interested in work and a different economic direction than the stagnating policies of the last eight years.

His opponent – Hillary Clinton – served as the Senator from New York for eight years, carpet bagging her way into office with promises to create 200,000 new jobs in Upstate that never materialized. Her husband pushed for NAFTA – the dirtiest of five-letter words in most parts of the Midwest – and passed other legislation that sold out factories in Buffalo for Wall Street traders in Manhattan.

It made for a visceral contest, with broad swaths of voters offended by the supposed (but actually asinine) relevance of Clinton's gender, her often two-faced policy positions, and her alleged (seemingly obvious) criminality.

Culture, not just policy

In many ways Trump's candidacy was a rejection of the 'pussification' of America – a process of social engineering that emas-

culates white men with racism masked as academics, and commonly peddled as a liberal arts education. That indoctrination, predicated on a liberal ideological posture that preposterously indicts whiteness, is a particularly pronounced form of racism that has inflamed race relations, particularly emboldened during the Obama administration.

Clinton's supporters call it misogyny. They argue that her mere presence suggests that women of her privilege can treat working-class men with disrespect – she dismisses Trump's supporters as racist, sexist, homophobic, or xenophobic – provoking an instinctive backlash among men who resent the power structures of a liberal, dominating elite.

Manly dignity is a big deal for working men.

Trump promises a world free of political correctness, where men can be men, unshackled with the burdens of crippling taxes and ivory tower regulations. Working-class men's wages hit the skids in the 1970's era of industrial restructuring; the 1990's era of free trade and the collapse of domestic manufacturing; and the Great Recession, caused by predatory lending and industry excess.

In response, Democrats have ignored – perhaps even disdained – this blue collar constituency of grit and pride. That has forced the pendulum swing of politics with more angrily reactionary tones.

But that's how pride works: most men, like most women, seek to fulfill the ideals they've come of age with. For many blue-collar men, all they're asking for in a Trump presidency is the basic human dignity that has been central to America's promise their entire lives.

The Democrats' solution? This month, The New York Times published an article advising men with high-school educations to take "pink-collar" jobs. Pink collar references service industry jobs historically dominated by women including bank tellers, waitresses, massage therapists, secretaries, nurses and retail clerks.

Some say that kind of elitism only fuels class anger.

Paladino, for his part, has earned the thanks and praise of a broad swath of the populace that has been victimized by a liberal establishment built on their vilification.

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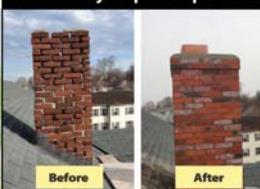
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Good News: State Will Close West River Parkway and Create Bike Path

Nate McMurray

Supervisor, Grand Island

I wanted to provide you a proper update on the meeting last week for the bike path.

New York State will move forward with the Grand Island West River Parkway closure.

In summary, the state's plan is:

- Safe—removal of 55 mph road, greatest distance from homes,
- Affordable—least use of taxpayer money,
- Environmentally friendly—minimal new materials and reuse of existing asset,
- Low traffic impact—both roads are under 10% capacity use currently (combined),
- Fit for multi-use—duck hunting, snowmobiling, horseback riding, cycling, etc.,
- Increases maintenance—State Parks have exclusive control, no longer with DOT,
- Prevents parking lots—again, no new lots,

· Stops Development—no commercial development, it stays green, and

· Positively affects property values—National Association of Realtors consistently state that trails, like good schools, create an amenity that increases property values.

I championed re-purposing the parkway into a multi-use bike path because I believe, after much consideration and a review of the objective data, that it is the most economically feasible, safe and environmentally friendly option for Grand Island.

But I have also tried listen to your concerns, and I have advocated for the removal of the parking lots and for increased maintenance. Thankfully, I can now report that under the revised plan, there will be NO additional parking lots and the state has committed to increased maintenance.

I know that many of you feel very passionately about this issue and remain concerned. I hope these materials (including the renderings) help address some of your concerns and help



A bike path will take the place of West River Parkway, according to New York State.

clear up any misinformation.

If you would like to speak with me in person, I would be happy to set up a time. Please contact Cyndy at my office, 716-773-9600 x658 or cmontana@grand-island.ny.us.

Also, the renderings for the project are now on display in town hall.

I know many of you feel very passionately about this space. It is your

home. And for some of you, it has been and will be your home for generations. You may feel that it is already perfect, so there can be no improvements. If my excitement for the plan has offended you or made you feel some discomfort, I sincerely apologize. It is my deep hope that we can work together to ensure that the final work is a great success.

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Precautions in Niagara Falls, #1 for Burglaries in NY

What I want done in New York State



John Hazel

(Ed. Note: The following is in response to the Reporter article last week announcing that Niagara Falls ranks #1 in burglaries in New York State.)

Home burglaries occur most often during the day, while the residents are at work and the house is unoccupied. Most burglars do not want a confrontation. They just want to get in, get their loot and get out.

Alarm systems are excellent deterrents. If the alarm is activated, and the police arrive at the scene in time, the burglar will be caught.

When leaving home, there are some simple things a homeowner can do to make the house look occupied. Leave a radio or TV on. A barking dog can make a burglar pass up that

house. Keep some lights on. Close the blinds so that nobody can see inside.

Neighbors should challenge any strangers on nearby property or call police. Be alert to vehicles that drive slowly through neighborhoods. They could be burglars looking for opportunities. Get plate numbers and notify police. Car burglaries most often occur when vehicles are unlocked.

Never leave your vehicle running when you run into a store for a brief purchase. Turn off the motor and lock the vehicle. Likewise, always lock the vehicle while it is unattended. Keep garage doors closed and locked and do not leave mowers or other tools out in the open. Lock entrance doors to the home even when you are there. These are common sense suggestions, but many people who do not follow them become victims of burglars.

Mickey Mouse



(ed. note: The following was sent to us by a reader. The content seemed worthy of publication even if we have some doubt whether it was

written by someone actually named Mickey Mouse.)

I am a frequent reader of the Reporter and think it is the leading weekly publication in WNY.

As you are most assuredly aware, New York States' 20 year cycle of voting on a Constitutional Convention is coming up November 8th, 2017. The option to vote either yea or nay on whether or not to hold a Constitutional Convention will be on the State ballot next year.

I will be voting 'yea.' There are too many problems in New York that cannot be ignored any longer.

1. Ending retirement benefits for convicted State officials. If you do the time, you shall lose your dime.

2. Changing how New York divvies up electoral votes. This area is overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of liberal voters downstate, especially New York City's five boroughs.

Our votes, typically a conservative vote, are muted by millions of liberal voters downstate. We need to change the Electoral College process from "winner take all" to a "some for

me and some for you" process.

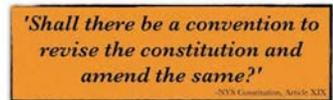
3. Ending current contracts with the NYPA. How dare they take the majority of our biggest natural resource, hydroelectricity, and send it elsewhere, without any (marginal) benefit to us here.

4. Stopping automatic appointment of people who control important aspects of our lives. Our current government has too much power over things that matter most. One person, the Governor, allowed to appoint, at will, whomever he/she pleases, is not acceptable, especially in this current corrupt system.

5. Possibly separating downstate and upstate. Not secession, although that has crossed my mind, but redistricting. Two separate entities falling under one umbrella.

I believe that 99.9% of the people in this state do not know they have the right, every 20 years, to vote for a Constitutional Convention. We need to educate and inform the people. After that the people can make their own choice.

Never is a word spoken publicly about this right that New York State voters have. Knowledge is power, knowledge is what the powers that be, do not like.



Every 20 years, the state constitution requires a statewide referendum on whether to convene a constitutional convention. The next vote will be November 7, 2017.

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A couple of thoughts worth mentioning in Dyster-ville

Frank Parlato

Rumor has it that the \$500,000 fire hall renovation by Isaiah 61 has once again proven the incompetence of the Dyster administration.

After spending more than \$100,000 fixing the roof, the city just discovered that the back wall is caving in.

Reminds us of when Isaiah 61 was renovating a home on Centre Street and forgot to brace it and it collapsed.

The Reporter said back when the city was first proposing to rehab the Highland Ave. abandoned fire hall that it would be far less expensive to demolish it and rebuild a new building for Isaiah 61.

That was when it was only supposed to cost \$500,000.

Who knows with the collapsing back wall if it can be fixed at all.

After all the money that has already been spent, it may be demolished after all.

While everyone is jubilant about the Amtrak lease with the City to move into the new \$43 million behemoth train station, we smell a rat.

Has anybody seen the actual lease which spells out how Amtrak is going to pay 63 percent of the overhead costs? Something is fishy here. Either the language is going to be Dyster-like vague, giving lots of wiggle room for Amtrak – which Dyster will then slide over on city taxpayers, or somehow Amtrak is getting a grant or subsidy to get them to move.

Why else would Amtrak go from paying no rent to what is now estimated by Dyster (and very suspiciously, too) at about \$170,000.

With the city picking up about \$60,000 per year.

Forget that city taxpayers used to pay nothing for the train station.

Also forget the fact that the train station is going to be empty almost all the time because it is 10 times larger than it

should be. Consider this:

Dyster plans for only a couple of maintenance people to keep up and clean this 20,000 plus square foot train station.

Are you kidding? Two government workers are expected to maintain one of the largest train stations in New York?

Even though Niagara Falls has nearly the lowest ridership numbers in New York, and only about 90 riders on average per day will be inside the building, which is bigger than your average supermarket, it still has to be maintained.

Something is fishy alright and once we see the lease, we are pretty confident that we will discover that Amtrak will be paying a percentage based not on real cost but some ridiculously underestimated BS calculation Dyster created as a fiction to save face to get Amtrak in.

Like so many of our predictions, they

come true a year or more later.

The Seneca Gas Station and Retail Store is about to open. When it does it will wipe out local gas stations who don't deserve to live in the Dyster world of "don't protect local businesses."

How can they compete with a tax free gas station?

Of course it may be a boon for local consumers who can save on gasoline taxes.

The retail element of the large store Seneca is building as part of their gas station should be revelatory.

How many tax free items will be sold there remain to be seen but one would think that it should wipe out the convenience stores in the area.

Perhaps they will sell clothing and other retail items.

This is the beginning of Seneca veering away from casino businesses to regular businesses meant to attract the general public who have no intention of gambling.

They want tax free products and will drive to get them and will ignore the local businesses here who pay giant taxes (Niagara Falls is the highest taxed city in New York).

And amid the highest taxes are the no-taxed.

That's the kind of justice New York State serves up.

And Dyster remains silent.

He should propose a tax free zone for the stores in direct competition with Seneca as part of a plan for a level playing field.

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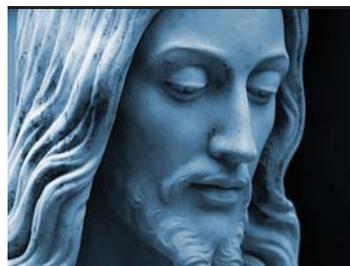
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\$9.99 Dinner Buffet
Lunch valid Mon-Fri: 11am - 4pm,
Dinner valid Mon-Sat after 4 pm; all day Sun.

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\$6.99 Breakfast Buffet

PONDEROSA
Cannot be used in combination with any other coupon, discount or promotional offer. Tax not included. Valid for up to party of 6 at participating Steakhouses.



"Such was the will of the Father that his Son, blessed and glorious, whom he gave to us, and who was born for us, should by his own blood, sacrifice, and oblation, offer himself on the altar of the cross, not for himself, by whom "all things were made," but for our sins, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps."

St Francis of Assisi

Holiday inspired décor on Display at Lewiston Tour of Homes



A tour of Lewiston homes features holiday inspired decor by WNY designers.

The 12th annual Historic Lewiston Tour of Homes will take place on Saturday and Sunday, December 3-4 from 9:30am to 1:15pm, and from 1pm to 5pm.

Homes on the tour will be decorated by WNY designers and retailers and feature holiday décor and Christmas tablescapes.

Locations this year include: Westwood Circle in Oak Run, Garden Lane in the Gardens at Oxbow off Mohawk Street, The Bar-

ton Hill home on Center and North 3rd Street and Fairbanks apartments at Center and South 3rd Street.

Four trolleys will make a circuit from Lewiston Village Hall, the Barton Hill Hotel, and each of the five homes on the tour.

Tickets are \$25 pre-sale, or \$30 on days of the Home Tour, and are available online at www.lewistonhometour.com/. Or buy and pick up tickets at: Wegmans locations

throughout Western New York, Barton Hill Hotel, 100 Center Street, Lewiston and DiCamillo Bakery, 535 Center Street, Lewiston.

Tickets include a dessert tasting reception at Barton Hill Hotel between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm with holiday pastries from DiCamillo's Bakery and the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute and a cocktail tasting, featuring a poinsettia cocktail from Hibbard's Portage Liquors and Niagara Falls Wegmans.

A Holiday Gift Market will also open at the Barton Hill Hotel where over a dozen vendors offer jewelry, home accessories, culinary items such as specialty olive oils, nuts and chocolate and other holiday shopping items.

Leandra Collesano, volunteer coordinator for the 2016 Tour Of Homes in Historic Lewiston, is soliciting volunteers for tour. Call her at 716-754-4642 to help. Volunteers get a free ticket!

Over 1,200 attended the 11th Annual Tour of Homes.

The event is a major fundraiser for the organization.

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The Village of Lewiston (formerly known as The Landing) was the site of the first European settlement in western New York in 1720, where trading started along the river. French explorers arriving from Canada across the river had visited the area as early as 1615. The village, incorporated in 1822, claims to be the "most historic square mile in America". It was named after Morgan Lewis, (pictured) the 3rd Governor of New York.



If the whole world stands against you sword in hand, would you still dare to do what you think is right?

Thanks to IBEW Local 237 for Lighting Up Schoellkopf Park



Joseph A. Ruffolo

President & CEO
Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center

Just in time for the upcoming holidays, beautiful Schoellkopf Park on the campus of Niagara Falls Memorial Medical is again shining brightly as a beacon of goodwill for the entire community.

Thanks to members of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 237, the park is ablaze with holiday lights, brightening the neighborhood and bringing cheer to the Memorial Park community and to Schoellkopf Health Center residents whose rooms overlook the park.

This has become a wonderful holiday tradition and we are grateful to President John Scherrer, Business Manager Russell Quarantello and the members of Local 237 for their generous donation of time and effort to bring the joy of the season to downtown Niagara Falls.

**NEWS, PRESS RELEASES,
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**



If you have a news tip, a news story, if your organization has a press release, or if you just have something important to say which would be interesting to our readers in the communities we serve, send it to us by email at news1926@gmail.com.

Or call at 716-284-5595
All submissions are reviewed carefully and whenever possible published in our pages.

Niagara Falls Jokes

Much to his chagrin, Mayor Dyster arrived at his City Hall office to find that it had been invaded by mice, and complained to Seth Piccirillo about it. Piccirillo thought for a moment, and suggested, "Why don't you offer to pay off their student loans?"

An Englishman, a Frenchman and a Niagara Falls resident are looking at a painting of Adam and Eve frolicking in the Garden of Eden. "Look at their reserve, their calm," muses the Brit. "They must be British." "Nonsense," the Frenchman disagrees, "They're naked, and so beautiful. Clearly, they're French." "No way!" the Niagaran points out, "They have only an apple to eat, and they are being told they live in a paradise. Obviously, they live in Niagara Falls."

A man parked his car in Mayor Paul Dyster's parking space next to City Hall. A policeman rushed to him, shouting, "Are you crazy? Mayor Dyster parks here!"

"No problem," the man answered, "My car has a good alarm system."

Gov. Cuomo visited a pig farm on the Southern Tier and was photographed there. In a newspaper's office, a discussion got underway as to what should be the caption under the picture.

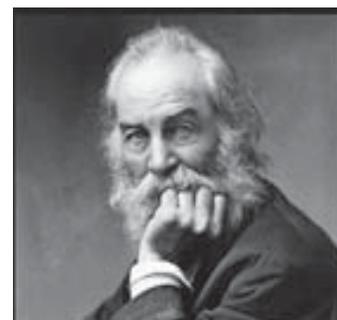
"Gov. Cuomo among pigs," "Gov. Cuomo and pigs," "Pigs around Gov. Cuomo," - all are rejected. Finally the editor makes the decision. The caption is "Third from left - Gov. Cuomo."

Mayor Dyster summoned City Administrator Nick Melson to his office and said, "I know you've been spreading jokes about me. It's impertinent."

"What are you talking about?" pleaded Melson.

"I am the Mayor of this city, leading its economic renewal, restoring hope and confidence in our future."

"No," Melson hesitatingly replied, "I've not told anybody that joke."



There is no week nor day nor hour when tyranny may not enter upon this country, if the people lose their roughness and spirit of defiance.
(Walt Whitman)
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