

letters

to the Editor

dsherman@beeneews.com  
www.beeneews.com

County legislator will be missed

I wanted to comment on Dr. Barry Weinstein's leaving the (Erie County) Legislature. He has always been a great help to the folks in Williamsville. As a senior, I appreciate how hard he worked for lower taxes and his speaking to us so honestly during that budget fiasco.

Each contact I have had with his office has been helpful and pleasant. I hope that he chooses to get involved in some other form of public service. It would be a loss to the community to lose such a smart, honest man in

government. Thanks for your service, Dr. Barry.

**Stella Bebout  
North Ellicott  
Williamsville**

Closing procedure at Glen is upsetting

The story about the Village Glen becoming strictly a tennis club is a story of reckless disregard for literally hundreds of people. It is true that years ago the Glen was just tennis. For at least the last 15 years that I have been attending, however, the Glen was the place to work out and get fit as well. In addition, (Please turn to page six)

Notes on Hillary Clinton and Buffalo's latest 'savior'

It's unclear exactly how many new jobs Hillary Clinton has promised the fawning masses in Iowa — she's still about 199,900 short in this neck of the woods — but you can bet the workforce retraining money that for the next 12 months her attentions will be much more intensely focused on Des Moines than it will Depew.

Of course, that won't represent anything particularly new. Fawn all you want over her rock star-like status, there's no argument that things are no better in Buffalo Niagara today than they were when she first bamboozled state voters six-plus years ago.

Still, it was more than just a mild shock to see a pre-Christmas poll in which Clinton trailed even Tom Vilsack among Democratic hopefuls. She was a mere three points ahead of Al Gore of all people. Of course, Vilsack is the former governor of Iowa, but still, the numbers of John Edwards and Barack Obama were more than twice that of the former First Lady.

\*\*\*

Speaking of those who leave the distinct glint of drool oozing from the corner of onlookers' mouths, are we to believe that Buffalo's latest savior is a 28-year-old native of Kuwait?

Bashar Issa certainly deserves the benefit of the doubt for now; he hasn't dashed nearly as many dreams and hopes as Niagara Frontier saviors who have come before him. But it was interesting that the Buffalo News would just a couple of days after Issa's latest public love fest dig up the memory of Eddy Cogan, who moved the masses in Niagara Falls to believe his grandiose development plans there would revitalize the American side of the natural attraction.

Cogan's plan appeared well thought out and had strong financial backing. A decade later, those plans are no closer to being realized than they were when he first dazzled local leaders desperate for any shred of potential positive news they could latch on to.

Whether or not Issa turns out to be a repeat of that, or anything even close to a real deal, remains to be seen. Here's a guess, but maybe the politics in Manchester, England, where he has made something of a mark, aren't quite as horrific as they are here. Said politics aren't a convenient excuse for when things don't get done around

here; they are fact, whether we like to put on our ruby red slippers and wish it away or not.

\*\*\*

L'Affaire Holt is hardly just a blot of Erie County Democrats, as much as partisans would like to hang legislator George's disgrace on just one party.

Of course, protecting his precious county paycheck despite criminal activity is something we would have expected from Legislative Majority Leader Lynn Marinelli, who was more than willing to enable the hot dog-stand owner to a feathery landing after he pleaded guilty for not paying state business taxes.

Her "It's not up to me, we'll let the voters of his district" decide dodge was yet another in a series of leadership abdications that is consistent with what seems to be the only key qualification to hold elected office in Erie County.

But she was hardly alone. While Republicans eventually came out with

proposed legislation designed to capitalize on the furor over the mercenary Holt's hell-no-I-won't-go hissy fit, it was disappointing that wasn't the initial response of legislative Minority Leader John Mills. It's easy to forget that in early January, Mills was on the same Marinelli merry-go-round, spinning with the rationale that it wasn't up to fellow legislators to pass judgment in the case.

\*\*\*

Whoever becomes New York's next comptroller won't be nearly as interesting as the not-so-behind-the-scenes drama over who in Albany is wielding the most power these days. Legislative leader and fellow Democrat Sheldon Silver is in the midst of a major snit with Gov. Eliot Spitzer over the process of picking Alan Hevesi's replacement. It's what happens when those who are used to always getting their way don't. The smart money on Albany's first major mano-a-mano stare down is still on Spitzer.

(Brian Ackley is a columnist for the Weekly Independent Newspapers of Western New York. For more information on WIN, or to provide feedback on this column, visit our Web site at www.wnynewspapers.com. Opinions expressed here are those of the author.)



**BRIAN ACKLEY**

Political Columnist

College affordability important goal; so is protection of employer

Two weeks ago, the new Democratic leadership of the House of Representatives pushed through hastily written legislation that will, over five years, phase in a reduction of interest rates that college graduates pay on subsidized student loans. While I have long supported efforts to make college more affordable and in turn voted in favor of this measure along with 355 of my colleagues, I did so with serious reservations about the methods the Democrats employed to pay for the rate cuts.

First and foremost, the rate cut is scaled down so much from the campaign promises made by Democrats, it is hardly recognizable. While some students will undoubtedly benefit from this rate cut, the full reduction from 6.8 percent to 3.4 percent is not realized until mid-2011 and then only stays in effect for six months, making this appear to be a stopgap political maneuver instead of a long-term solution to expanding college opportunity.

And unfortunately, this bill offsets the costs of these expensive and temporary rate cuts by dipping into the very student loan program designed to assist many students with financing their education.

Changes to the Federal Family Education Loan Program included in this bill could ultimately dampen competition in the lending industry, leaving student borrowers with fewer choices, fewer services and more administrative costs.

In particular, I am troubled that this legislation includes a decrease in incentives for companies such as Pioneer Credit Recovery, one of

the largest, private-sector employers in our area. Pioneer is a national leader, helping students who default on their loans meet their responsibilities and rehabilitate their credit rating — one of the most difficult and important services loan agencies provide.

Before any legislation is sent to the president, this provision must be addressed to ensure that Pioneer Credit not only can continue to effectively serve student borrowers but also continue to keep and create jobs in Western New York.

This and many other issues deserved full and fair debate. Unfortunately, Republicans in the House were denied any opportunity to amend and thereby strengthen this bill to be a real and long-term solution to college financing for millions of middle- and low-income families.

Cutting interest rates is a great sound bite, but good bumper stickers do not always make good policy.

Last week's vote was not the last word on this bill by far, and it is my sincere hope the Senate takes a much

fairer approach in its handling of this issue. We have a responsibility to students and taxpayers alike to continue working through this issue in a bipartisan way to truly make college more accessible and affordable for students while protecting jobs in our communities.

It is my hope that the Senate takes a much fairer approach in its handling of this issue and that together we can produce a final package that is sound policy instead of sound bites.

We need to ensure real and long-term college affordability without hurting the students we are aiming to protect.



**TOM REYNOLDS**

Congressman  
26th District

**EXCLUSIVE**  
**ONLINE Bee Poll**  
www.AmherstBee.com

**Click to vote on this Bee Poll TODAY!**

**Do you think Altemio Sanchez would have a fair trial in Erie County?**

**ONLINE POLL RESULTS**  
**VOTE**

Log onto **www.AmherstBee.com** today, to cast your vote for next week's online poll!

Last week's question:  
**Was the diocese correct in closing 14 schools?**

You said:  
**79% YES 21% NO**

How to reach The Bee

The Amherst Bee publishes community news free of charge. Mail items to The Amherst Bee, P.O. Box 150, Buffalo, NY, 14231-0150. Our telephone number is 632-4700. Our fax number is 633-8601. Our Web sites are www.BeeNews.com and www.AmherstBee.com. Amherst Managing Editor David Sherman's e-mail address is dsherman@BeeNews.com. Amherst Associate Editor Jessica Finch's email address is jfinch@BeeNews.com. Senders should state on their contributions whether their e-mail address can be published.

Letters to the editor must be typed, double-spaced and are limited to a maximum of 300 words. Names will not be withheld unless the author demonstrates a clear reason for anonymity. No unsigned letters will be printed. You must supply your name, address and telephone number for verification. Authors are limited to one letter every four weeks. Letters are subject to editing.

Our deadline is 5 p.m. on the Friday prior to publication. For engagement and wedding announcements, The Bee offers a form to list names and details. Call for a copy. There is no charge to publish engagements, weddings or anniversaries.

**Amherst Bee**  
Founded 1879

**Trey Measer**, Publisher/President, e-mail: tmeaser@BeeNews.com  
**John J. Evans**, Executive Vice President, e-mail: jevans@BeeNews.com  
**David F. Sherman**, Managing Editor, e-mail: dsherman@BeeNews.com  
**Jessica Finch**, Associate Editor, e-mail: jfinch@BeeNews.com  
**Michael A. Measer**, Circulation Manager, e-mail: mmeaser@BeeNews.com  
**Dean T. Hutter**, Advertising Manager, e-mail: dhutter@BeeNews.com  
**Karl Scheitner**, Production Manager, e-mail: karls@BeeNews.com  
**Mary Anne Cappon**, Special Sections Manager, e-mail: macappon@BeeNews.com

Web sites: www.BeeNews.com & www.AmherstBee.com

**Subscription rates:**

	One Year	Two years	Three years
	\$39.00	\$72.00	\$98.00
Sr. Citizen	\$36.00	\$66.00	\$89.00
Out of county	\$55.00	\$91.00	

**Adam L. Rinewalt**, Publisher/Founder 1879-1907  
**George J. Measer Sr.**, Publisher 1907-1965  
**George J. Measer**, Publisher 1965-1994 (USPS 024-300)

5564 Main Street, P.O. Box 150, Buffalo, NY 14231-0150

(716) 632-4700 ▲ FAX 633-8601

Circulation: 632-1791 ▲ Classified: 632-4712

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Amherst Bee, P.O. Box 150, Buffalo, NY 14231-0150

Published every Wednesday by Bee Publications Inc. Periodical postage paid at Buffalo, NY 14240

©Copyright Bee Publications Inc. 2007. All rights reserved. All advertising, news and editorial copy, including text, drawings and photographs published, are the property of Bee Publications Inc. and cannot be used without our written consent.