

## letters

# to the Editor



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## UB explains alarm malfunction

I regret that you had a less than favorable experience, but would like to inform you of the steps that were taken during and subsequent to the Dec. 2 incident to assure you that the University at Buffalo and the Center for the Arts acted in the best interest of everyone involved. The comfort and safety of our patrons is our top priority.

A full report from the house manager on duty for the event explains that within minutes of the alarm, two university police officers and a volunteer from the

Getzville Fire Department determined that there was not an emergency but that a malfunction had caused the alarm to sound. Regular announcements were made to the audience in the mainstage and atrium to convey this. The performance could have started immediately after the malfunction was discovered but was delayed because the flashing lights on the alarm system would have detracted from the performance. A university electrician was called to open the electrical panel and turn off the alarm, which unnecessarily delayed the curtain for the performance.

(Please turn to page six)

## A review of a year of reader feedback

As we prepare to turn the page on the calendar to a whole new year, I thought it would be fitting this week to share with you some of the "fan mail" I've received in recent weeks as I once again take some time to clear off my desk, empty out my notebook, clean out my e-mail inbox and respond to messages left on my voice mail.

The following are just a few of the messages I received either via e-mail or handwritten letter regarding items discussed in this space. Enjoy:

• "I think your column is full of half truths and weak opinions. You're a real jerk."

• "Dan, your analysis of Chris Collins and the Erie County Legislature was right on. No wonder we are having such difficulty in retaining our best and brightest. Can't wait to see Collins duke it out with Lynn Marinelli and the rest of the misguided folks we unfortunately consider to be our leaders."

• "Mr. Meyer, many years ago, Norman Vincent Peale wrote a book called 'The Power of Positive Thinking.' In it he theorized that positive thinking makes good things happen."

"I believe negative thinking also has power and can prevent good things from happening."

"Unfortunately, the media in general, and your column of Nov. 28 in particular, feeds this negative thinking. By publishing the pessimistic views of some of your readers on the Peace Bridge, Bass Pro, the Skyway demolition and the Buffalo Bills, I believe you are actually helping to prevent good things from happening."

"Why not a column looking at all the good things that ARE happening here? For example, already underway are an \$80 million renovation of the Statler towers, a complete facelift of the Dulski Building to include an Embassy Suites Hotel, conversion of the old Federal Reserve Building on Delaware Avenue to the New Era Cap Company's world headquarters, all the downtown residential development, and Uniland's many beautiful new office buildings that are fully occupied, including two or three inner harbor projects already completed including a start on re-watering the canal. As for the Bills, we should be optimistic about Jim Kelly and a group of local investors buying the team and building a new

downtown stadium."

"Delay can be a positive thing. For example, there have been three Bass Pro plans proposed. The latest plan to demolish 'The Aud' and build a new Bass Pro store there shows that finally everyone is on the same page. Positive results came out of that delay."

"The Peace Bridge Authority wanted to build a twin bridge. If there hadn't been opposition, we'd probably have a second bridge already. But people with more vision opposed twinning the old bridge. They want a beautiful signature bridge, something this area can identify with, as St. Louis identifies with its arch. Again, delay has been good."

"It would be refreshing to see something positive under your byline once in awhile."

• "I loved reading the 'Future of Buffalo' thoughts. We have no one to blame but our Chamber of Commerce and politicians. In the early 1990s, my brother put together a marketing plan with Paul Snyder to revamp Buffalo like what my brother did to Cleveland in the 1980s. Our Chamber was old-timers who didn't want change. His

ideas would have done wonders by now. The ideas included putting the rapid transit completely above ground and investing the difference into extending it to the airport and UB's Amherst campus, a retractable multisport domed stadium downtown so attendees have somewhere to go within walking distance to stay, shop and eat."

"Buffalo is soon to be the 'armpit of New York State.' I am embarrassed to tell my now out-of-town brother that the bridge talk is still that, just talk. It was also nice to see Niagara Falls beat Buffalo to the casino punch. More money lost thanks to the conservative relics that decide the future businesses and revenue losses. Why do you think our population is quickly diminishing? Our economy is horrific. The youth of today are relocating. I don't blame them. I will advise my kids to do the same. Thanks Buffalo!"

(Daniel Meyer is a columnist for the Weekly Independent Newspapers of Western New York. Comments on this column can be sent via e-mail to: meyersmusings@gmail.com. Opinions expressed here are those of the author.)



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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.

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## Supervisor outlines his agenda for the future

Our town has faced many challenges. Some we have created, and others we have endured. Hopefully, in 2008, with the new Town Board, we can make Amherst a better place to live and enjoy.

The concept of smaller government and reducing property taxes continues to be my top priority for 2008. To effectuate this, Council Member Guy Marlette has suggested a three-year freeze on expenditures, and Council Member Deborah Bucki is working on a hiring freeze law. To optimize our \$35 million expenditure in contracts, we are establishing a centralized purchasing program with competitive bidding.

Public facilities (water supply and sewage collection and treatment infrastructure) are aging and need replacement of worn-out sections and components. My 2008 budget includes adequate funds to begin renovation of these necessities.

Replanting of trees that were cut after the October 2006 storm will begin in the spring of 2008 with a budget of \$190,000.

Citizen participation is important. We have about 35 citizen boards and committees. Some are big, and others have not met for a long time. Therefore, we are now merging and eliminating several committees. Instead of large citizen committees, I will propose small three-member committees for some major departments and major tasks such as: health care, sinking homes and central purchasing.

Unfortunately, not much has been accomplished on sinking homes except a five-year graduated tax abatement on renovation costs. Council Member Barry Weinstein has volun-

teered to accelerate this task. Also, a fair and equitable assessment program is still to be finalized.

Physical development, both residential and commercial, if not supported by a corresponding increase in population or by new industry, will result in vacant buildings. I will work on a local law to avoid any vacant buildings in Amherst.

Our "safest" community has to advance toward other goals, including a healthy and walkable community. To achieve this, I will propose to construct 6-foot-wide sidewalks around our schools and shopping plazas. Council Member Shelly Schratz is working on eliminating use of trans fats in our schools and restaurants.

A decent and honest government is the prerequisite for a brighter future of any society. Amherstonians deserve one. I am hoping the new Town Board will cooperate with me in carrying out

open proceedings in a manner that will make our citizens proud of their vote. I am proposing an amendment to our rules of procedure that will authorize me to rule out of order any unparliamentary actions during our board's proceedings.

Plans for 2008 also include: building a new town hall; merging sanitary sewer services with the Town of Clarence, the Village of Williamsville and the county districts in Clarence; and, privatizing the management of some facilities such as golf courses and the compost facility. Each of the plans will be tested for long-term gains and feasibility before implementation.

I wish all Amherstonians a very happy and healthy 2008.



SATISH MOHAN

Amherst Supervisor