

Bee Editorial

Board should not vote from the heart

During Monday's Town Board meeting, Board Member Deborah Bruch Bucki crossed a line that elected officials should never cross: saying their vote is based on a personal reason.

Deputy Supervisor Shelly Schratz proposed a resolution that supports a request for changing a state law concerning condominium status. She said there is a loophole that allows structures not fully operating as condos to receive the status and thus a 48 percent tax rebate.

In what was expected to be a heated debate, the resolution drew only one public comment, from Don Oakley, who has spoken on the issue many times before. Most board members were also surprisingly quiet, showing their support for Schratz's resolution.

Bucki, on the other hand, said she would not support the resolution — because her parents live in a patio home and receive the

tax break. She told the whole story of her parents' 17-mile move from West Seneca to Amherst and that they now live in a one-story home and have benefited from the condo status law.

She said that while she sees merit in the resolution addressing the possibility of abuse, she could not support it in its current form.

Bucki could have said there are many elderly residents living in condos in the town and she wants to make sure they aren't affected, but she didn't. She said she couldn't support the resolution because of her parents' living situation. There was no need to offer that information, but she chose to, as members have done before, showing that they aren't being fair and unbiased — nor operating in the best interest of the entire town.

Also, the resolution clearly stated that structures currently listed as condos would

not be affected and would maintain their tax break. Bucki's parents would be protected, under Schratz's resolution. Also, anyone who lives in an actual condo should be allowed the tax break. And those who don't, shouldn't.

We aren't shocked by a personal agenda getting in the way of government business. It happens every day, at every level.

While the Amherst Town Board can't change corruption at higher levels, members can change themselves. Start voting with your head, not your heart. Don't vote one way or another based on a personal dislike of a developer, because a friend asked you to, or any other personal reason.

Just as Council Member Mark Manna said about supporting the change for the condo status law, if it's barred at the state level, so be it, but the board should do everything in town to make it fair.

Spindle items



JESSICA FINCH

Associate Editor

• IMAGES OF AMHERST

— Last week I received a letter from Kelley Sumner, a second-grade teacher at Furry Elementary School in Sandusky, Ohio, about her project, "Picture America."

She asked her students to write

States. I need your help with a special project we are doing called 'Picture America.' We are trying to collect postcards from each state. If you would like to help me with this class project please send me a post card showing an interesting or important feature of your state. Thank you for your helping me."

To participate, send postcards to 310 Douglas Drive, Sandusky, OH 44870.

• **100 PERCENT** — Rep. Thomas M. Reynolds, R-Amherst, has been presented a Certificate of Excellence from the National Breast Cancer Coalition, recognizing him as one of 194 members of the House and Senate who achieved a "perfect" record in 2007.

"We are so proud of Congressman Reynolds, who has been so supportive of breast cancer issues," said Phyllis Connelly, president of the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester and a member of the NBCC. "He has been our grand champion in Congress, and he is what we call

a 100 percenter."

The National Breast Cancer Coalition is a grassroots organization dedicated to ending breast cancer through the power of action and advocacy.

Reynolds has supported many efforts to increase awareness and provide more resources for the fight against cancer. He cosponsored legislation to invest in research that will study the link between the environment and breast cancer, which was a top priority of the National Breast Cancer Coalition. He also secured the \$2.5 million that is being used to help construct the Wilmot Cancer Center.

In addition, Reynolds has strongly supported the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program Reauthorization Act, which authorized \$1.25 billion for breast and cervical cancer detection programs and gives low-income and uninsured women greater access to screening services.

• **EYE OPENING** — Buffalo/Amherst

Business and Professional Women will present a panel discussion about domestic violence at its monthly dinner meeting at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, May 8, at Curly's Bar & Grill, 647 Ridge Road, Lackawanna.

The panel will consist of four women, all of whom have been victims of domestic violence. The women will speak to the issues of abuse by relating their own stories and sharing how they found freedom and healing. The panel will be moderated by Lora Warkentin, director of Cornerstone Manor.

To make a reservation, call 826-5378 or e-mail LBer633655@AOL.COM. For information, visit www.buffaloamherstbwpw.com. The cost of dinner and the program is \$25.

• **PHOTO GUIDELINE** — Often I receive photos sent from organizations and schools. Please make sure photos are in focus, limited to five or six people and that everyone pictured is named.

letters to newspapers around the United States asking that they be printed. The students are learning about geography.

My letter is from Hunter R., and he writes, "Dear residents of New York. My second grade class at Furry Elementary School is learning about the United

Out of the Past

125 Years Ago May 10, 1883

Last Thursday the Rough and Ready Fire Company recommended to the Village Trustees for appointment H.M. Long as chief engineer and C.H. Gotwalt as assistant engineer.

Mr. George Steinbrenner, our enterprising butcher, purchased six fine steers, averaging 1,800 pounds, of Mr. George Zent last week.

The many friends of Dr. Charles Van Pelt, formerly of this village, will be pleased to learn that he is one of the professors of a new medical college to be established at Toledo, Ohio.

Mr. W. Pautler has, at present, a large assortment of farming implements on exhibition at his place in Swornville.

D.H. Simmons was elected superintendent at the annual election of Sunday School officers at the Baptist Church.

John Gregory, or "English Jack" as he is familiarly termed by the residents of Camden, N.J., claims to have killed more than a quarter-million rats during the past thirty years. His only companions are his ferrets, his white rats, and his canine companions, "Pickle" and "Jack."

"Board wanted," as the young lady said as she came to a mud puddle in the sidewalk."

"A hotel keeper charged a traveler high rates for bad accommodations. 'What will you do when you have killed the goose that lays the golden egg?' said the grumbling traveler. 'Wait for another goose,' answered the landlord."

100 Years Ago May 7, 1908

The village is plagued with speeding automobiles, notwithstanding the sign boards erected at various places along the Williamsville road. The speed limit is 20 miles per hour.

The house with the saloon addition on Main Street about a half-mile west of Snyder, owned by John Schindler, was burned to the ground last Thursday afternoon.

75 Years Ago May 11, 1933

Congressman Alfred F. Beiter has presented to the Williamsville-Amherst Free Library a beautifully compiled book called, "Washington, the Nation's Capital."

Reduction in the pay of teachers is being adopted as part of the procedure of boards of education in offering contracts for the year opening next September. Teachers in the Williamsville High School have been offered a ten percent decrease in their salaries.

The grocery store which had been operated by Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Merckel on Main Street near Grove has been sold to Joseph Precore.

Dr. Robert S. Pratt wishes to announce that during the months of May through September, he will have no afternoon or evening office hours on Wednesday.

50 Years Ago May 8, 1958

Amherst residents will go to the polls on Saturday to vote on whether or not bingo will be legalized in the town.

A statue of St. Francis on the grounds of St. Francis Home for the Aged will be blessed this afternoon by Monsignor Eugene A. Loftus.

Our hometown Mickey Mantles and Ted Williamses have been getting in shape for the forthcoming softball season. Bob Seibel will manage the Jurek Post team in the Clarence-Amherst Softball League.

25 Years Ago May 4, 1983

The Amherst Town Board has approved a collective bargaining contract with the Amherst Police club, calling for a 6 percent wage increase, retroactive to Jan. 1, 1983, and a \$1,170 salary increase for all policemen on Jan. 1, 1984.

Twenty-two full- and part-time jobs have been created in Amherst by Harlem-Genesee Nurseries with completion this week of the firm's outdoor nursery at 480 Evans Street.

The Erie County Preservation Board will honor the late Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Niederlander, former owners of the Williamsville Water Mills, at a reception to be held May 10. Guided tours will also be available.