

letters

to the Editor

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www.ClarenceBee.com

Residents not just afraid of change

I feel I must respond to the "Bee Heard" caller who has leveled an accusation of being "narrow minded and afraid of change."

I find it particularly interesting that people who do not live where my neighbors and I do

have the audacity to make accusations that we are narrow minded and afraid of change. I must ask if this individual would have wanted a roundabout in front of his or her property that had a diameter of 140 feet and circumference 439.9 feet, with splitter lanes extending 110 feet?

Would this individual have
(Please turn to page six)

Correction

The amount of the total benefits to the Town of Clarence from Paula's Donuts mentioned by Supervisor David Hartzell in his page 5 column in the May 23 edition was incorrect. It should have been \$707,686. Yearly benefits of Paula's Donuts to the Town of Clarence are as follows: payroll — \$342,000; sales tax from those jobs — \$4,932; property tax from those jobs — \$6,064; effect on surrounding community — \$263,182; and extra 1.5 jobs created by Paula's expansions — \$91,508.

EXCLUSIVE

Bee Poll

www.ClarenceBee.com

Click to vote on this Bee Poll TODAY!

Is the Sheriff's Office handling criticism appropriately?

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

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

Last week's question:

Does Clarence need more apartments?

You said:

39% YES 61% NO

How to reach The Bee

The Clarence Bee publishes community news free of charge. Mail items to The Clarence Bee, 5564 Main St., Buffalo, NY, 14221-5410. Our telephone number is 632-4700. Our fax number is 633-8601. Our Website is www.BeeNews.com. Clarence Editor Andrea Kimbriel's email address is akimbriel@BeeNews.com. Senders should state on their contributions whether their e-mail address can be published.

Letters to the editor 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.

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Valid hydrofracking information emerges on the Internet

A few weeks ago, WPX Energy drilled more than a mile below the surface of the earth in Susquehanna, Pa., in search of natural gas. A deposit was reached through hydraulic fracturing, or hydrofracking, a process as controversial as it is complex.

Instead of bringing picks, shovels and dynamite to the site, crews were armed with tributyl tetradecyl phosphonium chloride, methanol, sodium persulfate and hydrochloric acid.

Tributyl tetradecyl phosphonium chloride is nasty stuff, according to details on its Material Safety Data Sheet.

"Liquid is corrosive to skin and eyes and may cause permanent eye damage, including blindness. Mist may cause irritation of eyes, nose, throat and lungs. Avoid contact with skin, eyes or clothing," it states. "This product is toxic to fish and aquatic invertebrates."

It acts as a biocide, in much the same way that chlorine is added to swimming pools.

Sodium persulfate sounds fairly safe but becomes unstable in the presence of heat or moisture. Contact with combustible material may cause fire, according to its MSDS information.

Work on this one well in Pennsylvania required almost 3.5 million gallons of fresh and recycled water.

All of this information is available through FracFocus, a joint project of the Ground Water Protection Council and the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission.

The website has been praised by members of Congress, industrial groups and some environmentalists for "taking the lead in disclosing the chemicals used in hydrofracking," according to the news source Politico.

Some states have written FracFocus into their "fracking" regulations by name, providing serious legitimacy. The Interior Department is also considering using the site as it develops fracking disclosure rules for wells on federal land, Politico said.

FracFocus gives the average American a first step in understanding an issue that remains impaled on the distant edge of the national energy debate. It is voluntary to post information on the site, so some firms will linger in the shadows, but information from March shows that 212 companies had signed up for the service, and informa-

tion was available for 13,000 wells in 20 states.

Meanwhile, the University at Buffalo's Shale Resources and Society Institute recently issued a report that offers a significant review of Pennsylvania's regulation of hydrofracking of natural gas. It examined 2,988 violations from nearly 4,000 natural gas wells from January 2008 through August 2011. Researchers found that 62 percent of the violations were administrative and preventive in nature. The remaining 38 percent were environmental in nature. The environmental violations were the result of 845 events, with 25 classified as "major" environmental events.

A press release from UB states that the report suggests that Pennsylvania's regulatory approach has been effective at maintaining "a low probability of serious environmental events and in reducing the frequency of environmental violations." UB found that the proposed regulatory framework in New York could help avoid the 25 major events identified in Pennsylvania.

Another sign that Western New Yorkers are taking an avid interest in the issue was Saturday's "People's Hearing on Fracking" at the Burchfield Penney Art Center. Organizers stated "Fracking has been cited as a threat to surface and ground water throughout the region, and has been blamed for fatal explosions, the contamination of drinking water, local streams, the air and soil."

The framework for Saturday's gathering was provided by a collection of artists and activists familiar with the Elmwood Village. Anyone who was bored with the environmental topic could drift over to live music and theatrical performances. Brad Wales, an associate professor at UB, said the goal was to "create a synergy that will draw as many people as possible to engage in clean water issues."

There's nothing like folk guitars and face painting to get people motivated about saving the planet. I'll stick with more traditional forms of research.

(David F. Sherman is managing editor of Bee Group Newspapers and a columnist for the Weekly Independent Newspapers of Western New York, a group of community newspapers with a combined circulation of 286,500 readers. Opinions expressed here are those of the author. He can be reached at ds Sherman@beeneews.com.)



DAVID F. SHERMAN

Managing Editor

Proposed toll increase would hurt consumers, businesses

As someone who frequently travels the Thruway for work, I know that paying for tolls can add a significant cost to any trip. The company I work for does business throughout New York State, much like many other enterprises that are vital to growth and development in New York State. With a sizeable toll already in place, it was disappointing to learn that the Thruway Authority was again proposing a hike, worse yet, a 45 percent increase, for big trucks.

This is another example of a New York State agency proposing a fee hike that will inevitably end up costing you more. This is simply bad for business. Companies that use the Thruway are going to be forced to examine their operations. This could mean reduced service for consumers; increased costs for the consumer to receive those services; or both. The unfortunate end result could be companies simply choosing not to do business in New York State any longer, a common occurrence because of other taxes and fees.

Yet another possible effect would be trucking companies opting to use alternative routes, putting big rigs onto streets that are not built to support them. This will result in increased infrastructure repair costs for the municipality that owns and maintains those secondary streets.

According to one report I read, a trip from Buffalo to Albany, for a commercial truck, cur-

rently costs \$44.70. With the proposed increase a truck would pay \$64.70. That is an outrageous hike. It is an insult for the chairman of the Thruway Authority to call this a "modest" increase. Such a large increase can't be passed onto our small businesses without a second thought nor should it be made light of. The effects some companies will incur will be anything but modest; we could see layoffs or businesses closing because of this new expense forced onto them. For someone in the chairman's position to view a 45 percent increase as modest demonstrates an out-of-touch approach to business.

New York State has proved time and time again that it is good at implementing anti-job-creation policies. Every day we lose residents and businesses. New York State is on a road leading in one direction, and it doesn't end well for residents and businesses. I encourage Gov. Andrew Cuomo and state

leaders to do what they can to reduce the proposed fee increase before the consequences are irreversible.

New York State's infamous reputation for over-taxing remains intact with this proposal.

I am always interested in your thoughts on issues that affect you. Please contact my Legislative Office at 858-8676 or email edward.rath@erie.gov if you have any questions or concerns. Information is also available on my website at www.erie.gov/legislature/district06.



EDWARD RATH

Erie County Legislator