

Our Opinion

Political letter deadline is Oct. 22

With just a few weeks remaining before voters go to the polls on Election Day on Nov. 2 — and with early voting starting on Oct. 23 this year — the *Cortland Standard* has already received and published a number of politically oriented letters to the editor. We are thrilled when these letters start to arrive because it’s always good to see a high level of public interest in political contests and issues to be decided on and before Election Day.

Voters in the city of Cortland and the town of Cortlandville have big choices to make this year, with major issues and critical decisions facing both municipalities and strong contenders for important offices.

After 10 years of the Democratic control of the city under the administration of retiring Mayor Brian Tobin, Democrat (and former mayor) Bruce Tytler and Republican (and former county Legislature chairman) Scott Steve have thrown their hats in the ring. Additionally, many Common Council seats are contested this year.

Incumbent Cortlandville Supervisor Tom Williams, a Republican, is facing Town Board member Doug Withey, a Democrat. Tension between the two has spilled into view at public meetings, perhaps unsurprisingly — Withey is the first Democrat on the town board in at least 50 years. Democrat Pam Jenkins is running to be the second, in addition to Republicans Jeff Guido (incumbent) and Greg Leach (former board member). Cortlandville voters: please note that Democrat Peter Morse-Ackley has dropped out of the race, although his name remains on the ballot. He has said he would decline to serve, if elected.

A number of town of Homer board seats are also contested and the Solon town supervisor seat is up for grabs this year, in addition to other area races.

Because of the high-profile nature of the city mayor and Cortlandville supervisor races, the *Cortland Standard* and X101 will present debates between the candidates for each office. Mayoral candidates will face off at 7 p.m. Thursday, with supervisor candidates debating at 7 p.m. Oct. 19. Both debates will be produced by Cortland High School’s Cortland Video Club, which will also livestream the debates alongside the *Cortland Standard* and X101, and they will be shown live on Spectrum Channel 17.

It is the *Cortland Standard’s* policy not to endorse candidates for elections, as we believe that anyone who seeks public office should be commended. However, we know a great many readers would like the chance to tell everyone else why they should also support a candidate.

Our Opinion Page is the first page many readers turn to when they get their daily paper. They want to see what others think about issues and events. Become part of that exchange by writing down your thoughts and opinions and sending them to us — your ideas are just as important as anyone else’s.

The deadline for submitting letters to the editor endorsing or opposing candidates is noon Oct. 22.

Oct. 29 will be the last day we publish political letters to the editor. Until then, we will publish letters on a first-come, first-served basis. However, responses from candidates to last-minute charges or accusations may be accepted at the discretion of the editor.

Letters to the editor must include the author’s name, home address and daytime telephone number (not for publication). There is a 200-word limit for letters endorsing or opposing candidates for public office and referendums. Letters on other topics are limited to 300 words. And sorry, but we do not accept thank you letters.

So if you’ve got something to say about the candidates or issues, don’t wait until the last minute to start writing a letter to the editor. The sooner we get politically oriented letters to the editor, the better chance they’ll have to make it into print.

Your Opinion

Facts on Gutches Park expansion

To the Editor:
I read with interest Pam Jenkins’ two letters regarding the Gutches Lumber Sorts Complex. I realize that Ms. Jenkins is running for office and candidates often look for something to grab the voters’ attention. The explanation for her opposition to the expansion of the project is lacking on many fronts. She is very quick to point out the expenditures of the project, without ever mentioning the monetary benefits to the community. The GLSC and the people the complex attract to the area has to be a contributor to the fact that Cortlandville’s sales tax collection through the first two-thirds of 2021 are about \$1 million more than was budgeted for.

She also takes exception to the contract Cortlandville signed with Professional Baseball Report, an organization that sponsors tournaments and show cases for players and teams. These teams travel from all over the Northeast, many with parents along. The economic impact of these groups can be huge. PBR will pay Cortlandville \$218,000 per year to build two new fields and have the use of the fields at certain times for their activities. This expansion will enable the complex to be used by more boys and girls programs.

Local high school, college and youth teams will not have their use of the fields impacted, as per the contract. Concession sales, as well as other revenue streams, such as naming rights for the individual fields and signage will be Cortlandville s.

The revenues from these sources will cover the debt to build the fields and improvements needed to infrastructure and amenities

While I believe in the taxpayers’ right to have a say in a taxpayer funded expansion of the complex, they should have all the facts.

John Tobin
Cortland

Good Old Days

October 13, 1971

New York Mayor John V. Lindsay shared a Cornell University stage Tuesday night with a number of hecklers and at least two dogs, and he told his unruly audience that it was just like being back at New York City Hall.

“I feel very much at home. It’s like any ordinary day at city hall. I hope you all saw the movie MASH. It was filmed about Korea, but actually it was about city hall,” the mayor quipped after taking back his microphone from a young man.

The man, accompanied by a sign that read, “Wanted. John Lindsay for murder,” had been hooted down by a crowd estimated at 2,500 when he tried to speak.

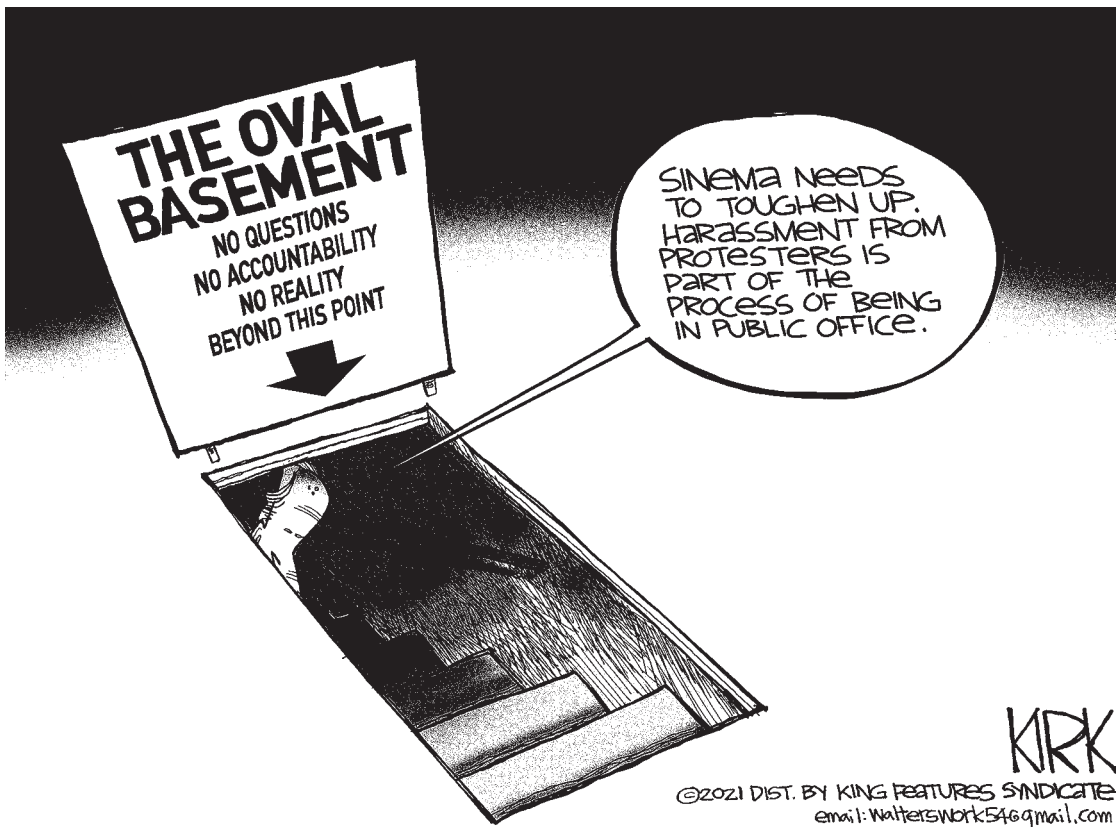
October 13, 2011

DRYDEN — Former Tompkins Cortland Community College student Beenish Javed has been honored by the United States Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan.

The embassy recognized the achievement of 10 alumni of U.S.-funded exchange programs at a “Leaders of Tomorrow” event recently at the National Library of Pakistan.

Javed was a student at TC3 from August 2008 through July 2009 as part of the Community Colleges Initiatives Program, a collaboration with the Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, and Community College for International Development, with which TC3 has a long-standing relationship.

The students were selected to participate by the Fulbright Commission.



Path to energy independence

Claudia Tenney



forward-thinking energy technologies that will have a positive impact on our environment. It uses innovation and common-sense regulatory reform to drive a least-cost, fuel diverse modernization of our electric power sector. It requires an 80% CO2 reduction in the power sector by 2050 and decreases the cost of electricity.

This bill is bipartisan and realistic, something that sets it apart from most others. It is focused on carbon reduction, but it allows the power sector to adapt to new energy technologies and to utilize options like carbon capture for natural gas, which is discouraged under our current tax code. This will cultivate a diverse power ecosystem far more resilient against the price spikes and energy shortages we are seeing in Europe and across the globe. It also provides a much more realistic timeline for CO2 reduc-

tions than any other proposal out there. It gives utility companies the chance to plan and technology the time to catch up.

But continuing to develop clean energy technologies is only part of the solution. We must also focus on reducing our dependence on China and ensuring we have access to the raw materials we need to drive our ingenuity. In one way or another, China currently controls 85% of the world’s rare earth minerals supply. We rely on Beijing for nearly all the clean energy technologies we are developing today, from batteries to solar panels. This is unacceptable. America must be self-sufficient in the production of energy and energy technologies to both boost our economy and avoid the obvious vulnerabilities of relying on an adversary like China.

The United States is home to

large deposits of rare earth minerals. These domestic sources can be extracted in environmentally friendly ways, with a fraction of the economic impact of those from China or Chinese-controlled mines abroad, and without any of the forced labor and human rights concerns. I have joined with my colleagues in Congress to support H.R. 543, the POWER Act, a bill to prevent the president from unilaterally blocking energy or mineral leasing on federal lands and waters without congressional approval. This will give the private sector the certainty it needs to make the investments required to safely use these valuable resources.

By responsibly utilizing our abundant supply of natural resources, we can drive the technologies of the future, protect our environment, reduce energy costs, and support the creation of well-paying, stable American jobs. Improving our prosperity and caring for our planet is not a zero-sum game. We can do both and together we can ensure our nation is at the center of the green economy and the next century is yet another American Century.

Rep. Claudia Tenney (R-New Hartford) represents New York’s 22nd Congressional District in Congress as a member of the House Foreign Affairs and Small Business committees.

Godspeed, Francis Collins

Kathleen Parker



throughout the global community. Obama awarded him the Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian award, and Pope Benedict XVI appointed him to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. He’s so admired and respected that Presidents Donald Trump and Biden both kept him onboard when they took office

Beyond Washington, Collins has become a familiar face during the pandemic, his soothing voice and straightforward manner a tonic for frightened people confused by partisan bickering over, of all things, whether to wear a mask or get a vaccine against the coronavirus. He doesn’t mince words, but nor does he season them. His quiet bedside manner makes him — and his message — accessible without scaring or intimidating people.

Yet, for most of his life, Collins has been missing from scandal sheets, slick magazines and talking-head TV. When you really are the smartest person in the room, I guess you don’t need a publicist. His statement

announcing his retirement was characteristically humble: “I fundamentally believe ... that no single person should serve in the position too long, and that it’s time to bring in a new scientist to lead NIH into the future.”

This is typical Collins, who is a practicing ethicist, too. In recent years, he has apologized for structural racism in science and refused to appear on any all-male panels. Under his watch, the NIH has vowed to stop experimentation on chimpanzees.

Though I’m awed by Collins’s accomplishments, it is his biblically inspired scientific mission that interests me most. My personal observations about him are based on occasional visits over the past decade or so at gatherings and dinners that often centered around the intersection of faith and science. Though a true believer in both, Collins was once an atheist. In his 2006 best-selling book, “The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief,” Collins argued that

evolution isn’t a negation of God but rather is how He created the world.

One can debate such issues forever, but there’s no question that Collins has done his homework, scientifically and theologically, and is equally fluent in both realms. His courage and equanimity in the face of criticism or insults — as when the late atheist/provocateur Christopher Hitchens basically called Collins an idiot at a dinner debate I attended — is a testament to a maturity missing in our public square.

Collins and Hitchens spoke more that evening in 2007, beginning a friendship that lasted until Hitchens’s death in 2011. Collins, by the way, played the piano at his memorial service.

At 71, Collins surely has earned his retirement, but he won’t be idle. He’ll continue leading his research laboratory at the National Human Genome Research Institute and, perhaps, continue his work advancing harmony between the church and science through his BioLogos Foundation. Heaven knows, we need it now more than ever.

I’m sure I’ve sounded like a eulogist here, but given my admiration for the scientist and the believer, I couldn’t let Collins depart without some confetti and a few deserved words of praise. The next time we meet, I’ll have a question for him about our species’ prospects for survival, which I can pose now: Has our genetic code mutated to liberate the inner ape crouching within us humans? Or is evolution done with us?

Letters

The *Cortland Standard* welcomes letters from readers for publication on this page. All letters submitted must be signed by the writer and include the writer’s home address and daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and content. Letters are limited to 300 words in length. Letters endorsing or opposing the election of candidates for public office are limited to 200 words. Thank-you notes will not be accepted.