

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Republicans show no spine about spending

As a registered Republican who considers herself a fiscal conservative, I feel betrayed by Rep. Tom Reed. My disappointment with his vote on the "cromnibus" budget bill has become a slow burn.

Democrats have only to cry "shutdown!" and Republican legislators run and hide under the bed. What was the big rush to pass this bill? Where is Republican leadership? Where is the challenge to Obamacare that the voters clearly want? Where is Republican outrage over the mountain of debt we are leaving our children? They just added another trillion dollars to it.

How is it that Republican legislators cannot recognize a decisive mandate when they get one? They were elected to fight the Democratic agenda that is ruining this country. But once again, Republicans are outflanked and we the voters are sold down the river.

We see the same leadership vacuum on the state level. Our state legislators may be in the minority, but the least they could do is stand up and fight. They have lost the battle for fracking without firing a shot.

I've had it with the Republican Party. Maybe it really is time for a third party that will truly represent the majority in this country — people who long for a return to fiscal sanity.

JO BARLOW
CORNING

We as a society must rethink need for excess

Regardless of what your political or religious persuasion might be, we have reached a defining moment in our history. We have, through a unified concerns, conflated excess with success. Excess is a sin and unrestrained excess is going to negatively affect future generations.

Most of us work hard, and we feel that a little excess is OK — that is fine. But some feel that excess with no bounds is a God-given right and that freedom and excess go hand in hand. Some even go so far as to feel that their right to excess trumps other people's rights, period.

As the population grows and natural resources dwindle, we cannot continue to go down the path of unreasonable excess. I know that no one wants to think or talk about it, but we have to — our future depends on it. Quality of life does not depend on grabbing everything in sight and then placing it on a shelf where it just gathers dust.

LEE E. JACKSON
ELMIRA HEIGHTS

Help with bell-ringing is appreciated

Thank you goes out to Mia Force-Russell and Rianne Drake of Odessa for ringing the bell on Dec. 13 for the Salvation Army. This was Mia's third year ringing the bell. Nice job, ladies.

SYLVIA FORCE
ELMIRA

WRITE TO US

We welcome letters no longer than 200 words. Please include your name, address and a daytime telephone number. We edit for brevity, accuracy, clarity and grammar. Edited letters should address a single idea. We reject anonymous letters, poetry, Internet pass-alongs and form letters. Writers are limited to one letter within 30 days. Letters and articles may be published in print, electronic media or other forms. We regret we cannot return or acknowledge unpublished letters.

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TWIN TIERS SHOWS ITS HOLIDAY SPIRIT



KARTZMAN FAMILY PHOTO

Sophie Kartzman and Santa delivered holiday cards to veterans in the Bath VA Hospital just before Christmas. Sophie's effort to gather signed cards with personal messages, for troops here and overseas, generated more than 9,000 cards.

Lots of elves were at work in the Twin Tiers over the past few weeks, handing holiday cards to heroes at the Bath VA, packing and delivering gifts for Chemung County children, and laying wreaths at Woodlawn National Cemetery in Elmira.

My personal favorite elf of 2014 has to be Horseheads Intermediate School student Sophie Kartzman. She was the girl who got hundreds of us to write holiday/thank you cards to troops and veterans as part of the Holidays for Heroes campaign of the Red Cross. More than 9,000 cards were shared, thanks to the efforts of Sophie, her family and the area Red Cross.

Just before Christmas, Sophie visited the Bath VA Hospital and hand-delivered some of those cards. Her mother shared some of the photos with me, and the big grins on the faces of the veterans (and Sophie) were heart-warming.

Sophie even looked like an elf for the delivery, with stripped socks. Santa accompanied her on her rounds at the hospital, too!

In Elmira on Christmas morning, folks lined up to be Santa and help the Arctic League deliver gifts in the city. On Christmas Eve, the role of Santa was played by volunteer firefighters from around the county.

In the weeks leading up to Christmas, I was privileged to be part of a crew that helped pack those bags one evening. My job was to gather up a Bratz doll, a tie-dye kit and a sand art kit each time the family in need included a girl (or girls) who were 7 or 8 years old.

The gifts were added to a bin that was slid down a table-turned-assemblyline to be bagged. The bags, which can be-



Lois
Wilson

Editor's
Corner

come heavy (as I can attest from other times I've volunteered at Arctic League), were then loaded into piles to await the Santas (and elves) who would deliver on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The Twin Tiers has a tradition of giving, and this year we got a new tradition with Wreaths Across America happening in a big way at Woodlawn National Cemetery in Elmira. Elves by the dozens turned out on Dec. 13 for a ceremony and again on Dec. 20 to place balsam fir wreaths on the 1,008 of the nearly 8,000 grave markers of veterans at the cemetery.

While Cameron Manufacturing and Design in Horseheads is quick to point to all the businesses and individuals who got involved to purchase or place wreaths, CEO Chris Goll and his team deserve the credit for leading the charge and for their willingness to do it again in 2015.

Across the area, people helped others in big and small ways this holiday season — from the 1-ounce gold coin dropped into the Elmira Salvation Army red kettle at Jubilee in Horseheads, to the donations and gift delivery by Simmons-Rockwell associates alongside volunteers from Meals on Wheels in Chemung County and Corning as part of the Subaru Share the Love campaign.

All of these acts of kindness seem like a good note on which to leave 2014. Yes, we will have challenges in 2015 as individuals, businesses and as a region, but don't underestimate what we can do together toward a common goal.

Have a happy, safe and healthy new year.

Wilson is the Star-Gazette's senior editor. Contact her by phone at (607) 271-8284 or by email lwilson@stargazette.com. Follow her on Twitter @SGLoisWilson.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Sunday, Dec. 28, 2014. On this date:

- » In 1832, John C. Calhoun became the first vice president of the United States to resign, stepping down over differences with President Andrew Jackson.
- » In 1846, Iowa became the 29th state
- » In 1897, "Cyrano de Bergerac," the play by Edmond Rostand, premiered in Paris.
- » In 1945, Congress offi-

cially recognized the "Pledge of Allegiance."

- » In 1981, Elizabeth Jordan Carr, the first American test-tube baby, was born in Norfolk, Va.
- » In 1982, Nevell Johnson Jr., a black man, was mortally wounded by a police officer in a Miami video arcade, setting off three days of race-related disturbances that left another man dead.
- » In 1987, the bodies of 14

relatives of R. Gene Simmons were found at his home near Dover, Ark., following a shooting spree by Simmons in Russellville that claimed two other lives. (Simmons was later executed.)

- » In 1991, nine people died in a crush to get into a basketball game at City College in New York.
- » In 1992, Somalia's two main warlords, Mohamed Farrah Aidid and Ali Mahdi

Mohamed, promised an end to their hostilities.

- » In 1996, leftist rebels in Peru released 20 more hostages, including two ambassadors, from Japan's embassy residence, following the first face-to-face talks between guerrillas and the government's negotiator.
- » In 2000, U.S. retail giant Montgomery Ward announces it is going out of business after 128 years.