

VIEWPOINTS

EVERYBODY'S COLUMN | LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Help available for cancer screenings

Did you know that about 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime? Or that breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths among women in New York State? Additionally, Black women are more likely to die from breast cancer than other groups of women.

But there are other important facts about breast cancer too. Facts like: When breast cancer is found early, it's easier to treat. Having regular mammograms gives you the best chance of finding breast cancer early and is the key to survival. Did you know most health insurance plans in New York State cover mammograms? For people without insurance, the Cancer Services Program (CSP) of Erie County may be able to help.

The CSP helps people without insurance get life-saving screenings for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer. If more testing is needed, our program can pay for that too and help enroll eligible people in the NYS Medicaid Cancer Treatment Program if cancer is found.

Breast cancer screening is recommended beginning at age 40. If you or anyone you know needs breast, cervical or colorectal cancer screening, please call the Cancer Services of Erie County at 716-858-7376, csp-wny.org.

Lisa Milewski
Senior outreach aide with CSP of Erie County
Buffalo

Texas blazing a path on renewable energy

During Climate Week, it's instructive to see how another state is harnessing the power of the wind and sun, coupled with battery storage, to meet its energy needs ("Texas oil country increasingly runs on renewables," Sept. 20). The author attributes this to a deregulated market and an easy process for connecting to the grid, though he could have also mentioned the astonishing drop in the cost of renewables. New York has a deregulated market, too, so why are we falling behind?

State law says that 70% of our electricity must come from renewables by 2030 but we're not even close. A recent audit of our Public Service Commission, which oversees the work of investor-owned electric utilities in our state, showed that it takes an average of 5 years for a large-scale renewable project to get up and running.

New York likes to claim leadership of action on climate. Can't we do at least as well as Texas, Gov. Hochul?

Sandra Ebert
Buffalo

Trump's lies about Springfield are vile

Donald Trump, with support from running mate JD Vance, has hit a new low with his demonizing and dehumanizing



A maple tree estimated to be 80 or 90 years old, marked for logging, within the Zoar Valley Multiple Use Area in Collins.

WE GOT MAIL

37 letters received this week

1. Environment, conservation
2. Trump, Springfield
3. Church closings
4. Municipal issues
5. Legislation



An image of a broken heart is seen across the street from City Hall near the Heritage Center of Clark County, right, in Springfield, Ohio.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

lies about Haitian immigrants eating pets in Springfield, Ohio. Trump's vile rhetoric has led to numerous bomb threats against immigrants there.

He has willingly provoked fear in that community and jeopardized their safety, all for his own political benefit. Do we really want Trump and Vance running our country with their hateful and dangerous rhetoric?

Immigrants in Springfield, like those here in Buffalo, have enriched their community in numerous ways. They have reversed their city's population decline, revitalized the economy, and enhanced their community's culture. They add to the region's tax base, spend money on area businesses, and in many cases create new businesses that employ native-born Americans.

They are also a rich source of labor for new housing construction, thus helping to alleviate the housing shortages that are temporarily exacerbated by their arrival.

We need to elect leaders who recognize legal immigrants for everything they contribute to our communities.

Robert A. Krohn
Amherst

Denigrating Haitians is unacceptable

We are better than this!
We are better than those who seek political gain at the expense of Haitians who are living legally in Springfield, Ohio.

These resettled Haitians are here in the U.S. because they have been driven from their own country by civil unrest, gangs, murders and social upheaval. They are employed and working hard at integrating in their new-found community.

I do not believe it is acceptable political behavior to call people nasty names, blame them unjustly, spread untrue rumors and make fun of them just because it gets you publicity.

Such political activity fans the fires of fear, prejudice and chaos in our nation.

It's time we dug deep and summoned up our better selves.
Marion Grimes
Hamburg

Miller James is right about Republican party

Congratulations and kudos to Mary Miller James, daughter of Bill Miller — the vice presiden-

tial running mate to Barry Goldwater in 1964. Her reflections of a true "Republicans' Republican" — in Sunday's News, show just how far from reality the Republican party has fallen.

She longs for a return to the party that once stood for decency, integrity, kindness, civility, inclusivity, common sense, and open-minded tolerance — all attributes which defined the legacy of "true" Republicans.

Donald Trump is not a Republican — he is a "Trumpist," of, for and by one man only: Donald J Trump. He does not care one whit for the legacy attributes of former Republican Party members. He is a felon and a fraudster, and the policies that he claims to be composing will only benefit him. He has said he will be a "dictator" on day one of his presidency and wants to suspend our cherished Constitution. He promises to deport "millions" of immigrants right away. The list goes on and on and on.

Republican senators and congress people who blindly continue to support him are threatening our United States of America way of life. Their continued silence regarding Trump's continued threats about what happens if he doesn't get his

own way highlight their spineless and shameless fear of him, despite his complete unfitness to become the Commander in Chief of our proud democracy.

Republicans who do not follow Trump need to step up and defend the values that Mary Miller James highlights in her reflections of what the party once was. They must exhibit courage and strength, looking out for those who live their lives honestly and decently and show understanding of what "liberty and justice for all" really looks like.

Larry Gustina
Buffalo

Run for White House is a lose-lose proposition

And you thought the Kentucky Derby; Super Bowl and the World Series were exciting. How about the race for President of the United States. Each candidate finds fault with their advisors. They also change positions to gain undecided voters and claim to create programs that will bring joy to your life.

Sad to say, the winner will be a normal politician with normal promises for the voting public, who has little choice in the betting odds. And the odds are poor.

Pat Delaney
Depew

Clear-cutting at Zoar must not be allowed

Zoar Valley is under grave threat.

A common tautology, nowadays, proclaims "everything is sacred." But "if everything is sacred, then nothing is sacred," according to James Hillman, the archetypal psychologist who took modern psychology to task for routinely tracing everyone's depression to their childhood, rather than the rigged condition of our politics.

We wallow in a neo-feudal oligarchy, promulgated as a healthy democracy. The Supreme Court's indefensible ruling on Citizen's United has handed key political victories to the billionaire class. Their love of money has replaced the love of God, justice, foresight, and clear common sense.

Yet, beyond the shadow of a doubt, Zoar Valley is sacred. It's an enchanted forest. A cosmic treasure beyond any price. It's the last stand of primordial wilderness in Western New York. No sane person would ever consider threatening the fragile ecosystem of these hallowed hills.

But wolves in sheep's clothing from the Department of Environmental Conservation and Audubon Society are blatantly betraying the stewardship of Zoar Valley. They're planning to clear-cut vast tracts of the encompassing woodlands, which are essential to a healthy ecosystem.

These "conservationists" will leave a fragile fringe of trees along the ridge to hide the desecration of the forest. This cannot be tolerated. Blind avarice is an enemy of life itself. Everyone, raise your holy yowl! We must defeat this grotesque grab of an irreplaceable sacred forest.

Get involved.
Franklin LaVoie
Buffalo

Farming

From F1

soil. Along with worms and other critters, these microbes (such as bacteria and fungi) allow more absorption of water, decompose organic matter and help transfer minerals from the soil into the plant roots. Good for the water cycle, good for the carbon cycle, good for biodiversity. A virtuous symbiosis readying soil for future seeds.

Some version of "back to the land" has to be part of our climate solution: more people farming again. Leah Penniman and her family started Soul Fire Farm, in New York's Rensselaer County, in 2006. They have been manifesting such a vi-

sion, growing food in a way that is grounded in community, justice and food sovereignty.

When I interviewed Penniman for my book, she helped me see how farming and our food system can and must transform. Among her striking insights was how to treat carbon not as an enemy but as a natural element that has been misplaced.

We've vilified carbon as a driver of climate change, but carbon is the building block of all life. It's just in the wrong place. It's in the atmosphere as methane and carbon dioxide, causing the greenhouse effect. We need it in the soil and in the bodies of living things.

Or as Penniman put it, "Carbon is life," something we need "back in the soil eco-

system where it's doing immense good, feeding us and stabilizing the soil when the waters come."

I take further inspiration from something Larisa Jacobson at Soul Fire Farm told Penniman: "Our job as farmers is to call the carbon and call the life back into the soil. That's our No. 1 duty as farmers."

Ayana Elizabeth Johnson is a marine biologist and policy expert. She is co-founder of the nonprofit think tank Urban Ocean Lab, distinguished scholar at Bowdoin College, co-editor of the best-selling climate anthology "All We Can Save" and author of "What If We Get It Right?: Visions of Climate Futures," from which this piece is adapted.

Abcarian

From F1

In August, the California Legislature passed a bill requiring school districts to develop policies limiting the use of smartphones by July 2026.

"Quite frankly, school boards in general need to be pushed into this," said Democratic State Sen. Ben Allen, a co-author of the bill. "There's always reasons to drag your feet, but the data shows that phones lead to learning loss, lower scores, increased depression, physical fights, less focus, less ability to learn."

And let me add, this is a problem that extends beyond the classroom door.

Whenever they aren't in class, kids are on their phones at school, ignoring each other in favor of texting, Snapping and whatever else distracts them from

face-to-face interaction. So, how to get kids off their phones?

Some schools collect phones in the morning using phone lockers, while others supply magnetic pouches that stay in kids' possession but can be unlocked only at school exits or by teachers and administrators. In a big school like Venice High, Melvoin said, pouches would seem to make the most sense.

The 10-year-old Mar Vista-based company Yondr, a pioneer in the phone pouch field, first created them to free live performers from the distracting and constant use of cellphones in the audience. Many artists have adopted the practice of shutting down cellphones, including Alicia Keys, Guns N' Roses, the Lumineers, Dave Chappelle and Chris Rock.

Then teachers began reaching out to the company, its director Sarah Leader told

me. Now the pouches are being used in thousands of schools in all 50 states and in 27 countries.

"We are not taking something away," said Leader. "We are giving kids access to a phone-free education." Yondr works with schools to train staff, and to make sure kids and their parents understand how and why a phone-free day can improve the school experience.

Turns out, there are all kinds of unexpected benefits to getting kids off their phones. Schools that use the pouches are seeing more meals eaten in their cafeterias. Some schools report that more books are being checked out of the library.

Banning cellphones in schools won't solve all the problems wrought by a technology that has gotten way out of hand.

But wouldn't you agree that it's a great first step?
Los Angeles Times