

# FINGER LAKES TIMES

PAUL M. BARRETT / Publisher

ANNE H. SCHUHLE / Managing Editor

"The First Amendment ensures that all points of view may be heard; it does not ensure that all points of view are equally likely to prevail."

— Michael McConnell, U.S. appellate judge, 2006  
Community Media Group

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Calling SF Park 'moribund' was way off base

To the Editor:  
In his letter (*Times*, Jan. 8) Stephen Cotler suggested that the Friends of the Women's Rights National Historical Park is "moribund." As president of our Finger Lakes chapter, let me assure you that our organization is alive and well.

The Friends group was established in 1998 as an outgrowth of the 150th anniversary of the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls. We have worked diligently since then to raise funds for the Park, encourage individuals to visit and support the Park, and increase awareness of unresolved issues related to women's rights in the U.S. and around the world. During the past year, alone, our organization took on the following initiatives:

- A conference titled "Leadership, Learning and Looking to the Future," which focused on women's rights over the past 160 years and the challenges that women still face.
- Establishment of the Nan Johnson Legacy Fund to provide interns for the Park.
- Promotion of the Women's Rights History Project Act, which will create a "Votes for Women" history trail of sites in New York state associated with the women's suffrage movement.
- Raising funds for the development of a "Children's Corner" at the Park and "Educational Traveling Trunks" of artifacts and historical materials for use in area classrooms.
- Redecation of the Declaration of Sentiments from the 1848 Women's Rights Convention.
- Presentation of our "In Her Footsteps" award to four high school girls from the Albany area for their inspiration to young women in the docudrama film "Heroic Girls."
- Support for the efforts to restore the 1816 Quaker Meeting-house in Farmington and include it as a historical site within the Park.
- Distribution of information cards throughout the Finger Lakes to promote visits to the Park and tourism in Seneca County.

While tourism is down in our area over the last two years, we have seen an increase of 40 percent in visitors to the Park over the same period.

Seneca Falls will forever be known nationally and internationally as the "birthplace of women's rights," and Friends of the Women's Rights National Historical Park will continue to be active in protecting and promoting this legacy.

ADRIENE EMMO  
President  
Finger Lakes Chapter  
Friends of the Women's Rights  
National Historical Park  
Seneca Falls

### Obama 'change' not evident in Cabinet appointees

To the Editor:  
I noticed that many of Mr Obama's recent cabinet appointees don't exactly coincide with his mantra of change.

The possibilities I was thinking of were Secretary of State, Noam Chomsky. Or maybe Secretary of Labor, Ralph Nader. I wouldn't mind Secretary of Education, Howard Zinn either.

If we installed a fair and compassionate foreign policy, there would be no need for a Department of Homeland Security. If Mr. Obama wants to deliver on his motto of change, how about repealing the Patriot Act and giving us back our Constitution.

Let's also have a genuine investigation into 9/11 instead of the

whitewash we got. Repeal Bush's tax cuts to the wealthy. Take back our food, water, air and natural resources out of the clutches of corporate greed.

And Mr. Obama, please do not let the outgoing administration off the hook. Do not let them walk away with smirks on their faces, back to their ranches and book deals and seats on the Council on Foreign Relations. There has been massive criminal activity in the last eight years. It must be dealt with.

Lastly, I am quite aware that you are not going to be the "savior" everyone is sadly expecting, but with a Congress that should be fairly supportive, you can get the ball rolling.

JASON SHAW  
Seneca Falls

### Winner is wrong about upstate and Paterson

To the Editor:  
Rather than marginalizing upstate New York, as Sen. George Winner would have us all believe (*Times*, Jan. 8), Gov. David Paterson in his State of the State address reaffirmed his commitment to economic prosperity throughout New York.

Most significantly, the governor announced his support for the Upstate Revitalization Fund, which includes \$120 million for critical upstate infrastructure projects, and \$50 million for a New York Growth, Achievement and Investment Strategy (GAINS) Fund aimed at creating jobs in manufacturing, agribusiness, high-technology, biotechnology and other strategic industries.

Furthermore, in an effort to help sustain one of our state's most important agribusinesses, from Long Island to Central New York's Finger Lakes, the governor has proposed allowing grocery stores to sell wine products. Currently, there are only 2,400 wine outlets here, one of the smallest per capita figures in the United States. Under the governor's proposal, more than 19,000 new outlets for wine will be open to New York wineries, providing a real incentive for the growth of the New York wine and grape industry. Rather than subsidizing marketing for a private industry, the governor is proposing spurring the market — and recommitting the savings to where they're needed most.

While Sen. Winner has derisively referred to the prospect of a competitive yet environmentally friendly economy and has disparaged the governor's proposals to increase access to local wine outlets, Gov. Paterson has reminded us all that the old ways will not do, and that change is coming whether we like it or not. We had best be prepared with new ideas, not the same old rhetoric.

MAYOR JOHN S. TONELLO  
Elmira

### WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

**Mail:** Letters to the Editor, Finger Lakes Times, P.O. Box 393, Geneva, NY 14456

**E-mail to:** editor@flltimes.com  
**Fax:** 315 789-4077

**Guidelines:** Include your full name, address and daytime telephone number. Submissions should not exceed 400 words. We edit for length and clarity

**Guest Appearance:** Columns up to 700 words will be considered for publication; writer should have an expertise in the topic or be a principal in the subject addressed. E-mail to editor@flltimes.com.

# Paterson 'gets' the need for affordable education

KEUKA PARK — Gov. David Paterson 2009-10 budget proposal is his effort to deal with the greatest economic and fiscal challenge of our lifetimes."

Recognizing that a statewide economic resurgence is highly dependent on a well-educated work force, the governor has taken a bold step by including the New York Higher Education Loan Program (NY HELPs) in his Executive Budget. It's based on the recommendations of the New York State Commission on Higher Education and would provide a minimum of \$350 million a year in loans to 45,000 resident students enrolled in degree-granting programs at public and private campuses across the state.

In partnership with institutions of higher education, private lenders would originate a total of \$350 million in loans in 2009-10 and the State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA) would buy them with funds raised through issuing bonds. Then, SONYMA would use tax-free bonds to finance new, fixed-rate loans of up to \$10,000 per borrower.

The debt service on the bonds and administrative costs would be paid by the borrowers. The program also allows for an unlimited number of variable rate loans at similarly affordable rates, which private lenders would originate and hold.

Gov. Paterson is clearly rising to the economic and fiscal challenge by proposing NY HELPs. He is taking a page from one of his predecessors who went on to become president of the United States, Lake Paterson, Franklin Delano Roosevelt recognized that education is a basic ingredient to any economic resurgence. On June 22, 1944, FDR signed the Servicemembers' Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as

### JOSEPH BURKE

President of Keuka College



the GI Bill of Rights, into law. By the time the original GI Bill ended in July 1956, 7.8 million World War II veterans had participated in an education or training program.

New York colleges and universities have worked hard to educate a work force required to build future high-tech markets. We have established curricula designed to reduce our teacher and health service shortages while enhancing the quality of our graduates in multiple technology fields.

However, this recession is threatening the advances we have made. Access to higher education is becoming dicey. The rising borrowing costs of student loans and banks' tightened lending mean students have fewer choices of lenders, or no options at all. With an interest rate expected to be approximately 8 percent, substantially lower than private bank loan rates, NY HELPs is an idea whose time has come.

"During difficult times, it becomes even more crucial to provide a quality, affordable higher education to all New Yorkers who seek it," Gov. Paterson said.

It's clear the governor gets it. My hope is that our legislators get it, too. Our economic future depends on it.



# Obama's building Bush legacy

WASHINGTON — Except for Richard Nixon, no president since Harry Truman leaves office more unloved than George W. Bush. Truman's rehabilitation took decades. Bush's will come sooner. Indeed, it has already begun. The chief revisionist? Barack Obama.

Vindication is being expressed not in words but in deeds — the tacit endorsement conveyed by the Obama continuity-we-can-believe-in transition.

It's not just the retention of such key figures as Secretary of Defense Bob Gates or Treasury Secretary nominee Timothy Geithner, who, as president of the New York Fed, has been instrumental in guiding the Bush financial rescue over the last year. It's the continuity of policy.

It is the repeated pledge to conduct a withdrawal from Iraq that does not destabilize its new democracy and that, as Vice President-elect Joe Biden said earlier this month in Baghdad, adheres to the Bush-negotiated status of forces agreement that envisions a U.S. withdrawal over three years, not the 16-month timetable on which Obama campaigned.

It is the great care Obama is taking in not pre-emptively abandoning the anti-terror infrastructure that the Bush administration leaves behind. While still a candidate, Obama voted for the expanded presidential wiretapping (FISA) powers that Bush had fervently pursued. And while Obama opposes waterboarding (already banned, by the way, by Bush's CIA in 2006), he declined George Stephanopoulos' invitation (on ABC's "This Week") to outlaw all interrogation not permitted by the Army Field Manual.

Explained Obama: "Dick Cheney's advice was good, which is let's make sure we know everything that's being done," i.e., before throwing out methods simply because Obama campaigned against them.

Obama still disagrees with Cheney's view of the acceptability of some of these techniques. But citing as sage the advice offered by "the most dangerous vice president we've had probably in American history" (according to Joe Biden) — advice paraphrased by Obama as "we shouldn't be making judgments on the basis of incomplete information or campaign rhetoric" — is a startlingly early sign of a newly respectful consideration of the Bush-Cheney legacy.

Not from any change of heart. But from simple reality. The beauty of democratic rotations of power is that when the opposition takes office, cheap criticism and calumny will no longer do. The Democrats now own Iraq. They own the war on al-Qaida. And they own the panoply of anti-terror measures with which the Bush administration kept us safe these last seven years.

### CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

letters@charleskrauthammer.com.



Which is why Obama is consciously creating a gulf between what he now dismisses as "campaign rhetoric" and the policy choices he must now make as president. Accordingly, *Newsweek* — Obama acolyte and scourge of everything Bush/Cheney — has miraculously discovered the arguments for warrantless wiretaps, enhanced interrogation and detention without trial.

Indeed, *Newsweek's* neck-snapping cover declares, "Why Obama May Soon Find Virtue in Cheney's Vision of Power."

Obama will be loath to throw away the tools that have kept the homeland safe. Just as he will be loath to jeopardize the remarkable turnaround in American fortunes in Iraq. Obama opposed the war. But it's all but over. What remains is an Iraq turned from aggressive, hostile power in the heart of the Middle East to an emerging democracy openly allied with the United States. No president would want to be responsible for undoing that success.

In Iraq, Bush rightly took criticism for all that went wrong — the WMD fiasco, Abu Ghraib, the descent into bloody chaos in 2005-06. Then Bush goes to Baghdad to ratify the ultimate post-surge success of that troubled campaign — the signing of a strategic partnership between the U.S. and Iraq — and ends up dodging two size-10 shoes for his pains.

Absorbing that insult was Bush's final service on Iraq. Whatever venom the war generated is concentrated on Bush himself. By having personalized the responsibility for the awfulness of the war, Bush has done his successor a favor. Obama enters office with a strategic success on his hands — while Bush leaves the scene taking a shoe for his country.

Which is why I suspect Bush showed such equanimity during a private farewell interview at the White House a few weeks ago. He leaves behind the sinews of war, for the creation of which he has been so vilified but which will serve his successor — and his country — well over the coming years. The very continuation by Democrats of Bush's policies will be grudging, if silent, acknowledgment of how much he got right.