

Political

10-03-2016 5-HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS. THAT'S HOW MUCH MONEY IS UP FOR GRABS IN THE GOVERNOR'S UPSTATE REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE, AND THE DEADLINE ARRIVES ON MONDAY. LOCAL OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN PUTTING TOGETHER THEIR PROPOSAL FOR MONTHS AND WILL OFFICIALLY SUBMIT THE FINAL DOCUMENT MONDAY MORNING. TEN UPSTATE REGIONS ARE COMPETING FOR THREE 5-HUNDRED MILLION DOLLAR AID PACKAGES.

10-10-2016 STATE SENATOR JOE GRIFFO IS ASKING THE THRUWAY AUTHORITY TO CONSIDER INSTALLING A NEW EXIT IN EITHER MARCY OR ROME. IT WOULD BE ONE OF TEN NEW HIGH SPEED INTERCHANGES ADDED TO THE SYSTEM UNDER A PROPOSAL TO REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND DELAYS ACROSS THE STATE. THE PLAN WOULD SEE NEW HIGH SPEED INTERCHANGES ALLOW QUICK ACCESS BETWEEN THE THRUWAY AND THE STATES EXISTING MULTI-LANE HIGHWAYS. WITH HIGH SPEED E-Z PASS SCANNERS CARS WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE TO SLOW DOWN FOR THE EXIT. THE PLAN WOULD COST AN ESTIMATED 75 MILLION DOLLARS.

10-11-2016 IS THE STATE THRUWAY ABOUT TO BECOME THE GANGA EXPRESS? MASSACHUSETTS IS SPONSORING A REFERENDUM THAT WOULD LEGALIZE RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA USE. THAT INCLUDES CARRYING UP TO AN OUNCE OF MARIJUANA, STORING UP TO TEN OUNCES IN THEIR HOME, AND CULTIVATING UP TO SIX MARIJUANA PLANTS. IF IT'S APPROVED IN NOVEMBER SOME STATE OFFICIALS ARE WORRIED IT WILL LEAD TO A MASSIVE FLOW OF MARIJUANA ACROSS THE BORDER INTO NEW YORK. UNDER THE LAW IT WOULD BE LEGAL FOR NEW YORKERS TO BUY MARIJUANA IN MASSACHUSETTS, AND RESIDENTS THERE ARE FREE TO GIFT AN OUNCE OF WEED TO ANYONE OVER 21.

10-04-2016

GOVERNOR CUOMO HAS VETOED LEGISLATION HANDING MADISON COUNTY MORE GAMBLING REVENUE FROM THE ONEIDA INDIAN NATION. THE MEASURE GAVE MADISON COUNTY 25 PERCENT OF THE REVENUES FROM SLOT MACHINES WITHIN IT'S BORDERS. OFFICIALS SAID THEY WERE ENTITLED TO THE MONEY AS A HOST COUNTY FOR THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD CASINO IN CHITTENANGO. CUOMO SAID THE LAW COULD COMPROMISE THE GAMING COMPACT IN PLACE SINCE 2013, BUT SAID MADISON DOES DESERVE SOME REVENUE FROM GAMING DEVICES. ONEIDA COUNTY OFFICIALS WERE STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE CHANGE.

10-05-2016

GOVERNOR CUOMO IS ASKING STATE AGENCIES TO HOLD THEIR BUDGETS STEADY. YESTERDAY HE INITIATED THE BUDGET PROCESS FOR NEXT YEAR BY ISSUING A CALL LETTER TO ADMINISTRATORS. CUOMO IS ASKING DEPARTMENT HEADS TO HOLD THE LINE ON SPENDING AS THEY PUT TOGETHER THEIR SPENDING PLANS FOR 2017. ONLY EDUCATION AND MEDICAID SPENDING ARE EXEMPT FROM THE REQUEST, BUT EVERY FACET OF THE BUDGET IS UP FOR DEBATE ONCE THE LEGISLATURE GOES BACK INTO SESSION IN JANUARY.

10-06-2016

ONEIDA COUNTY'S PROPOSED BUDGET ONCE AGAIN AVOIDS A TAX INCREASE. YESTERDAY COUNTY EXECUTIVE ANTHONY PICENTE ROLLED OUT HIS SPENDING PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR. THE 394 MILLION DOLLAR BUDGET INCLUDES A MINOR JUMP IN SPENDING BUT KEEPS BOTH THE PROPERTY AND SALES TAX LEVY'S AT THEIR CURRENT LEVEL. HOLDING THAT LINE HAS BEEN POSSIBLE THANKS TO THE MILLIONS PAID BY THE ONEIDA INDIAN NATION AS PART OF THE STATE'S GAMBLING SETTLEMENT. BUT PICENTE WARNED THAT REVENUES NEED TO INCREASE,

AND WANTS TO SEE BOTH THE COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF UTICA AND ROME GET A BIGGER SLICE OF THE SALES TAX PIE.

THE STATE IS BREAKING THE LAW BY ALLOWING FANTASY SPORTS BETTING. THAT'S ACCORDING TO A LAWSUIT FILED BY ANTI-GAMBLING ACTIVISTS, WHO POINT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OWN REASONING TO SUPPORT THEIR CASE. LAST YEAR HE SHUT DOWN FANTASY SPORTS BETTING SITES LIKE FAN DUEL AND DRAFT KINGS, SAYING THEY WERE ILLEGAL GAMBLING SITES. BUT THIS YEAR THE LEGISLATURE PASSED A MEASURE LEGALIZING THE GAMES, AND TAKING A HEFTY CUT OF THE TAKE, SAYING THEY'RE ACTUALLY GAMES OF SKILL. THE LAWSUIT SAYS THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IS RIGHT AND THAT THEY CAN'T BE LEGALIZED WITHOUT AN AMENDMENT OF THE STATE CONSTITUTION.

10-07-2016

IF YOU WANT TO VOTE IN NOVEMBER'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YOU HAVE JUST ONE MORE WEEK TO GET REGISTERED. OCTOBER FOURTEENTH IS THE DEADLINE FOR THIS YEAR'S RACE, AND LOCAL ELECTION OFFICIALS SAY THEY'RE SEEING AN UPTICK IN THE NUMBER OF NEW VOTERS THANKS TO THE ATTENTION FOCUSED ON THE RACE BETWEEN HILLARY CLINTON AND DONALD TRUMP. THE FASTEST WAY TO REGISTER IS THROUGH THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES. FORMS ARE AVAILABLE AT THEIR OFFICES AND ONLINE AT THE D-M-V-DOT-N-Y-DOT-GOV WEBSITE.

10-10-2016

STATE SENATOR JOE GRIFFO IS ASKING THE THRUWAY AUTHORITY TO CONSIDER INSTALLING A NEW EXIT IN EITHER MARCY OR ROME. IT WOULD BE ONE OF TEN NEW HIGH SPEED INTERCHANGES ADDED TO THE SYSTEM UNDER A PROPOSAL TO REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND DELAYS ACROSS THE STATE. THE PLAN WOULD SEE NEW HIGH SPEED INTERCHANGES ALLOW QUICK ACCESS BETWEEN THE THRUWAY AND THE STATES EXISTING MULTI-LANE HIGHWAYS. WITH HIGH SPEED E-Z PASS SCANNERS CARS WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE TO SLOW DOWN FOR THE EXIT. THE PLAN WOULD COST AN ESTIMATED 75 MILLION DOLLARS.

WITH LESS THAN A MONTH TO GO BEFORE VOTERS HEAD TO THE POLLS CONGRESSMAN RICHARD HANNA IS HOLDING OFF ON ENDORSING A SUCCESSOR. POLLS SHOW ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY LEADING THE RACE FOR THE 22ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, FOLLOWED BY DEMOCRAT KIM MYERS AND INDEPENDENT MARTIN BABINEC. HANNA HAS ALREADY SAID HE WON'T BE ENDORSING FELLOW REPUBLICAN TENNEY, THE RESULT OF BAD BLOOD BETWEEN THE TWO FROM TENNEY'S PRIMARY CHALLENGE LAST ELECTION CYCLE. HE SAYS HE'S STILL CONSIDERING AN ENDORSEMENT, BUT HASN'T IDENTIFIED WHICH CANDIDATE HE FAVORS.

10-11-2016

EVEN MORE MONEY IS FLOWING IN TO THE RACE FOR THE 22ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT. THE CONTEST BETWEEN INDEPENDENT MARTIN BABINEC, DEMOCRAT KIM MYERS, AND REPUBLICAN CLAUDIA TENNEY IS GETTING AN INCREASING AMOUNT OF NATIONAL ATTENTION. THE LATEST IS A NEW AD CAMPAIGN FROM THE DEMOCRATICALLY ALIGNED HOUSE MAJORITY PAC TAKING AIM AT BOTH BABINEC AND TENNEY. IN JUST OVER A MONTH THE GROUP HAS SPENT NEARLY TWO MILLION DOLLARS ON THE RACE. THE MOST RECENT PUBLIC POLL SHOWS TENNEY WITH AN EDGE OVER BOTH OF HER OPPONENTS.

10-12-2016

IF YOU HAVE A CHEAP CELL PHONE YOU NEED TO START PAYING YOUR FAIR SHARE. THAT'S ACCORDING TO THE STATE'S ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES, WHICH WANTS A SURCHARGE ON PRE-PAID CELL PHONE PLANS. REGULAR CELL PHONES CURRENTLY PAY A DOLLAR TWENTY A MONTH AND A LOCAL SERVICE FEE TO HELP FUND THE STATE'S 9-1-1 SYSTEM. BUT PRE-PAID PLANS USED BY UP TO A THIRD OF CELL PHONE USERS DON'T PAY. COUNTIES SAY THAT'S CUTTING THEM OFF FROM MILLIONS OF DOLLARS THEY NEED TO UPGRADE 9-1-1 SERVICES. COMPLICATING MATTERS, LAST YEAR THE STATE SPENT JUST 65 MILLION OF THE 185 MILLION RAISED BY THE 9-1-1 FEE ON UPGRADING 9-1-1 SERVICE.

10-13-2016

THE AREA WILL BE GETTING 400-THOUSAND DOLLARS TO FIGHT ZOMBIES. NO, NOT THE UNDEAD, BUT ABANDONED PROPERTIES THAT ARE IN FORECLOSURE AND NOT BEING MAINTAINED. THOSE HOMES CAN BECOME A BLIGHT ON A NEIGHBORHOOD, DRIVING DOWN PROPERTY VALUES AND SETTING BACK DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS. UTICA IS IN LINE FOR 250-THOUSAND DOLLARS, WHILE THE CITY OF ROME WILL GET 150-THOUSAND. THE GRANTS FROM THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE WILL PAY FOR ENFORCING CODES REQUIREMENTS AND TRACKING PROPERTIES IN FORECLOSURE, MAKING SURE THAT PROPERTIES ARE MAINTAINED WHEN BANKS TAKE OVER OWNERSHIP.

10-17-2016

PRESSURE IS GROWING FOR THE STATE TO STOP SKIMMING MONEY FROM THE 9-1-1 FEE ON CELL PHONES. LAST YEAR NEW YORK MADE 185 MILLION DOLLARS FROM THE 1-20 SURCHARGE ON YOUR MONTHLY MOBILE BILL, BUT ONLY 65 MILLION DOLLARS ENDED UP GOING TO THE STATE'S 9-1-1 SYSTEM. THAT'S LEFT COUNTY'S STRUGGLING TO PAY FOR UPGRADES TO THE SYSTEM, INCLUDING BEING ABLE TO LOCATE THE PHYSICAL LOCATION WHERE AN EMERGENCY CALL WAS MADE FROM

10-19-2016

THE THREE WAY RACE FOR THE 22ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT HAS BECOME ONE OF THE MOST EXPENSIVE IN THE STATE. NEW FIGURES SHOW THE BATTLE BETWEEN MARTIN BABINEC, KIM MYERS, AND CLAUDIA TENNEY HAS RACKED UP EXPENDITURES OF CLOSE TO NINE MILLION DOLLARS. ROUGHLY HALF OF THAT COMES FROM THIRD PARTY GROUPS AND SUPER PACS HOPING TO INFLUENCE THE ELECTION, WITH THE OTHER HALF SPENT BY THE CANDIDATE'S CAMPAIGN COMMITTEES. INDEPENDENT MARTIN BABINEC HAS SPENT NEARLY TWO MILLION DOLLARS OF HIS OWN MONEY ON THE RACE

10-20-2016

THE RACE TO REPLACE RETIRING CONGRESSMAN RICHARD HANNA IS THE FOCUS OF A NEW DOCUMENTARY SERIES. CREWS HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE MARTIN BABINEC SINCE HE STARTED HIS CAMPAIGN. HE'S FACING OFF AGAINST DEMOCRAT KIM MYERS AND REPUBLICAN CLAUDIA TENNEY IN WHAT'S BECOME ONE OF THE AREA'S MOST EXPENSIVE RACES IN HISTORY. BUT THE ODDS ARE AGAINST HIM. AN INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE HASN'T WON A CONGRESSIONAL RACE IN NEARLY THIRTY YEARS

10-25-2016

COULD RETIRING CONGRESSMAN RICHARD HANNA BE THE NEXT GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK? THAT'S WHAT SOME REPUBLICANS ARE HOPING. THE DAILY NEWS SAYS FELLOW REPUBLICANS HAVE APPROACHED HANNA ABOUT RUNNING FOR THE TOP SPOT IN ALBANY IN 2018. SOME EXPERTS SAY HE COULD HAVE A SHOT AT IT, WITH A RECORD OF INDEPENDENCE FROM HIS PARTY THAT INCLUDED BEING THE SOLE REPUBLICAN IN CONGRESS TO SAY HE'LL BE VOTING FOR HILLARY CLINTON OVER DONALD TRUMP. HIS CURRENT TERM AS THE REPRESENTATIVE FOR NEW YORK'S 22ND DISTRICT COMES TO AN END THIS YEAR.

A COMPLETE OVERHAUL OF THE STATE'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES WILL BE IN PLACE BY NEXT WEEK. THAT'S ACCORDING TO THE HEAD OF EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT, WHICH IS TAKING OVER THE PROJECTS FORMERLY CONTROLLED BY TWO NON-PROFITS ATTACHED TO SUNY POLYTECHNIC. THAT INCLUDES THE MARCY NANO-CENTER PROJECT.

10-26-2016

THE LONG LEGAL BATTLE BETWEEN NEW YORK AND DAILY FANTASY SPORTS HAS COME TO AN END. THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL HAS REACHED A SETTLEMENT WITH FAN DUEL AND DRAFT KINGS OVER DECEPTIVE ADVERTISING. UNDER THE AGREEMENT THE COMPANIES WILL EACH PAY SIX MILLION DOLLARS AND CHANGE HOW THEY ADVERTISE THEIR FANTASY SPORTS CONTESTS. THAT INCLUDES PUBLISHING CLEAR TERMS AND CONDITIONS, THE ODDS OF WINNING A CONTEST, AND THE EXPECTED PAYOUT FOR AVERAGE GAMES.

10-27-2016

NEW YORK IS AVOIDING THE SPIKES IN INSURANCE PRICES THAT ARE PLAGUING OTHER STATES. THE FEDERALLY MANDATED INSURANCE EXCHANGE OPENS FOR ENROLLMENT NEXT WEEK, AND

PRICES IN NEW YORK ARE INCREASING AROUND 16 PERCENT OVER LAST YEAR. THAT'S IN CONTRAST TO THE AVERAGE 25 PERCENT JUMP ACROSS THE NATION, AND SOME STATES ARE SEEING RATES SOAR OVER FIFTY PERCENT. MOST PEOPLE THAT BUY THEIR POLICIES THROUGH THE EXCHANGES WILL ALSO SEE THEIR SUBSIDIES RISE, LIMITING THE AMOUNT OF MONEY THEY'LL ACTUALLY PAY FOR COVERAGE

11-01-2016

FORMAL REGULATORY APPROVAL OF TABLE GAMES AT 4 UPSTATE CASINOS IS EXPECTED TODAY. THE DECISION WILL CLEAR THE WAY FOR NEW OR EXPANDED OPERATIONS AT TIOGA DOWNS, THE SOUTHERN TIER RACETRACK AND CASINO OPERATED BY THE VERNON DOWNS OWNERSHIP, AS WELL AS CASINOS IN SCHENECTADY, THE FINGER LAKES AND THE CATSKILLS.

SENATOR JOE GRIFFO HAS SECURED 100,000 DOLLARS THAT WILL GO TOWARD THE AMBITIOUS LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENTS THE UTICA ZOO PLANS TO BRING TO ITS OPERATION. HALF OF THE AMOUNT WILL GO TOWARD RENOVATIONS OF THE ZOO'S PRIMATES BUILDING AND THE HOUSING OF ANIMALS USED OFF-SITE FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES. THE OTHER HALF WILL BE SPENT ON IMPROVEMENTS TO THE EDUCATION CENTER AT THE ZOO.

11-03-2016

RICHARD HANNA WON'T BE MAKING A RUN FOR THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE. LAST WEEK HIS NAME WAS FLOATED BY SOME STATE REPUBLICAN OFFICIALS AS A POTENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR NEW YORK'S TOP SPOT, BUT HANNA SAYS THAT ISN'T GOING TO HAPPEN. HANNA SET OFF A FIRESTORM EARLIER THIS YEAR WHEN HE THREW HIS SUPPORT BEHIND HILLARY CLINTON RATHER THAN FELLOW REPUBLICAN DONALD TRUMP. HE'S ALSO REFUSING TO ENDORSE A SUCCESSOR FROM ANY OF THREE CANDIDATE'S VYING FOR HIS JOB. THE RETIRING CONGRESSMAN INTENDS TO SPEND MORE TIME WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN.

11-07-2016

WITH ELECTION DAY LOOMING THE CANDIDATE'S FOR THE 22ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT ARE MAKING THEIR FINAL PITCHES. INDEPENDENT MARTIN BABINEC, DEMOCRAT KIM MYERS, AND REPUBLICAN CLAUDIA TENNEY ARE ALL SPENDING TODAY ON LAST MINUTE CAMPAIGNING. THE THREE WAY RACE HAS BECOME ONE OF THE MOST EXPENSIVE IN THE STATE, WITH CLOSE TO NINE MILLION DOLLARS BEING SPENT BY THE CANDIDATES AND THIRD PARTY POLITICAL ACTION GROUPS. POLLS CURRENTLY SHOW TENNEY WITH THE LEAD OVER BOTH BABINEC AND MYERS.

11-08-2016

HOW DO YOU DIVIDE THE PIE WHEN EVERYBODY THINKS THEY DESERVE A BIGGER PIECE? THAT'S THE QUESTION FACING A COMMITTEE LOOKING TO REAPPORTION ONEIDA COUNTY'S SALES TAX. LAST NIGHT WAS IT'S FIRST MEETING, AND THERE ARE ALREADY SIGNS IT'S GOING TO BE A CONTENTIOUS DISCUSSION. SOME OF THE SPEAKERS REPRESENTING VILLAGES ARE CONCERNED THAT LARGER MUNICIPALITIES, INCLUDING THE COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF UTICA AND ROME, WILL SEIZE THE PAYMENTS THEY RELY ON.

11-09-2016

ELECTION 2016 IS OVER. THERE WAS HEAVY TURNOUT THROUGHOUT THE AREA, WITH SOME LOCATIONS DEVELOPING LINES OF PEOPLE WAITING FOR THEIR CHANCE TO VOTE. EXPERTS CREDIT THAT TO THE INTENSE RACE FOR PRESIDENT. WHILE NEW YORK AS A WHOLE WENT FOR DEMOCRAT HILLARY CLINTON IT WAS A VERY DIFFERENT STORY LOCALLY. 58 PERCENT OF VOTERS IN ONEIDA COUNTY CAST THEIR BALLOT FOR DONALD TRUMP, WHILE A WHOPPING 65 PERCENT OF HERKIMER COUNTY VOTERS GAVE HIM THE NOD.

THE CONTEST TO SUCCEED RETIRING REPUBLICAN CONGRESSMAN RICHARD HANNA ENDED WITH ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY WINNING A THREE WAY RACE. SHE HANDILY DEFEATED DEMOCRAT KIM MYERS AND INDEPENDENT MARTIN BABINEC. THE WIN COMES DESPITE HANNA'S FAILURE TO ENDORSE HER CANDIDACY, THE LEGACY OF A CONTENTIOUS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATING BACK TO HER PRIMARY CHALLENGE AGAINST HANNA LAST ELECTION.

11-10-2016

THE CONTROVERSIAL RAISES FOR ONEIDA COUNTY OFFICIALS VANISHED YESTERDAY. FOR MONTHS LEGISLATORS HAVE BEEN TAKING HEAT FOR SETTING THEMSELVES UP FOR PAY INCREASES AT THE SAME TIME THEY UPPED THE PAY OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE, SHERIFF, AND CLERK. BUT A LAST MINUTE AMENDMENT PULLED THE MONEY FOR THE RAISES FROM THE BUDGET YESTERDAY, LEADING TO SOME VERY FRUSTRATED LEGISLATORS. THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE PAY HIKES UNTIL NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET.

11-11-2016

30 MILLION DOLLARS. THAT'S HOW MUCH THE STATE IS SPENDING TO BUILD UP A STATE OF THE ART AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM BETWEEN GRIFFISS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND SYRACUSE. GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCED THE MONEY YESTERDAY, SAYING IT'S AN INVESTMENT IN MAKING THE AREA OF WORLD CLASS SITE FOR DRONE DEVELOPMENT. THE SYSTEM WILL LINK TOGETHER RADAR AND OTHER SENSORS TO TRACK AND CONTROL EVERYTHING FLYING WITHIN THE 50 MILE LONG CORRIDOR BETWEEN THE TWO CITIES.

11-14-2016

GOVERNOR CUOMO IS CALLING FOR LEGISLATORS TO RETURN TO ALBANY FOR A SPECIAL SESSION. THE MOVE COMES AFTER THE ADMINISTRATION HAMMERED OUT A NEW AGREEMENT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING THAT NOW NEEDS LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL. BUT A SPECIAL SESSION COULD ALSO BE A CHANCE FOR LAWMAKERS TO GIVE THEMSELVES RAISES. THE SPECIAL PANEL ON INCREASING THEIR PAY IS EXPECTED TO GIVE IT'S RECOMMENDATIONS TOMORROW, LEAVING ELECTED OFFICIALS JUST OVER A MONTH TO HIKE THEIR PAY.

11-15-2016

LAST WEEK'S ELECTION SAW MORE PEOPLE REGISTER TO VOTE IN NEW YORK THAN EVER BEFORE. BUT NOT MANY OF THOSE NEW VOTERS ACTUALLY WENT TO THE POLLS. THAT'S ACCORDING TO A NEW STUDY FROM THE NEW YORK PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP. THE STATE SAW THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS JUMP SEVEN PERCENT TO 11.4 MILLION IN THE LAST YEAR. BUT ONLY 62 PERCENT OF THEM VOTED, A NEW LOW. THAT COMPARES TO THE 71 PERCENT THAT TURNED OUT IN 2008 AND 65 PERCENT IN 2012.

11-17-2016

THE STATE HAS APPROVED A MOHAWK VALLEY LAND BANK. OFFICIALS SAY THAT OPENS THE DOOR TO A UNIFIED APPROACH TO REDEVELOPING BLIGHTED PROPERTIES ACROSS THE AREA. THE LAND BANK WILL TAKE CONTROL OF ABANDONED AND TAX-DELINQUENT LAND AND BUILDINGS, MAKE SURE THEY'RE PROPERLY MAINTAINED, AND THEN CONNECT PROPERTIES WITH BUYERS. THE ORGANIZATION WILL OPERATE AS A PUBLIC AUTHORITY, LEAD BY A BOARD OF DIRECTORS DRAWN FROM PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES.

11-18-2016

HOW WILL THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION IMPACT ROME'S DEFENSE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE? THAT'S THE QUESTION LOCAL OFFICIALS ARE ASKING. THE FACILITY EMPLOYS CLOSE TO A THOUSAND WORKERS HANDLING PAYROLL AND ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS FOR THE MILITARY. BUT IT'S FACED POTENTIAL DOWNSIZING OVER THE LAST DECADE AS THE ARMY CONSIDERS BRINGING THOSE FUNCTIONS IN HOUSE. MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL NEW YORK DEFENSE ALLIANCE SAY THEY'RE GEARING UP TO KEEP DFAS INTACT UNDER THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.

11-22-2016

GOVERNOR CUOMO IS GOING TO BE BUSY OVER THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY. IN AN APPARENT RESPONSE TO HAVING A PAY RAISE SHOT DOWN MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE HAVE SENT AN AVALANCHE OF BILLS TO HIS DESK. THAT INCLUDES 133 OF THE 158 BILLS THEY PASSED THIS YEAR, BUT HAVEN'T YET SENT TO THE GOVERNOR FOR HIS SIGNATURE. BY LAW CUOMO WILL HAVE TO DECIDE TO APPROVE OR VETO THOSE BILLS BY NOVEMBER 28TH, LEAVING THE ADMINISTRATION JUST DAYS TO WADE THROUGH MONTHS OF LEGISLATION.

11-28-2016

IT'S GOING TO BE A BUSY DAY FOR GOVERNOR CUOMO. JUST BEFORE THANKSGIVING THE LEGISLATURE SENT HIM OVER A HUNDRED BILLS. BY LAW HE HAS UNTIL TODAY TO EITHER SIGN OR VETO THAT LEGISLATION. IF HE DOESN'T TAKE ACTION THE BILLS WILL AUTOMATICALLY

BECOME LAW. THE AVALANCHE OF LEGISLATION WAS REPORTEDLY IN RETALIATION FOR THE COMMISSION CONTROLLED BY CUOMO TURNING DOWN AN AUTOMATIC RAISE FOR LEGISLATORS. 25 BILLS FROM THIS YEARS SESSION ARE STILL AWAITING ACTION BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR

12-04-2016

GOVERNOR CUOMO WOULD LIKE EVERY ELECTED OFFICIAL TO DISCLOSE THEIR FULL INCOME, BUT THAT PROPOSAL IS GETTING PUSHBACK FROM OUTSIDE ALBANY. THE NEW RULE IS INTENDED TO MAKE LEGISLATORS IN ALBANY REVEAL ALL THEIR OUTSIDE INCOME, BUT IT WOULD ALSO COVER LOCAL OFFICIALS LIKE MAYORS AND COUNTY LEGISLATORS. AND THAT HAS SOME OF THEM SAYING IT WOULD DISCOURAGE PEOPLE FROM RUNNING FOR OFFICE. THE NEW INCOME RULE IS ONE OF THE PROPOSALS BEING FLOATED FOR A POTENTIAL SPECIAL SESSION OF THE STATE LEGISLATURE

12-07-2016

ELECTED OFFICIALS IN ALBANY ARE STILL DANCING AROUND THE SUBJECT OF A SPECIAL SESSION BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. WHILE BOTH THE ASSEMBLY AND SENATE LEADERSHIP HAVE REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED THE ISSUE WITH GOVERNOR CUOMO, THEY'RE DENYING THAT ANY DECISION HAS BEEN MADE. LAWMAKERS ARE EXPECTED TO PUSH FORWARD WITH A HEFTY PAY RAISE DURING THE SESSION, WHILE THEY'VE BEEN NOTABLY COOL TO NEW ETHICS RULES LIKE FULL INCOME DISCLOSURE AND TERM LIMITS

12-13-2016

WE COULD BE RINGING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH UBER. GOVERNOR CUOMO IS REPORTEDLY PUSHING FOR THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO APPROVE RIDE SHARING ACROSS THE STATE DURING A SPECIAL SESSION BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. THAT'S JUST ONE OF PIECES OF LEGISLATION HE WANT'S LAWMAKERS TO APPROVE WHILE THEY'RE ALSO GIVING THEMSELVES A RAISE. RIDE SHARING SERVICES LIKE UBER AND LYFT ARE CURRENTLY BANNED OUTSIDE OF NEW YORK CITY THANKS TO THE STATE'S POWERFUL TAXI LOBBY

12-20-2016

THE CLOCK IS TICKING IN ALBANY. WITH JUST OVER TEN DAYS LEFT IN THE YEAR LEGISLATORS AND THE CUOMO ADMINISTRATION ARE STILL TAP DANCING AROUND CALLING A SPECIAL SESSION BY NEW YEAR'S DAY. SENATE AND ASSEMBLY MEMBERS DESPERATELY WANT A PAY RAISE, BUT THEY DON'T WANT IT TO LOOK LIKE THE ONLY REASON THEY'RE CALLING A SPECIAL SESSION IS TO VOTE THEMSELVES MORE MONEY. FOR HIS PART CUOMO SAYS HE WANTS THE LEGISLATURE TO APPROVE RIDE SHARING AND A POTENTIAL PROPERTY TAX CUT.

12-22-2016

CONGRESSMAN RICHARD HANNA MAY BE RETIRING FROM WASHINGTON, BUT HE'S LEAVING THE DOOR OPEN FOR A RETURN TO POLITICS. HE'S BEEN FREQUENTLY MENTIONED BY REPUBLICAN PARTY LEADERS AS A POTENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR IN 2018. DESPITE A LUKEWARM RESPONSE TO THE IDEA EARLIER THIS YEAR HE'S NOW GIVING IT MORE THOUGHT, ACCORDING TO INTERVIEWS WITH THE OBSERVER DISPATCH AND A BINGHAMTON RADIO STATION. HANNA'S REPLACEMENT IN WASHINGTON, ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY, WILL TAKE OFFICE JANUARY THIRD

12-21-2016

BOOZE IS TURNING INTO BIG BUSINESS IN NEW YORK. GOVERNOR CUOMO IS TOUTING THE SUCCESS OF THE STATE'S SMALL DISTILLERIES, WHICH HAS SEEN AN EXPLOSION IN THE NUMBER OF PRODUCERS. IN 2011 ONLY TEN FARM DISTILLERIES WERE MANUFACTURING BEER, CIDER, WINE, OR SPIRITS. THAT NUMBER HAS NOW GROWN TO 107, AND THE BESPOKE BOOZE BUSINESS HAS BECOME A MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR INDUSTRY. AND IT'S NOT JUST SALES OF BOOZE DRIVING THAT GROWTH. FARM BREWERS HAVE BECOME A MAJOR TOURISM DRAW FOR VISITORS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

12-23-2016

YOU'D BETTER PAY THOSE TOLLS. THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY THEY'RE CRACKING DOWN ON TOLL SKIPPERS AND WILL START SUSPENDING THEIR

VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS. THE PENALTY HITS ANYONE WHO SKIPS OUT ON THREE TOLL PAYMENTS WITHIN A FIVE YEAR PERIOD, AND APPLIES TO TOLLS LEVIED BY THE THRUWAY AND ROADS AND BRIDGES DOWNSTATE. THE TOUGH NEW PENALTIES ARE PART OF A PUSH TO GET MORE DRIVERS USING THE STATE'S E-Z PASS SYSTEM.

12-27-2016

BARRING A MIRACLE THE STATE LEGISLATURE WON'T BE HAVING A SPECIAL SESSION THIS WEEK. DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE AGENDA FOR A PROPOSED RECALL OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY REPORTEDLY COLLAPSED JUST BEFORE THE HOLIDAY WEEKEND. THAT MEANS PROPOSED LEGISLATION LEGALIZING RIDE SHARING AND OFFERING UP A PROPERTY TAX CUT WILL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL NEXT YEAR, WHILE ANY HIKE IN LEGISLATORS PAY WILL HAVE TO WAIT ANOTHER TWO YEARS. THE 2017 SESSION STARTS JANUARY FOURTH.

12-29-2016

IS ALBANY GOING TO BE A BATTLEFIELD IN 2017? THAT'S WHAT SOME INSIDERS ARE SAYING. MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE REPORTEDLY THINK GOVERNOR CUOMO STABBED THEM IN THE BACK ON THE ISSUE OF PAY INCREASES, AND THEY INCREASINGLY THINK HE CAN'T BE TRUSTED. THAT COULD COMPLICATE TRYING TO HAMMER OUT A NEW BUDGET AGREEMENT. SOME OFFICIALS SAY THAT'S WHY CUOMO IS PLANNING ON PRESENTING HIS STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS OUTSIDE OF ALBANY THIS YEAR.

IF YOUR CAR REGISTRATION EXPIRES IN JANUARY YOU MAY WANT TO GET IT TAKEN CARE OF THIS WEEK. NEXT MONTH EVERY CAR WILL HAVE TO HAVE IT'S WINDOW'S TESTED FOR EXCESSIVE TINTING. THAT'S GOING TO ADD FIFTEEN MINUTES TO THE AVERAGE INSPECTION, AND GARAGE OWNERS SAY IT COULD MEAN LONG DELAYS AS THEY TRY TO HANDLE THE NEW REQUIREMENTS. WORSE, IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN A 30 PERCENT TINT YOU'LL FAIL YOUR INSPECTION AND HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE WHOLE PROCESS AGAIN AFTER GETTING YOUR WINDOW TINTS REMOVED.

12-30-2016

THE ARRIVAL OF 2017 HERALDS A FLURRY OF NEW LAWS IN NEW YORK STATE. THE BIGGEST IS A HIKE IN THE MINIMUM WAGE. WORKERS LOCALLY WILL SEE IT RISE TO 9-70 AN HOUR, WHILE IT JUMPS TO 11 AN HOUR IN THE NEW YORK CITY AREA. AS OF MONDAY ANNUAL CAR INSPECTIONS WILL TEST IF YOUR CAR'S WINDOWS ARE TOO DARK. AND YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO CHANGE A BATTERY IN YOUR SMOKE DETECTOR AGAIN. STARTING SUNDAY ONLY SMOKE DETECTORS WITH SEALED POWER SOURCES GOOD FOR AT LEAST TEN YEARS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN NEW YORK.