

## GUEST COMMENTARY

By Thomas DeChiaro



I recently had the opportunity to hear my good friend Nick Donofrio, IBM Fellow & Executive VP Innovation and Technology alumnus, speak at an event in Ridgefield, Conn. Nick recently "graduated" from IBM and is now involved in philanthropic activities and continues to champion education initiatives.

During his speech, Nick discussed the need for everyone to embrace change. Not for the sake of change, but for our own survival and well-being. He said, "We all want to be better off tomorrow than we are today. I don't know a single person who wants to be worse off tomorrow than they are today." In order to accomplish this, we must all be willing to change the way we think, solve problems, communicate, work and innovate. These principles apply to the way businesses work, governments govern and teachers teach.

In developing nations, such as Africa,

most people live at the bottom of the pyramid. Because of this, they are very motivated to better their lives and therefore, are more eager to embrace innovation and change than we are. We can no longer afford to be complacent or resist change because we are comfortable. Given the state of our economy, we must be willing to openly accept change. And innovation is tool that enables change.

Innovation doesn't always require technology. Look at the way the town of Southampton eliminated the bottleneck on Route 39 by repainting lines and utilizing the shoulder lane. They saved millions of dollars, all resulting from innovative engineers who were thinking outside the box.

Technology innovations are another means to drive change. Everyday, each of us utilizes over one billion transistors. In 2005, the LA Times reported that "This year, human beings produced more transistors (and at lower cost) than they did grains of rice." Transistors are in our phones, cars, computers, TVs, etc. In the near future, more and more devices will be interconnected. Social networking and massive multi-player gaming technologies are transforming the way we work and communicate. Individuals with common interests can easily find each other. They correspond instantaneously and they even

used to foster one's town advancement, I urge support of a man who puts community first and his business acumen for the good of all.

**Msr. Dermot Brennan**  
Bronx

## Seniors' options

To the Editor:

# The will to change

We can no longer afford to be complacent or resist change because we are comfortable. Given the state of our economy, we must be willing to openly accept change.

police the behavior of members within their virtual communities.

As a reference, look at some of the disruptive technologies and innovations that have changed our lives forever (MP3, cell phones, text messaging, social networking, fax machines, e-mail, GPS, computers, On-Demand, Internet...).

Students who embrace change enhance their ability to land a job when they graduate.

Businesses that evolve and respond quickly to change gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

Politicians, who welcome change, will find creative ways to solve problems and will make a difference in the lives of the people they serve. With our help and vote, they will become the future leaders of our towns and country.

We must be thinking about change and innovation if we want our local towns to survive. Our taxes are out of control and many longtime residents are considering moving away. The cost of living index for Yorktown is 50 percent greater than the US average. It is becoming more and more difficult for young professionals to afford to live in our neighborhoods. Our local governments discourage economic development and small businesses. They are systematically taking away our property rights with these outrageous com-

prehensive plans and it is too onerous, complicated and expensive to move projects through the numerous town boards & committees. These processes need to be streamlined and some eliminated. The level of duplication inside our government agencies must end.

Unemployment in Westchester County has doubled since 2007 and it's becoming more and more difficult for our seniors to afford their property taxes. Where are the innovative solutions to these problems? Why are we not looking to attract businesses that can help our local economy? At the risk of sounding parochial, why not encourage agriculture and wine businesses? The full economic impact of the US wine, grapes and grape products on the American economy is \$162 billion. (For more on the economic impact of wine visit: <http://TheWineryAtStGeorge.com/WineFacts.pdf>.) How about encouraging investments in vineyards? How about creating a destination and tourist industry 45 miles north of New York City? Shouldn't we be discussing and encouraging ideas like these?

Our towns and our country are in jeopardy of losing our leadership position in the global economy. We are truly at a tipping point! We must not be complacent anymore. Make a difference and help elect leaders who are innovative thinkers, problem solvers and will embrace change. "If nothing changes, nothing changes..."

"In vino veritas" - "in wine [there is] truth."

*Thomas DeChiaro is the owner of The Winery at St. George, located on Route 6 in Mohegan Lake, and is also the founder of People for an Honest Government, a political action committee. He lives in Mahopac.*

## Letters to the Editor

*Continued from previous page*

while she believes that a town administrator is in the best long-term interest of the community, she has no interest in pursuing the issue in the face of little public support for it.

Susan believes she can best serve Yorktown as town supervisor. Having

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