

# OWEGO PENNSAVER GUIDELINES FOR POLITICAL NEWS COVERAGE, LETTERS and POLITICAL ADVERTISING

## NEWS & EDITORIAL COVERAGE

1. The newspaper does not endorse candidates for local, state or national office.

2. As a general rule, the newspaper does not cover fund-raising dinners or promotional gatherings limited to particular candidates or political parties.

3. When a person announces his or her candidacy, the newspaper will run a news story. Such announcements must be received no later than one (1) month after the filing date for a particular office.

4. The newspaper will publish news stories about write-in campaigns. Since decisions to run write-in campaigns sometimes are made shortly before an election, there is no deadline set on receiving such announcements.

5. Election-related news coverage beyond or in exception to the above will be at the sole discretion of the newspaper's management and editor in the name of reader interest and information.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1. Election-related letters must be local and address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

2. The newspaper does not publish partisan letters that promote or endorse local political candidates based solely on their record, reputation and qualifications. This constitutes paid political advertising.

3. Candidates themselves may not use

the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes. This constitutes paid political advertising.

4. The newspaper is particularly sensitive to organized "letter-writing campaigns" that we believe to be part of a contrived attempt by a political camp to use the editorial page for campaigning purposes, or to otherwise attempt to manipulate our policies for a political advantage. As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of management, reserves the right to reject any such letter.

5. The newspaper is very likely to reject singular letters that are "signed" or submitted under the names of multiple authors. We will not publish such letters without information provided to promptly verify that each signatory is aware of and has agreed to the contents of the letter.

6. The newspaper strongly encourages writers to limit election-related letters to 300 words.

7. To help insure fairness, all letters to the editor of a political nature must be received at the newspaper office by the deadline for our print edition being published three (3) weeks prior to Election Day. Political letters will not be published in the two weekly editions of our newspapers published immediately prior to Election Day.

8. The only exception to this three-week

rule is a response to a letter of an attacking or derogatory nature. In the name of fairness, the newspaper will accept such a response after the three-week deadline, provided it is written and delivered in time for our very next edition, two weeks prior to Election Day. Such responses may rebut charges, innuendos or misstatements of fact from the initial letter but may not present new charges or level inflammatory counterattacks on the opposing political camp.

9. Under no circumstances will any election-related letter be published during the week immediately prior to Election Day.

10. In the case of questionable content (e.g. unfounded allegations, statements of fact that are suspect, or assaults on a candidate's character or moral standards), the newspaper reserves the right to verify such information before publication, or to edit letters.

11. All letters must be signed and include the address and telephone number of the writer. Phone numbers are for questions and verification purposes only and will not be published.

## POLITICAL ADVERTISING

1. All political advertising is charged at the prevailing open rate. (No discounts, special pricing or earned rates.)

2. All political advertising must be paid for in advance. No exceptions.

3. All political advertising must carry a line reading "Authorized By..." or "Paid For By..." If authorized by the candidate, his authorized political committee or their agents, the ad must clearly state such. If not authorized, the ad must clearly and specifically state the name of the person, committee or organization who placed or financed the ad. (Personal identification may be requested.) In the case of citizens' groups, committees and unofficial organizations, they must be established, registered and/or reasonably identifiable to the newspaper's readers. If not, the name of the treasurer or another officer may be required.

4. The phrase "PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT" by itself is insufficient.

5. No political ads may be placed on a page that carries special rates or restrictions on advertising. (e.g. Page 1 or the Business Directory page.) There is no guaranteed position or placement offered for political ads.

6. No political ads of a derogatory or attacking nature will be published.

7. In the case of questionable content (e.g. unfounded allegations, statements of fact that are suspect, or assaults on a candidate's character or moral standards), the newspaper reserves the right to verify such information before publication, or to reject the material.