

Real Reporting.org / NewsLanc.com

4/12/13 • Publisher: NewsLanc.com, LLC • Volume II, No. 188

Street Cars: A bad idea finds new life

An *Intelligencer Journal* – *New Era* article entitled “Hourglass Foundation speaker says young and old together revitalize cities” reports on a talk given to members of the local organization by Christopher Leinberger whom they describe as a “*Land use strategist, author, professor and Brookings Institution Fellow*”.

According to the article:

“ ‘Streetcars are tremendous economic generators,’ said Leinberger, noting that cities across the country are installing tracks. ”

“ ‘To fund those systems, cities are using ‘*value latching*,’ in which the increased value of properties along the line are tapped to pay for part of the streetcar’s operating costs, he said. ”

” ‘You now have the tools to do it. It’s now time to put in the streetcar,’ *Leinberger said*. ”

“*Lancaster Mayor Rick Gray, who supported a study of a 2.6-mile streetcar loop four years ago, said the idea never really went away.* ”

Perhaps Leinberger had not read the series of articles by *NewsLanc* some six years when the street car concept was first suggested. The sponsors cited several cities as references of success. In fact, *NewsLanc’s* research determined that either the lauded systems were almost totally subsidized by tax payers or were in major cities and thus irrelevant.

Representative articles are “Little Rock Trolley Experience Belies Lancaster Projections” ,

“Portland Streetcars: Fares cover only 6%; Taxpayers subsidize millions annually” , and

“Trolleys are for broad avenues; not narrow streets”

Then there was the letter to the editor of the *New Era*, “Former Operator Warns Against Street Cars” by a driver of the faux Lancaster street cars (the rubber tire version seen around town) who pointed out that hardly anyone rides the loop route.

Dumbing down the Lancaster Newspapers

We burst out laughing when we picked up this morning paper and scanned the front page.

The big story, “**The 70s return**” told us that it was warm yesterday, something people who had stayed inside might not have noted.

Then there were two articles on local police actions: “**Man and police in standoff in Elizabethtown**” and “**Police seek suspect in Saturday shooting.**”

Then we learned from “**Nik Wallenda has friends in high places**” about a tight rope artist who happened to be visiting local friends.

Finally there was an article about “**The Bowhunters Festival**”.

Just how provincial can they get?

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Now compare the *Intell's* front page to the articles of local interest the same day at *NewsLanc.com*:

“Thornburgh wrote book; Corbett penning sequel”

“Street Cars: A bad idea finds new life”

“Corbett names Wolf secretary of Pennsylvania Department of Health”

“Penn State trustees’ campaign heats up”

“Senators Manchin and Toomey Work on Background Check Deal”

“Millersville students calling for new graduation speaker”

Acquaintances of ours are having a few friends over for a birthday party next week. We had better let the *Intell* editor know so that a reporter can be sent over to cover it.

Corbett names Wolf Secretary of PA Department of Health

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE: Gov. Tom Corbett has nominated Michael Wolf, the state’s acting health secretary and a former pharmaceutical lobbyist, to be secretary of the Department of Health.

The Harrisburg native began his career in the political realm, including serving as the political director of the Republican Party in Pennsylvania and with the Tom Ridge for Governor Campaign. He served in the Ridge administration in the Office of International Business Development for nearly four years, according to his LinkedIn profile.

Mr. Wolf, 46, also worked for pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, as director of public affairs and policy. In his role there, Mr. Wolf said he was responsible for lobbying in states as well as “working with

legislators to educate them about issues important to Pfizer and to the industry.”... ([more](#))

EDITOR: *Throw Joe Paterno under the bus to divert attention from the “slow walk” and contributions from Second Mile Foundation directors, give a free ride to Marcellus Shale extractors in exchange for millions in donations, privatize the lottery system without legislature approval to benefit special interests – including former governor Ed Rendell’s consulting firm, and now putting a pharmaceutical lobbyist in charge of the Health Department.*

Has Gov. Tom Corbett no sense of shame when it comes to rewarding supporters and raising contributions for his 2014 re-election campaign?

LETTER: Incinerator deal all about bailing out creditors

“Re: “*Is Lancaster to be sacrificed to save Harrisburg from bankruptcy?*”

“Very good. What’s even more interesting now, is the fact that no one knows what direction the negotiations are going. [Every] thing is ‘top secret’, as the community gets led by the nose right back into the rabbit hole.

“This whole exercise is about ‘bailing out’ the banks and the creditors.”

The above items have been excerpted from www.NewsLanc.com. Visit the website daily for news, commentary, letters, and other features. Suggestions and letters can be sent anonymously through the home page.