The Watertown Story

THREAT TO COMMUNITY WATER FLUORIDATION

LEADS TO ORAL HEALTH ACTION IN UPSTATE NEW YORK COMMUNITY

Watertown City Council Meetings 10/2012 – 6/2013

Becomes Ground Zero for Anti-fluoride Arguments

October 15, 2012 - Resolution 1 - Accepting Bid for Fluoride Replacement System - \$73,195

November 2012 - April 2013 - City Council Meetings - drum beat of public comment/letter continues....

May 13, 2013 - City Council Work Session

Dr. Paul Connett, St. Lawrence University - makes an anti-fluoride presentation.

June 10, 2013 - City Council Work Session

Dr. Jayanth V. Kumar, DDS, MPH, New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Dental Health – makes a pro-fluoride presentation.

uture nurky or city luoride

ater supply: Council odds over issue of etting rid of chemical

CRAIG FOX

ES STAFF WRITER

Could the Watertown City ouncil end up voting to take uoride out of the city's water upply?

Mayor Jeffrey E. Graham

to hear fluoride flip side

SUPPORTERS' TURN:

Dental group pushes to keep city water as is

By CRAIG FOX

TIMES STAFF WRITER

Pro-fluoride forces are taking their turn to go on offense.

After weeks of hearing an anti-fluoride group lobby for its side, the Jefferson-Lewis County Dental Society and others are ready to make

SUNDAY

JUNE 9, 2013

Dental director to urge fluoride

VISITING WATERTOWN:

Doctor travels state in public-health push

By CRAIG FOX

TIMES STAFF WRITER

Dr. Jayanth V. Kumar, a dentist for 30 years and the director to Pr Carie Th input Conn chem versity Fluori cently counc Dr.

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Watertown City Council Member Quotes

- "mass medication directed towards the demographics that do not take care of themselves."
- o"dentists are programmed to support fluoride in the water."
- "set a date to determine whether to continue with the fluoridation of water."

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OUR VIEW

Keep fluoride

Watertown council to hear Monday from true experts

onday's City Council meeting will finally present a forum for a fair hearing on whether the city should continue its near 50-year practice of adding fluoride to the water supply.

The Jefferson-Lewis County Dental Society is prepared to expose the council to the science and facts that substantiate the value of use of minuscule amounts of fluoride in the water to strengthen tooth enamel to prevent nearly all tooth decay.

Already 184 million Americans are protected from tooth decay by fluoridated water and benefit from a significant breakthrough in public health.

Joining the Dental Society will be Dr. Jayanth Kumar, director of the state Department of Health Dental Bureau. The Health Department is one of the leading proponents of fluoridation of public water supplies.

The role of the Dental Society is significant. The Dental Society rises above the selfish desire to earn fees from treating tooth decay because of its commitment to healthy patients. Dentists are the most knowledgeable people in society about oral hygiene and have devoted generations of expert medical practice to the prevention of decay. And they stand by their remarkable commitment to healthy teeth.

Years ago, once the value of fluoride was discovered, students in Watertown's public schools were summoned to the dental hygienist's office, where their teeth were bathed in a metallic-tasting fluoride bath. Shortly thereafter, fluoride was added to the water system, ending that practice. The oral hygiene industry developed toothpaste with fluoride. This combination resulted in dramatic improvement of dental health.

The City Council and the three other candidates seeking open seats should listen carefully Monday night to the experts. The last thing Watertown needs is a reprise of the worldwide scorn that followed the council's decision to regulate who could live in your home.

Protecting the teeth of youngsters has been an admirable and successful function of city government for more than 50 years. To reverse direction is irresponsible and sentences the next generation of children to a high incidence of tooth decay.

Council Feels the Pressure?

More Council Member Quotes....

- "given the background of Council members, it is difficult to make a judgement on a medical or scientific issue such as this."
- o "open-minded in terms of which avenue to pursue."
- •"is there really a problem in Watertown?" "Area dentists that I've talked to state there is little fluorosis in the City."

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE

Fluoride supporters unwilling to debate

In response to the editorial on June 9 regarding fluoride. The simplest way that promoters of fluoridation could demonstrate that their case for fluoridation was strong and scientifically-based would be take on qualified opponents of fluoridation in open public debate.

Their refusal to do so speaks volumes on their lack of confidence on the science of this issue. Instead of debate and use of the primary literature they resort to solo performances and the constant reference to outdated and meaningless endorsements by "higher authorities." Such appeals to authority over primary science should have ended with the Pope's clash with Galileo and the scientific revolution that followed.

I am prepared to return to Watertown to publicly debate this issue with any dentist, doctor, scientist or public health official (including Jay Kumar) who believes in fluo-

ridation, should they find the confidence to defend their belief system. Hopefully, the editor of the Watertown Times, instead of blindly urging the continuation of this practice, could use his or her influence to find a fluoridation promoter willing to participate in such a debate in Watertown.

Meanwhile, I think readers can gauge the lack of scientific professionalism of the American Dental Association in this statement it made in a white paper from 1979:

"Individual dentists must be convinced that they need not be familiar with scientific reports of laboratory and field investigations on fluoridation to be effective participants in the promotion program and that nonparticipation is overt neglect of professional responsibility." (ADA White Paper on Fluoridation, 1979)

It is clear that both bureaucrats in state health departments and members of the dental profession are under enormous pressure to toe the party line on this outdated practice. People of good will should insist that science, not authority, be the basis of public health policy, especially with one which has the potential to impact the health of millions of Americans. Only this way will governmental regulatory agencies and professional bodies begin to regain the trust of the American people and in this case the residents of Watertown.

PAUL CONNETT BINGHAMTON

The writer is director of the Fluoride Action Network.

The Enduring Mord

My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.

Proverbs 3:11-12









IN FAVOR OF FLUORIDE ...

Some of the points favoring fluoride are:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention calls it one of the 10 great public health achieve-
- ments of the 20th century.

 Fluoride exists naturally in most
- water supplies.

 Fluoridation is endorsed by more than 100 health organiza-tions, including the Environmental Protection Agency, the American Academy of Pediatricians, the American Medical Association and the American Dental Association. ■ Fluoridation is cost saving when balancing the cost of water treatment against the cost of dental restorations and other dental



...AND AGAINST IT

Arguments made against fluoridation of the public water supply.

- 97 percent of Western Europe's water supply is not treated.
- The World Health Organization says there is no discernible difference in tooth decay rates between fluoridated and unflouridated water supply users.
- m The National Academy of Health and Science calls fluoride an 'en docrine disruptor' that can affect many parts of the body.
- Fluoride causes dental fluorosis
 discoloration of the teeth —
- in 40 percent of U.S. teenagers.

 Fluoridated water contains 100 times the concentration of fluoride that is advised for infants,

according to the Institute of Medicine

Candidates say fluoride issue losing its bite

CITY COUNCIL RACE: Six say the question of treating water supply doesn't seem as prominent in voters' minds these days

This is the third installment in a series of stories presenting the views of City Council candidates

procedures.

By CRAIG FOX

Fluoride.

It's the issue that the six Watertown City Council candidates no longer want to talk

For weeks, a growing num-ber of people belonging to an anti-fluoride group lobbied the council to rid the city's water supply of the of tasteless, colorless chemical.

The group recently stopped going to council meetings. As its presence waned, so has the

It apparently has not riled up a major population of city water users who cannot even water users who cannot even vote on the people who will decide the issue — the city's fluoridated water goes to 60,000 people, including residents of Fort Drum and the towns of Watertown, LeRay, Pamelia, Champion and "a little piace." Champion and "a little piece of Rutland," according to water superintendent Michael J. Sli-

None of the six candidates even a vocal fluoride oppo-nent and a strong supporter of like-minded people who have appeared before the council believes that eliminating fluo-ride from city water will come to a vote before the election.

And it's only when the can-didates were pressed that they agreed to talk about fluoride.

Incumbents Jeffrey M. Smith and Teresa R. Macaluso and candidate Cody J. Horbacz all say they have not decided on how they would vote. Rodney J. LaFave said he supports it and believes most people do.

'It's on the back burner," because jobs and other issues are more pressing, said Jasmine W. Borreggine, the candidate who began the debate last Novem-

Fluoride seemingly is not on the minds of many voters. Few people bring up the issue while the candidates have been out

campaigning, the six said.

While going from door to door, candidate Stephen A. Jennings, who supports fluoride and serves as Jefferson County public health planner and public information officer, said only one resident mentioned it to him.

said only one resident mentioned it to him.

Both Mrs. Borreggine and Mr. Jennings insisted they are not one-issue candidates who decided to run solely because of their stances on fluoride. They said they have been interested in city government and council issues for quite some time and have been thinking about running for a couple of

But make no mistake, the

two definitely are on the opposing sides of the issue.

Mrs. Borreggine cited a federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study that advises against the use of mix-

ing fluoride with baby formula.

According to the CDC, recent evidence suggests that
mixing powdered or liquid infant formula concentrate with fluoridated water on a regular basis may increase the chance of a child developing faint, white markings of mild enamel

Dental fluorosis, the mild discolouration of teeth enamel, is caused by excessive expo-

See FLUORIDE A9

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OUR VIEW

City Council choices

Watertown voters are urged to elect Macaluso and Jennings

fter a vigorous primary in September the controversy over just who can live in when two candidates were win-

Anowed from the list of those aspiring to sit on the Watertown City Council, the race for two seats has become much less visible with few issues separating the political honefuls

What does differentiate the candidates are experience and vision. Teresa R. Macaluso and Jeffrey M. Smith sit on the council today and are seeking reelection. Stephen A. Jennings and Cody J. Horbacz each want one of those seats.

Since the primary, there has been little overt political action. Each candidate has been interviewed by radio, television and the newspa-

per. There have been two public debates the last of which was a rather desultory affair because the audience was more in-

terested in leaving the auditorium at Immaculate Heart Central Junior/Senior High School to go outside to watch

IHC win a football game. The primary attracted 2,840 voters, who overwhelmingly supported Ms. Macaluso, Mr. Smith narrowly came in second ahead

of Mr. Jennings by 45 votes.
The primary set the stage for an anticipated debate over city issues. That has not happened.

None of the primary issues such fluoride in the water, the Thompson Boulevard shared housing debacle and oversight of the city's rental properties have earned any-

thing but minor lip service. The candidates have been campaigning, going door to door, placing lawn signs and appearing in what few public debates have been spon-sored. But the electorate does not seem



Teresa R. Macaluso

family dwellings zoned Residential A. She

is a listener and seems to have a clear understanding of what is important to Watertown residents. Operating her coffee business provides her with an immediate conduit to public opinion.

Mr. Jennings brings an interesting and thoughtful perspective to the race and would make a valuable addition to the council. He has a vision for Watertown that revolves around focusing attention on deteriorating neighborhoods.

He relies upon data to define the most challenged neighborhoods in the city. His vision is simple: Focus

on these neighborhoods to define the root issues and prescribe a game plan for improvement by invoking help from social agencies, government and residents.

> That the council would have a voice with a vision for changing the direction of city neighborhoods is refreshing. It is a focused approach that would utilize resources, not to create a new arm of government but to help contain deterioration and embolden resi-dents and property owners to invest.

The ill thought out dismissal of this approach by Mr. Smith at the IHC debate is inadequate:

And it shows that Mr. Smith may have been in office so long that he is be-

coming jaded.

Stephen A. Jennings

Mr. Jennings' professional life relies on data analysis to create healthier communi-

His public health record is clear and has benefited lefterson County.

Candidate seeks su

My name is Eric Warner. and I am running for St. Law-rence County coroner on Nov. 5. I will be running on two lines: the Democratic and an Independent line, ECD.

I want to introduce myself to the constituents of 5t. Lawrence County. I was born and raised in Heuvelton and graduated from Heuvelton Central School. In 2007, I married my wife, Kiera Cilley, and in 2011 we had our first child. Kain.

I live in Lisbon where I run a small Clydesdale horse farm. I am running for coroner under three basic principles: experience, compassion and dedica-

I began working for Allen-Denesha and Allen-Nichol funeral homes in 1999 as a senior in high school. I studied for my degree at SUNY Canton, and in-2003 I graduated with my mor-

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Better ways to crea

Las Vegas and Atlantic City, the two destinations on the continental United States that people from all over the world associate with when they think of destinations to go and gam-

When people think of New York, they think Statue of Liberty and Times Square. Ask about upstate New York? Some people familiar with what upstate consists of may tell you about the mountains, wineries and a host of other locations.

People not so familiar with upstate would probably tell you there are plentiful amounts of both farms and snow. And in reality, besides Lake Placid and Niagara Falls, there isn't much else that acts as a heavily sought after attraction or point of interest for either international or domestic tourism, New Yorkers included.

So why Proposition No. 17 If not familiar with Propoаппери State rize th nos wi allow lower run. a decr ment time thear prop

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Jennings qualified

Stephen Jennings' decision to campaign for a seat on the Watertown City Council is a result of long-standing educational opportunities, work experiences, community involvement and a desire to make a difference.

Steve, if elected, will effectively serve in this important role within city government. Through work with public health. Stove developed strong administrative and leadership skills that will advance the work

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is first run for political barely paid attention night as the results wn on a large-screen e Black River Valley then, though, he had ited a 165-vote lead. ng fazes me," he said. vs calm."

inings explained his by saving he worked luding campaigning or. He also left about es of campaign litvoters' homes, wrote eople he talked with t another 300 to all

> absentee voters, he said.

"It was always almost entirely positive," he said about meeting and talking with potential supporters.

the race focused



Stephen Jennings is congratulated Tuesday by fellow Republicans after winning a seat on the Watertown City Council.

said he was proud of his showmind, she said at a gathering at safely win re-election and ing Although his age may have

Mayor will brief Jennings on city

By CRAIG FOX

TIMES STAFF WRITER

A. Jennings will get a crash course on city government next week as he meets with Mayor

Jeffrey E. Graham.

"I already have so many questions," said Mr. Jennings, who will receive a briefing from the mayor on Tuesday. "I'm very excited to meet with the mayor and I'm very excited to meet with city staff."

Mr. Graham called him to congratulate

him on his election victory Tuesday and to offer to meet with the newly elected council member.

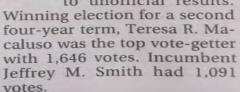
"I thought we'd sit and talk with him about my thoughts and see what he's interested in," Mr. Graham said.

The mayor also will arrange a tour of city facilities to be part of his orientation. Mr. Jennings also said he's looking forward

> to talking with City Manager Sharon A. Ad-

dison.

A political newcomer, Mr. Jennings had 1,378 votes, enough to claim the second seat up for grabs, ahead of Cody J. Horbacz, who finished third with 1,106 votes, according to unofficial results.





Jennings



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Councilman Stephen A. Jennings finishes his speech after being sworn into office Wednesday.

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By STEVE VI

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Graham position has exp staying due con

Meanwhile....

- Statewide partnership is formed to address oral health as a 3-year initiative. Statelevel and local-level objectives.
- The City of Watertown/Jefferson County, NY is on the radar as a potential ECC Community Reduction Project site.
- The New York State Department of Health, New York State Health Foundation, Community Health Foundation of Western & Central New York, Schuyler Center for Analysis & Advocacy collaborate to establish two ECC Community Reduction Project pilot locations.
- Jefferson County, NY and the City of Buffalo are chosen and agree to participate.

Jefferson County

- Strong history of support for community health.
- Good mix of community resources and assets.
- Still need to improve oral health.
- Medicaid and poverty indicators.
- Fluoridated and non-fluoridated communities.
- Good relationships with partners.

The Jefferson County Leadership Team:

- Maternal/Child Health Network
- Federally Qualified Health Center
- Community Action Planning Council
 - Head Start
- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County (Nutrition)
- 2 Dentists General Practitioner and Pediatric
- Dental Hygienists
- Local Health Department

- Jefferson-Lewis Dental Society
- Mental Health Provider
- Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization
- Schools
- City of Watertown
 - Water Superintendent
 - City Council
- SCAA
- CDHP
- New York State Health Foundation

Our Training Sessions – *March-June, 2014*

- Some helpful approaches from that process:
- Community Assets Exercise
 - Institutions
 - Programs
 - Individuals
 - Resources
- Telling Your Story
- Face-to-Face Interviews

Our Name



Our Workplan

- Increase fluoride varnish application primary care providers.
- Increase proper tooth-brushing in young children – Cavity-Free Kids curriculum.
- Maintain access to fluoridated water.
- Outreach through social and other media.