Two, This, That, There

letters for july 24 2008 thursday, july 24, 2008 7:53 am law followed on cable deal i disagree with mr. burnham's assertion the meredith town board did not follow the law, with regard to a july 8 public hearing to address the renewal of delhi telephone co. cable's franchise agreement. mr. burnham's letter has quoted a section of the rules **THAT** govern cable television franchise agreements and has offered his own interpretation of those rules. however, the state public service commission concluded, when it approved a virtually identical agreement between dtc cable and the town of meredith five years ago, **THAT** the requirements of the law were met. does the law matter? it certainly did in **THIS** case. new york has a very rigorous review process for all cable tv franchise agreements. in fact, the franchise renewal agreement at issue can not become effective until psc staff members review it and the commission issues an order permitting it to become effective. also required is the publication of a public notice, on **TWO** occasions, **THAT** the agreement has been submitted for approval and inviting the public to examine the application and to submit comments. if the psc finds any discrepancies in the agreement, it will order approval contingent upon adoption of the changes **THAT** appear in the order. does the law matter? the psc review process serves to protect the interests and provide transparency to the residents of the town of meredith, the meredith town board and dtc cable! mr. burnham's opinion **THAT** the law has not been followed in **THIS** process is not supported by the facts. the town board and dtc cable have followed the law in **THIS** process exactly; mr. burnham's right to further comment on the renewal application is protected by law. mr. burnham's rhetorical question, "does the law matter?" is not appropriate for **THIS** situation. does the law matter? very much so! douglas n. edwards new lisbon edwards is vice president and general manager of delhi telephone co., of which dtc cable is a wholly owned subsidiary. letter-writer twisted words in reply to andrew reinbach's june 28 letter, mr. reinbach's comments regarding my letter are so distorted they hardly deserve rebuttal. the people who know me best know my integrity speaks for itself. mineral rights owners should educate themselves by, quoting my original letter, "listening to both sides." a qualified oil and gas attorney as well as an educated land agent can be a valuable resource for learning more about the industry and its impact on mineral ownership. in addition, the state department of environmental conservation has on its website a wealth of information to help educate mineral owners. i made no exaggeration of the financial risks exploration companies undertake. the costs i cited were accurate. i did not include costs for lease acquisition, abstracting, legal fees, curative, etc. drilling dry holes, while a cost of doing business, also serves to increase the cost of drilling a productive well, **THERE** by increasing the financial risks involved. mr. reinbach states **THAT** i trivialized, "the entire relationship between a landowner and energy company." wow! you got **THAT** from my letter? talk about twisting words! he continues: "if they could, would it be in the interests of energy companies to drag out negotiations until the landowner ran out of money?" as if these companies have unlimited resources and it doesn't matter what the costs are. the answer is they could, but they wouldn't. the cost of negotiating a lease position can be extraordinarily high. like any other business, **THERE** is an interest in containing these costs. i am confident readers will see through mr. reinbach's vain attempt to twist my words into his own warped sense of reality. his previous letter to the editor, may 13, "we can't be oil self-sufficient," confirms **THAT** mr. reinbach has his own no-drilling-in-the-usa agenda. david perazone oneonta state must take lead on drilling natural gas burns cleaner than oil and coal. we should extract it in an environmentally responsible way and under contracts **THAT** protect our land. but, as elmira lawyer chris denton said, gas company contracts are "designed to help them in every way possible and to make your life miserable." the state must provide minimum contract language requirements **THAT** protect the landowner. we also have to keep our water and air pure. however, the 2005 energy act exempted gas drillers from the clean water, clean air and safe drinking water acts. **THAT** is why i'm calling for an immediate moratorium on leases and drilling for natural gas. let's look at what these land-men leases don't tell us: what our communities will be like with a gas well every mile; what the drilling process entails; **THAT** these wells require millions of gallons of water; what chemicals they're mixing in the water; what companies will do with **THIS** water mixture after drawing it from wells; **THAT THERE** is no guarantee **THAT** aquifers won't be affected; **THAT** neither the state department of environment conservation nor the federal environmental protection agency is regulating these water issues; **THAT** local road damage will be the taxpayer's problem; **THAT** buried gas lines will run through properties; and **THAT** leases may hurt our ability to sell our property environmentally safe extraction can deal with these problems, but the state legislature leaves it up to us to protect ourselves and our land. we also need to know where natural gas extraction fits into our long-term energy independence plan. unfortunately, our representatives haven't made informed decisions **THAT** protect our interests; instead, they've decided in favor of the gas companies. as your next state senator, i will do better. don barber brooktondale barber is town of caroline supervisor and a candidate for state senate in the 51st district.