

Editorials and Commentary

Students welcome in Potsdam

At the end of summer, in many places when students go back to school the effect is that they disappear from view. They vacate parks and porches and backyard pools and head for the Halls of Ivy.

But in Potsdam, when students go back to school, this is where they go. They are everywhere, carry books, riding bicycles, riding buses, and lounging on porches and in parks.

When school starts, Potsdam perks up and gets moving again. Business booms and things start happening.

After a relatively quiet summer season, arts and music flourish on the campuses, distinguished visitors appear for public lectures, and any number of generous and energetic students become involved in various community service projects.

Many of these students at the State University College at Potsdam and at Clarkson College of Technology will not return to Potsdam after they have graduated, but while they are here they leave their mark.

The students make for a livelier atmosphere with their enthusiasm and energy, and they often direct that enthusiasm and energy toward making life better for area residents who will live here most of their lives.

For example, last year student volunteers helped many families in Potsdam and the surrounding area weather-proof their homes as part of a Neighborhood Center project. And service groups raised money which they donated to the Center for other projects.

Sororities and fraternities and other students regularly give their time and effort to young children in the community. The Easter

Seal Society can always count on holiday parties for handicapped youngsters, and groups donate themselves to entertain Head Start children at parties in fraternity houses. This summer, the Sandstone Senior Citizens received a generous check from student groups to help in outfitting a better senior citizen facility here.

The list can continue for a long space, but we hope you get the idea.

The colleges in our community help the quality of life for many of us. The students and staff at each institution are valuable assets to Potsdam, and we appreciate the efforts they make to share in the responsibility of keeping Potsdam a fine place to live.

So, to all the returning students, welcome back. And to all those coming to Potsdam for the first time, we're glad to meet you, and we hope you enjoy your school years here.

75 years young

Milon Mushtare is 75 years old on Wednesday.

Normally someone turning 75 years old isn't cause for an editorial opinion, but in this case we think it is.

Milon works at Adirondack Motors in Potsdam. He puts in his workday despite what some people call "old age."

With all the talk recently about mandatory retirements, social security, and other age discrimination related topics we believe that Milon serves as a good example that a person need not be forced into retirement when he or she is still capable of working.

Milon became a used car salesman in 1960 and has spent the last 17 years with Gordon Theisen at Adirondack. He told a Courier and Freeman interviewer that "I enjoy working here for Gordon, I like to keep moving."

He also told our interviewer that he will continue to keep working.

Adirondack Autos is sponsoring a birthday party for him on Wednesday at the showroom on Maple Street in Potsdam.

A party for one man who decided that life didn't end at 65.

Letters policy

Due to the overwhelming response we have gotten to our letters to the editor section of the Courier and Freeman, we have been forced to ask that those who write observe some guidelines.

Letters which are accepted for publication must be signed and include telephone number of the author if applicable.

Further, while no letters to the editor will be edited, we must ask that letters be limited to a maximum of 450 words or about two typewritten double spaced pages.

Letters of greater length will be returned to the author for editing.

Fred's Our Man



By David Cateforis



MAYOR RUTH Garner cuts the ribbon while owners Joe Dwyer and Charles Trippany look on as the Super Duper Market reopened its doors on Sunday. The new store is located on Elm Street in the old Big M location. Also attending

the ribbon cutting was village administrator Sanford Dewey and trustees Norma Thayer and John Chapple. A large crowd of more than 100 people watched as Garner cut the ribbon. (Mike Billington Photo)

Writer 'amazed' at traffic tie-ups

Dear Editor:

I am a resident of the village of Norwood. My husband is a professional in town. I am amazed at the current construction occurring in the Town of Potsdam. Last Friday, Leroy Street was blocked off at the same time that Market Street was more congested than I have ever seen it. Isn't it remarkable that Leroy and Market Streets were closed off simultaneously? This would be a great way to convince people of the need for an alternate route. This situation is particularly annoying because the bypass supported by local officials would not necessarily alleviate this traffic "problem". (We need only to remove the construction vehicles from a few of the strategic streets to eliminate that problem). Are we the public being fooled into believing there is a serious traffic problem and an absolute need for Alternate Route C? Certainly there is heavy traffic from Canton to Massena via Potsdam. But there are other possible routes and alternatives. Many area residents, (from Canton, Massena, Norwood and Norfolk) are aware of the back route from Norwood

to Canton (from Spring Street in Norwood, through Slab City and West Potsdam to Route 11 near Canton.) If these back roads were improved and clearer signs posted, they could certainly relieve the Market Street traffic problem. Another possibility is widening the existing bridge in Potsdam on Route 11 near White's. I am not a highway planner, but I am interested and concerned citizen. I have seen too many bypass roads destroy the inner core and charm of a town. Unfortunately, like a cancer, it takes a few years for the ill effects to be felt. It may be true that the high rents and parking difficulties. But if this road is built as planned, their problem may be getting business at all. As a case in point, the town of Kingston, New York recently completed an expensive project to renovate falling downtown stores in an effort to attract customers away from the chain of discount and department store malls along bypass 887. The proposed Alternate Route C terminates on Route 56 outside the village of Potsdam, 1/2 mile from Penney's and Big N in an unincorporated swamp area, with little or no zoning restrictions. What a prime spot for a few shopping centers. I wonder how many residents are aware that this proposed four lane highway, designed to relieve one problem, will also create many more. People will be cut off from vital services on the other side of the highway. Access roads will have to be constructed into town, creating further traffic chaos for a few years. And, of course, how many businesses (including the Potsdam Co-op) and people will have to relocate? I believe there is an obvious need for a further public hearing on the issue. There are too many unanswered questions. The Department of Transportation will not authorize construction on the \$17 million highway until they are convinced the people want it and until the county and town boards support it. I urge the residents of Potsdam and surrounding areas to consider this question and demand a public hearing to decide if this route, or any route, is the alternative that the people want for the future of Potsdam.

Sincerely,
Susan G. Klein

SLEO report takes middle approach

BY TERRY KOCH
The subdivision of hundreds of miles of St. Lawrence River and Eastern Lake Ontario shoreline into summer camps or permanent homes may be "the single most significant change" hurting the quality of those shorelines. At the same time, the impact of present and proposed nuclear power plants for the shoreline area "raises serious questions," but needs more study. This is the opinion of the St. Lawrence-Eastern Ontario Commission in its recently-released study of coastal resources.

The report, which itself makes no "zoning" recommendations, will go to the state legislature when it considers controls for the contiguous strip of land bordering the two bodies of water on the New York side.

Middle-Of-The-Road
The commission's report is clear in pointing the finger of guilt for the shoreline's environmental damage. But at the same time it takes what looks like a "middle-of-the-road" stand regarding the competing interests of development and conservation.

Both the public and private sectors have "unilaterally indulged themselves" in the use of the water resources of the Great Lakes Basin," the report states, "with limited regard for its carrying capacity or its capacity to recover from the stress placed on the water resources by the basin's 30 million residents." The result, it states, "has been the degradation of resources."

But when deciding the priorities between development and conservation it takes the middle ground. On the one hand the report says the possibility of nuclear power in the region "raises serious questions." Yet on the other it suggests that locally-generated power would be "the area's most important industrial location advantage."

The conciliatory stance is best expressed in the study's summary. There points out that several interests, from international shipping to "bird watching," compete along the shoreline. Says the report, "the best use of the area and its resources means many things to many people. Therefore, it is essential that any proposal to develop and yet protect the area's resources provide for an equitable apportionment of benefits among a host of legitimate competing interests."

The report outlines several dangers to or possible pressures on the shoreline environment. While it also analyzes the impact of two ports, examines the economic base of the area, and addresses questions of local zoning, this analysis deals with the study's pinpointing of the environmental pressures. First of these is shoreline subdivision. Others are introduction of toxic substances like PCB's; the Seaway itself, with its resultant oil spills; municipal, industrial and agricultural runoff; and the possibility of new power generating plants.

Asks support for mental health drive

Dear Editor:

Today we know that mental illness can be prevented in many cases. We can do this through education, especially of parents, and by learning to cope with stress. There is a group of citizens like ourselves, trying to see that this happens-The Mental Health Association. During September, Mental Health Month, your neighbor will be coming to your door to collect for mental health. I urge you to give generously.

The Mental Health Association needs your support because mental illness can be cured the cycle of child abuse can be stopped education of parents can prevent some emotional problems in children. Your support is needed to accomplish this.

Very truly yours
Hilda L. Champney
Mental Health Chairperson

Writer is 'shocked'

Dear Editor:

I heard in passing that the DOT Potsdam by pass plan has been approved by the County Planning Board last Thursday evening. Like many citizens I thought it was a dead issue. There was little if any advance warning to concerned citizens that the decision was going to be made for us at a regular meeting of the Planning Board.

It shocks me that the village isn't holding another public hearing to allow us folks to have our say. As I remember it was made clear at the last public hearing that the citizens of Potsdam feel the plan will hinder Potsdam. Surely there are good common sense solutions. For one, widening the existing bridge. I sincerely hope this will not be one more case of the citizens concerns being overlooked by government agencies.

Diana Douglas

Strip Development
With the subdivision of the shoreline and "strip" development, the destruction of wildlife habitats; decreased water quality; loss of open space; decreased public access; destruction of the scenery; destruction of fish spawning areas; and changes in the natural coastal processes.

The problem is compounded by the nature of the region's soil. In short, the high population density along the shoreline, combined with poor drainage, causes septic tank pollution problems. As the report explains it, the surface of northern New York was glacially scoured about 10,000 years ago, leaving soils throughout the area that "present serious limitations to development." As a result, "major problems occur in the areas of drainage, onsite sewage disposal and agricultural productivity."

Toxic Substances
Toxic substances like PCB's have contributed to the water's woes. "Actionable amounts of these in Great Lakes waters have caused the state to put a ban on possession of some sports fish species. Unless the issue is resolved quickly, the study says, the problem "will have a multimillion dollar negative impact" on coastal areas dependent on recreation for its economic support.

On top of that, says the commission, timely control by public agencies has been prevented by inadequate information regarding the presence, sources and environmental consequences of these materials. PCB's, the report points out, "are known to have harmful effects on humans."

The Seaway
One of the most important changes wrought upon the St. Lawrence River was of course the St. Lawrence Seaway navigation and power project. The report states this has "contributed to the degradation of the areas water resources."

In particular, the report says, major oil spills and illegal bilge pumping are periodically "plac[ing] the area's economy and environment under stress and have damaged the area's natural resource base."

And an extended navigation season will "appreciably" increase the potential for further degradation. The report is not glowing in its description of the local economic benefits attendant upon the building of the Seaway. While it has produced "some" economic stimulus and employment in the St. Lawrence Valley, the report says

"major economic benefits have yet to be realized locally." Most of the benefits have gone to Toronto and major urban centers on the Upper Great Lakes.

Runoff is another pressure on the shoreline environment. Municipal, industrial, and in some cases, agricultural runoff, "is contributing major pollutants" to estuaries and nearshore waters of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River.

Nuclear Power Generation
The report takes a cautious stand on the possibility of nuclear and other thermal generation, apparently careful not to take a stand on one side or the other.

It states first that the region "has a number of advantages" for the location of thermal electric generation facilities, among them proximity to established interregional transmission corridors, abundant water for cooling purposes, and substantial open space for sites.

In combination with the abundant water resources of the areas, the report says, "the availability of locally generated energy may be the area's most important industrial location advantage."

With the possibility of more nuclear plants in the future, effects of increased water temperatures and of radioactive products "are among the concerns raised by these developments. Considerable study has been done on both sides, the commission says, "and more is needed."

There is no question, it states, that major thermal discharges increase the surface water temperature. The report admits that "resulting changes in habitat conditions do affect local aquatic plant life," but says "their significance for the lake ecosystem has not been established."

An increase in temperature of 23 degrees Fahrenheit has been predicted for the year 2,000 for the eastern end of Lake Ontario from existing and proposed power plants. "These findings, if correct, do not seem to suggest a significant problem," the report says. Regarding nuclear waste products, the report says studies have shown "elevated levels" of radionuclides in aquatic plants three miles downriver from Nine Mile Point at Oswego, but none have been reported accumulating up the food chain.

"Practical experience in this matter," the commission suggests, "has perhaps been too brief to permit reliable estimates of long-term impacts on the aquatic ecology of the area."



4-H MEMBERS all over the area entered their projects in the Gouverneur-St. Lawrence County Fair. The Handy Helpers group won a total of eighty-three ribbons for their crafts, sewing, baking and canning. Shown above from left are Mary Anne McKenna, Karen McKenna, Kelly Burcume, Lisa Rockefeller and Brenda Kilkenny. Others who won ribbons are: Carol Narrow, five blue, eight red; Renee Stevens, four red; Kim Wing, 1 blue, three red; Melinda LaVac, one red; Tammy Perry, one blue, six red, two white; Maureen McKenna, one blue; Barbara Gravin, two blue, two red; Tammy Rockefeller, eleven blue, eight red, one white; Lisa Rockefeller, nine blue, eight red; Kelly Burcume, one blue, two red, two white; Mary Anne McKenna two blue; Brenda Kilkenny, two blue; and Karen McKenna, one blue. (Dawn Vick photo)

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MIKE BILLINGTON, Managing Editor

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