



OFFICERS INSTALLED—New officers of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary were installed at a dinner at the Elks Club in Ogdensburg. The new officers are, from left to right, Robert Heaney, division captain; Jerry Peo, vice-commander of the

local flotilla, Henry Burgess, flotilla commander; and Jim Lewis, outgoing vice-commander. Lewis is a patrolman with the Potsdam Police Department. (Paul Mitchell photo)

SLEOC Will Discuss Its Uncertain Future

BY JOHN FRIOT

CANTON — A proposal for St. Lawrence County to join Off-Track Betting remains in the starting gate this year after the state legislature failed to take any action in 1979 on a bill to annex the county to the Capital OTB Region.

In February of 1979, the county legislature passed a pro-Off Track Betting resolution, and in March, the legislative body decided to stick with an earlier choice to seek annexation into the Capital District of Off Track Betting.

A bill seeking the annexation was then filed in the state legislature where it subsequently died.

The county Finance Committee met Wednesday night in Canton and was told by county Administrative Assistant William Collins that he had been in contact with representatives from the Assembly, Senate, and the Capital OTB District all of whom were questioning "whether the county still wants legislation passed for OTB."

Collins said that "there is a tug of war going on between the Capital and Western OTB Regions which makes the bill's passage not the simplest thing in the world."

"There is no point," he continued, "of

Olympic Tickets

Are Festival Prize

The Potsdam Chamber of Commerce will award two fully-paid trips to Olympic events as door prizes, it has been announced by Wally Siebel, chairman of the chamber's Winter Festival Committee. Registration slips for the prizes may be obtained free from any participating merchant.

Drawing for the prizes will take place on Feb. 8. The winners need not be present at the drawings, but will be notified immediately, Siebel said.

A bus will pick up the winners in Potsdam on the morning of Friday, Feb. 15, and transport them to Lake Placid in time for the two-man bobsled runs at 9:30-12:30. After a box lunch, the winners will see the men and women huge runs from 2-4 p.m. and then return to Potsdam by about 6 p.m. An alternate pickup and delivery in Canton or other community on the route can be arranged.

In addition to Siebel, the members of the Winter Festival Committee are: Enid Ablowitz, Joyce Lalonde, Peggy Jensen, George Maclean and Hal Stokes, David Demarest, Doris Frazer and Steve Yianoukos also are assisting the committee.

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them going through the effort to get out of one district and into another if the county is going to sit back after that and do nothing."

The committee voted 5-2 to put a resolution on the Feb. 11 Board of Legislators agenda, reaffirming the county's intent to go into the OTB business once the enabling legislation is passed. Legislators Donald Livingston, who is the Chairman of the Board, and William Hess opposed the resolution.

If the bill annexing the county from the Central OTB to the Capital OTB District is re-introduced and passed by the state legislature this year, the county legislature would need to adopt a local law in order to establish OTB parlors. The county local law would be then subject to a public referendum if 10 percent of the voters in the last gubernatorial election request one.

If the request is not made and opponents of OTB do not collect enough names on their petition, the local law would take effect after an automatic 45-day waiting period.

The OTB proposal for the county could be placed on the November ballot if everything goes smoothly and the county legislators renew their intent to participate in OTB. The county Board of Elections needs to have the certification 29 days prior to an election in order to

place it on the ballot.

The Capital OTB District encompasses Columbia, Rensselaer, Greene, Albany, Schenectady, Montgomery, Fulton, Herkimer, and Clinton counties.

At a meeting last year, between the county and a Capital OTB District official, the county was informed that it could expect to receive about \$100,000 in the first year it operates through the Capital District.

Off Track Betting in the county has been opposed in the past by several organizations and residents for several reasons ranging from morality to a claim that it would lure money from people within the county who are least able to afford it.

The debate over whether or not to continue to pursue the establishment of OTB parlors in the county is more than likely expected to result in a tug of war between those that are opposed to gambling because of moral convictions and those that are interested in stimulating the economy.

The committee also briefly discussed the possible repeal of the county sales tax on home heating fuels but deferred any action on the issue to allow the legislators a chance to get a better handle on how much sales tax money may be coming into the county this year.

Off-Track Betting Still An Issue For The County

WATERTOWN—The St. Lawrence-Eastern Ontario Commission will meet at 2 p.m. Wednesday, at its fourth floor headquarters in the State Office Building here.

Tentative plans call for discussion of the Independent Cement Corporation's proposal for alternative siting of its planned cement storage and transfer facility at the Port of Oswego.

The commission will also discuss the implications of Gov. Hugh Carey's recent budget recommendations.

The governor has proposed the elimination of the local commission and the assumption of its duties by other statewide agencies.

In a statement released to the press last week, chairman of the commission, former St. Lawrence County legislator Ernest LaBaff, has criticized the

governor's decision and called for the state legislature to reinstitute funding for the commission.

"It would be unfortunate for the North Country if Governor Carey's recommendation to abolish the St. Lawrence-Eastern Ontario Commission were approved," LaBaff said.

"Hundreds of man-years of research and planning in support of programs to enhance the area's economic and natural resource base have resulted in the dynamic, project-oriented development effort currently being conducted by the Commission," LaBaff said.

Projects and programs are carefully designed to complement, not duplicate, the work of other agencies."

Throughout the Commission's service area, assistance to local governmental units would cease if the agency were to be abolished, LaBaff said. This assistance centers around land use planning, and development of sanitary codes and other ordinances desired by local governments as prerequisites to the development of local governmental resource management programs. In addition, technical assistance is

provided to communities in identifying and planning projects aimed at stimulating the all-important tourism industry of Northern New York.

Other commission efforts are aimed at mitigating the negative impacts of natural and manmade phenomena along the shoreline of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River, LaBaff said.

In St. Lawrence County efforts to complete the oil spill response model for the St. Lawrence River could be terminated. The model is being developed to identify environmentally and economically sensitive areas along the river that would receive priority for protection in the event of another oil spill. In conjunction with this, efforts to provide a self-help booklet and demonstration of methods waterfront property owners can use to protect themselves could end, LaBaff maintained.

Tourism development and promotion in connection with the Seway Trail program could also terminate. Development of two tourism centers would be delayed or discontinued without the assistance provided by the commission.

Potsdam Man Heads

Coast Guard Auxiliary

Dr. Robert Cotellessa of Potsdam was installed as Commander and James J. McDermott, Vice Commander of Flotilla 1-1, United States Coast Guard Auxiliary at a Change of Helm Dinner and Ceremony held at the Village Inn, Massena, Jan. 29. Division Vice Captain, Norman C. Swanson of Syracuse conducted the installation ceremony. Thirty-two members and guests attended.

Dr. Cotellessa issued merit awards to his staff officers for outstanding service during the past year. Plans were made for the 13 lesson boating course to begin on Feb. 25.

Classes will be held each Monday evening beginning at 7:30 p.m. in Room 311 of the Massena Central High School. Walter G. Reimer, public education staff officer for the Flotilla, will head the various instructors in the safe boating lessons.

Tax Aid For Elderly

Senior citizens can get free income tax advice through the tax-aid program sponsored by the local chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons.

Volunteer counselors trained by the Internal Revenue Service will have a desk in the lobby of the St. Lawrence National Bank in Potsdam and Canton every Wednesday, from Feb. 6 through April 9 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Senior citizens who want to take advantage of the service should bring in their last return for 1979 and all the necessary papers for 1979. Those unable to make it to the bank should call 265-2946 in the evenings.

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