

Take Views To Albany:

Students, Faculty Fear Cut In SUCP Quality

BY JOANNE SIMARD
Student Intern

"We need to go to Albany and ask the politicians what kind of a SUNY system they want," said Professor James Wightman, president of the local chapter of the United University Professions at Potsdam College.

It was a question that Potsdam faculty, staff, and students also asked themselves as they launched a full force demonstration in Albany last Tuesday, Jan. 29, in protest of Gov. Hugh Carey's proposed budget cuts.

"Save SUNY Day" was sponsored by the United University Professions (UUP). Two buses with approximately 25 faculty, 33 students, and five staff left Potsdam campus at 6:30 a.m. last Tuesday and arrived at the Legislative Office Building in the state capital at 10:45 a.m. After a brief speech by the Chairman of the Assembly of Higher Education, Mark Siegel, participants of Save SUNY Day met with assemblymen and senators to discuss the proposed budget cuts.

Under Carey's spending plan, Potsdam College would gain \$843,800 in appropriations but would lose eight positions. There would be a reduction of five faculty, one staff, and two support positions.

Students who went to Albany last week, although inexperienced at lobbying, felt that the assemblymen were both receptive and interested. Randy Coburn, an economics major, discussed the possible effects of the cuts with Assemblyman Ronald Stafford. "Students will not want to go to school here. They will either leave the state or not go to college. They will probably go to another state because you have to be educated today. We would lose student

resources. Declining enrollment affects finances; less money coming in would hurt the whole system financially," Coburn told Stafford. He did feel, however, that Stafford was very interested in advocating higher education. "He was most emphatic in our interests," noted Coburn.

Past Cuts Show

The proposed retrenchment of eight positions on the Potsdam campus is only the most recent of cuts made in the last five years. In 1976 tuition was raised \$100 and faculty cuts were made. Last year tuition was raised again by \$150 for lower division students.

This year on the college campus there is a general feeling of disappointment directed toward the Carey administration. Many feel that Albany is not fully aware of the needs of the students, the college, and its employees. "Albany does not really know what is going on here. They do not come to us, we have to go to them," said Mary Lauzon, keypunch operator in the Computer Science Department.

The effects of past cutbacks are reflected in larger class sizes, and many professors find it difficult to instruct the larger classes efficiently. One professor, Joseph Santo of the Foreign Language Department explained, "You cannot teach a language at a beginner level with 42 students. An ideal number is eight to ten; any more than that is absurd."

Previously, two master's degree language programs were offered at Potsdam. Now only three languages are taught. With further retrenchment there is a possibility that the department will be even more. With only four Spanish professors, three French, and one German, Santo said he fears the con-

sequences of any more position losses. "It could destroy the major if there were any more cuts. Students would have to transfer. We would play the role of a junior college. Our department is at the absolute bottom; any more cuts would destroy it," noted Santo.

Students Would Suffer

Faculty and staff members seem to agree that students will suffer the most as a result of the proposed cutbacks. "Students will not be serviced as well," commented Ms. Lauzon.

College President James H. Young has stated he hopes to cushion the blow of the position cuts by not filling existing vacancies.

But some fear attrition would lead to inefficient service due to an uneven loss of positions throughout the college.

Professor Wightman said he believes the cuts should not be made through attrition. The position losses would not be spread evenly throughout the college's departments and might cause one area to suffer more than one cut, he said. Wightman noted that the UUP does not want to see anyone lose his job, but is interested in saving SUNY. He said he hoped that the trip to Albany would help state officials know SUNY better and would show the willingness of faculty, staff, and students to work together.

There is also fear on campus that the proposed cutbacks will eventually impersonalize the relationship between student and professor. Economics major Gina Scott described Potsdam College: "The atmosphere is friendly and warm. A lot of the closeness and good feelings come from the fact that professors really care." Ms. Scott suggested that this close relationship is now threatened by impending retren-

chment. The position cuts could lead to a loss of personal attention to individual students because classes will become larger and individual help for students very scarce, she said. Biology major Lisa Brownshide said, "the best thing about this school is the personal attention you receive that is not possible at the larger schools. I have been treated as a person; I'm afraid of becoming just a number." Likewise, faculty members feel it is important to know their students in order to help them. "Each student has different needs," said one professor.

Many feel that SUNY has not been given all the credit it deserves. "People do not realize what a great university this is. Potsdam enjoys an excellent reputation," Wightman said. He went on: "St. Lawrence County is very poor. If it is to develop, it has to offer arts programs, music, sports, and new courses for adults if it wants to draw professionals. The college 'enriches a lot of people's lives, not only students.'"

"The SUNY system has a good reputation throughout the country and Potsdam State is a well-respected division of that system," said one student. Many fear that the retrenchment will lower the reputation of Potsdam. "Over a period of time, this has to have an effect on the overall reputation. What standard of unsanitariness, for example, will students accept due to cuts in the custodial staff? Eventually, due to word of mouth, student enrollment will drop," said Ms. Lauzon.

But there is optimism at the local level. Mrs. Kay Brown, librarian at the school's Frederic Crumb Memorial Library, said that, in the long run, the SUNY system will be recognized as an excellent system of higher education.



DOCTOR HONORED — Dr. Max Thaler, Parishville physician for the past 30 years, was honored Saturday at an open house. He is shown above with his wife, Angela, at left and one of many well-wishers, Edwina Elek, at right. (Hal Stokes photo)

Parishville Honors Dr. Thaler; 30 Years As Community Physician

BY HAL STOKES

PARISHVILLE — Thirty years ago the people of this community turned out in force to welcome their new doctor, a 40-year-old refugee who had escaped from the Gestapo in his native Austria and spent 10 years practicing medicine in Switzerland before coming to this country.

They had been without a doctor for four years. So when Dr. Max Thaler and his family arrived in the bitter cold of January 1950, nearly the entire village of 350 came to welcome him with open arms at a reception given in the town hall.

Last Saturday, Feb. 2, the townspeople turned out again. This time it was to honor Dr. Thaler at a surprise open house as he marked 30 years in the community.

Dr. Thaler, 70, and his wife, Angela, still live in the same house that they moved into when they arrived. The townspeople, anxious to attract a physician, formed a corporation in 1950 and raised \$5,000 to buy the house for the Thalers.

On Saturday, that house was filled with well-wishers.

Mutual Attraction

Apparently, the attraction between the Thalers and Parishville was mutual. After Dr. Duffy, the community's physician, died in 1946, the village was left without adequate medical care. In December 1949 the town fathers contacted the National Committee for Resettlement of Foreign Physicians and sent pastor Francis Rockwell to Manhattan to interview prospects.

The first and only doctor he saw was Dr. Thaler, who at the time had been the head physician for a children's camp in Narrowsburg, N.Y.

The Thalers were longing to escape New York City for the small-town at-

mosphere similar to St. Gallen, Switzerland, where they had lived for ten years after their escape from occupied Austria in 1938. The Gestapo had given them 48 hours to get out of their native land and they fled across the border and stumbled into St. Gallen, a small Alpine village where they grew accustomed to the snow as well as the people whom he cared for as a doctor.

Dr. Thaler still recalls the weather when he and Angela and their two daughters arrived in Parishville. "It was 40 below for about two weeks."

But if the temperature was frigid, the people certainly weren't. Mrs. Thaler, in her first letter to her family from the new Parishville home, described the warmth and friendliness she felt. Her parents eventually moved to Parishville in 1951 and lived there the rest of their lives. In 1953 the Thalers became U.S. citizens.

In those early days, the doctor charged \$2.50 for an office call.

His practice kept him "always busy," he recalls. The couple has worked together through the years, with Angela as nurse, bookkeeper, etc. "I never knew anything different," she says with pride.

Dr. Thaler still maintains his practice, although he did retire in 1979 as school physician for the Parishville-Hopkinton Central School.

The Thalers are the parents of four children: Ellen, Harmon, N.Y.; Joan, Potsdam; David, Potsdam; and Susan, Boulder, Colo.

Although the doctor, a 1934 graduate of the University of Vienna, undoubtedly has written many prescriptions during his career, he received a new one at the Saturday reception. It came in the form of an inscription on a cake and it read: "Rx Feb. 2, 1980 To Doctor and Angela, congratulations for 30 years, love and patients."

As Olympics Draw Near

Crane Musicians Take The Good With The Bad

Special to the
Courier and Freeman

"Our director asks us to be flexible and tolerant, but we are running out of flexibility and tolerance."

Those are the words of one member of the Crane Olympic Orchestra that will be providing ceremonial music for the XIII Winter Olympic Games in Lake Placid beginning next week.

Although her words reflect a flagging patience that she says is felt throughout the 100-member Olympic orchestra, others among the 550 musicians from the State University College at Potsdam

admit to being swept up in the thrill of their task.

After hearing some of their comments, it becomes evident that participating in the Olympics has its share of bad points along with its good points.

The 300-voice Crane Olympic Chorus, conducted by Brock McElheran, and the Crane Olympic Orchestra, under the direction of Richard Stephan, are providing all of the music for the Lake Placid Winter Games, Feb. 12-24. There will also be three Crane bands participating during the Games.

Lisa Leonardi, a violinist with the orchestra, said, "This is something that I will never forget for the rest of my life." But she added a different note when she said, "There is a lot of time wasted during rehearsals, mainly because of the lack of organization." She was joined by another violinist, Janine Aprigliano, in recalling an entire day that was spent at the Olympic Village in Raybrook, much of it just standing around. Ms. Leonardi added, "Now we will be going during the week and that means missing classes."

Troublesome Cold

Performing in the cold will be troublesome to the musicians, the two stated. Ms. Aprigliano noted that some of the heaters were not working properly and this caused unique problems for the performers. She said that she was unable to play a vibrato—a vibration of the sound caused by finger action on the strings—because her hands were too cold.

Both women also complained about the quality of the instruments they will be using, calling them "students' models."

Nonetheless, Ms. Aprigliano agreed that most of the musicians are pleased to participate in the ceremonies. "We are all looking forward to seeing the athletes that will make history," she said.

Allan Ploth, a member of the Olympic Chorus, said that singing in the cold is "one aspect in the Olympics that many are not looking forward to." But he called the Olympics a "once in a lifetime event" and said that the general feeling among the voice majors is one of pride and honor with an underlying tone of exhilaration.

Many in the chorus were disappointed, Ploth said, because they did not receive the official snowsuits that they were to perform in. Instead they were given capes and pairs of distinctive white "moon boots."

The orchestra members, however, did receive the promised suits, which are a sky blue color and have thin blue and white stripes on the sleeves. As the days lead up to the opening of the Winter Games, they can be seen proudly wearing them around Potsdam as they prepare for their part in the ceremonies.

School Superintendent Becomes Principal

Superintendent of Potsdam's Schools Dr. Carlos Gutierrez is filling in as high school principal this week, awaiting the arrival of the newly-hired principal, William LeForester.

Dr. Gutierrez said last week that LeForester's first day on the job will be next Monday. The interim principal, William Stephenson, finished his job Friday. Rather than hire a substitute principal for one week, the school superintendent said that he would move over to the high school principal's office.

In another school-related matter, the school board will meet tonight (Tuesday) at 7:30 p.m. in the high school cafeteria to conduct their monthly business session.



OLYMPIC REHEARSAL—The Crane Olympic Orchestra and Olympic Chorus played to a full house in Potsdam College's Hooper Hall Monday night when they gave an open rehearsal to the community. They played selections that they will be playing in Lake Placid next week as the official music makers for the XIII Winter Games. (Hal Stokes Photo)

Country Entertainer Dick Curless Named King For Tri-Town Carnival

BRASHER FALLS—Dick Curless, a top country artist and a professional entertainer since 1950, has been chosen King of the 15th annual Tri-Town Winter Carnival which will be held Feb. 14-15-16-17.

Dick entertained during his early years in the New England area at Grange Halls, doing minstrel shows and

he had his own sponsored radio show at the age of 17, under the guiding hand of "Slim Clark." In 1950, he made his first recording entitled "The Coast of Maine." Later he joined in the ABC Network Radio Show, playing rhythm guitar, for the "Lone Pine Mountaineer," originating out of Bangor, Maine.

In 1957 he won the Arthur Godfrey Talent Scout Television Show. This was the biggest radio and TV show going. He continued to entertain everywhere but was content with the Northeast area. Curless started recording L.P.'s in Boston and his first real western album was "Songs of the Open Country" and his first single "Hillbilly Heaven" and "The Deck of Cards."

In 1966 he joined Buck Owens. Curless was one of the originals of the "Buck Owens All American Music Show" that toured the U.S. and Canada, appearing from the Hollywood Bowl to most metropolitan areas in between to three encores at "Carnegie Hall. He also was a part of the "Buck Owens Ranch Show," a television syndicated series taped at WKY studios in Oklahoma City. During this time he continued to guest on other TV shows, record more singles and albums, while working packaged shows with people like Merle Haggard, Freddie Hart, Wynn Stewart, Red Simpson, Tommy Collins, Kay Adams, and The Buckaroos (the originals) and the list goes on and on.

Curless was introduced into the world of radio and television advertising in 1977. Many area people have heard his "We Can't Wait for Tomorrow" series country version for Alcoa—The Aluminum Company of America—which premiered in January of 1977.

Arson Suspected Again In Potsdam Fire Friday

Village police suspect that it was arson that caused a fire in the hallway of an apartment located over the Electrolix store on Market Street early Friday morning.

The fire, which police said was set in two different places, was put out by Potsdam volunteers with very little damage to the building owned by Kay Williams.

Police said they were called at 2:20 a.m. by James Becker who lives in an apartment at 51 Market St., one floor up over the Electrolix Store in downtown Potsdam.

He reportedly told police that he heard glass break and smelled gasoline before he discovered the fire outside his door in the hallway.

He reportedly told police that some of his friends thought they had the fire out, but police called the Potsdam Fire Department and rescue squad when they arrived on the scene and discovered that it was still going.

By 2:45 a.m. the fire was out and everything was under control, police said. The fire had been set in two different places, trash outside Becker's door and in a trash room off the hall, officers said.

The police department was investigating the fire Friday morning.

The fire comes a week after a blaze that swept through two apartments and four businesses. Arson has been suspected as the cause of that blaze.

Youth Center Issues Update

The Potsdam Youth Center, Inc. directed by Anna Whalen, has been very busy recently. It's "Hire-a-Youth" project is now underway, staffed by Carol Beamer and Scott Basil. The program is based at the Potsdam High School, so as to be readily available to students wishing to register for part-time jobs. The office is next to the nurse's room in the older part of the building. Although housed in the school, the program is not school-related, and any inquiries about the project should be directed to 265-4840, not the high school number. Dr. Carlos Gutierrez and the high school staff have been most accommodating in helping the group locate in the school, program sources said.

On Jan. 25 the Youth Center received a second \$2,000 from the Village of Potsdam to use in implementing the Hire-a-Youth Program. For its part, the Youth Center is committed to help raise another \$2,000 themselves.

At a meeting to discuss fundraising ideas at the Campus School Jan. 24, interested citizens and students shared their thoughts. Suggestions for a casino night, coffee house socials, and the production of the play, "Godspell," are currently being entertained. A Leap Year Dance will be held Feb. 29 at the high school gym. "First Infinity" will provide the music.

On Jan. 17, the Hire-a-Youth Program sponsored a stress management workshop, directed by Rosalie Hunter, nursing instructor at Canton ATC. Ms. Hunter will repeat the program on Feb. 5 at 8 p.m. in the high school cafeteria. Students are especially encouraged to attend; the community is invited, free of charge.

Carol Beamer, director of the Hire-a-Youth Program, attended a three-day seminar at Star Lake Campus from Jan. 25-27. The workshop was designed to interest teachers and administrators in Project HEAR, a program developed to increase awareness of sex-role stereotyping in the educational process. The students, under the direction of Scott Basil, have prepared to participate in Potsdam's Ice Carnival. They have chosen to paint a window at Super Duper cafeteria to depict Emerald City from "The Wizard of Oz." They also planned to

enter a float in the Ice Carnival Parade.

Any questions or comments regarding the program may be directed to: Carol Beamer, "Hire-a-Youth" Program, Box 71, Civic Center, Potsdam, or by calling 265-4840.

This Story Not For The Birds

BY BETSY BAKER

Robins in February? Sure, it sounds hard to believe, but you can take this reporter's word for it—they're there, right in Gordon Hartle's back lot, clearly visible in the fading light of a February afternoon.

Hartle, who lives on the May Road outside the Village of Potsdam, called the Courier and Freeman Monday to say that he had sighted the robins earlier this winter near a spring on his property and that they had been there ever since.

"Would we like to take photographs?" Hartle asked. How could we turn down an opportunity like that?

Shortly thereafter, around 4:30 p.m., this reporter was following Hartle about a quarter of a mile through his hilly, wooded property toward the spring. Other birds, chickadees and woodpeckers, were either visible or audible, but at first there was no sign of the elusive robins.

Then they began to appear, some 15 to 20 in all, rising from the trees and cat-tails around the spring and flying off over the meadow, and a prettier sight all you spring-hungry snow bunnies never saw.

Photographing the robins proved frustrating; they seemed more shy in February than they do in May, and most unwilling to pose prettily on a tree branch.

Nevertheless, they're there—real, genuine, red-breasted robins, not grosbeaks, but good, old-fashioned sign-of-spring robins, just when we all thought it would be above zero forever. Hartle believes the birds were attracted to his property because of the spring, which does not freeze over completely. The birds drink and bathe in the spring, and feed on cherries on the ground nearby.