

# 'The Way' In Potsdam: Mind Control In The High School?

BY HAL STOKES

The modest red bungalow on the Waverly Street extension is very tidy looking — set off slightly from neighboring homes by large pine trees, the shutters white, the newly-raked yard free of autumn leaves. But until recently, the house at 67 Waverly Street was the center of local activity for The Way, a religious movement denounced by some as a cult and feared by parents who claim it steals their children from them through sophisticated mind-control techniques. In nearby Massena, the group has been in the eye of a maelstrom of bad publicity in recent weeks.

at the little red house on Waverly Street any longer. Within the past several days the "Way Home," as it is called within the movement, has moved to Circle Drive along with the local leader, a school teacher who works for the Board of Cooperative Educational Services in the Potsdam High School. The teacher, 31-year-old Steve Tully, refused to be interviewed about his role — and The Way's — in the community. But it is known that he is a leader for the movement in Potsdam, and that he is in daily contact with scores of young people as a teacher of the handicapped in a BOCES work-study program centered in Potsdam High School.

Chances are, however, that it wasn't Tully it would be someone else. The Way's leadership, locally, has changed frequently over the years. Before Tully, the movement was guided in Potsdam by Mike Strauhal. A woman named Cindy Mauchly was a key figure, too. But they are gone now, and an ex-member says that is a practice of The Way: to keep the leaders moving, to prevent them from settling down.

The location of the Way Home in Potsdam has changed many times, as well. At various times within recent years, The Way has been centered at houses on Main Street, Elm Street and Washington Street. Yet if the leadership and the location for the movement have changed often, the presence of The Way in Potsdam has not. Perhaps because it is a college town where eccentric lifestyles and beliefs are better tolerated than in a community like Massena, the movement has caused little concern and few raised eyebrows here.

Moving Into The High Schools But where it once made inroads on the college campus in the 1970's, The Way has lately been reaching out to a younger and more susceptible audience in the nation's high schools. Its appeal is strong, say critics, especially to bright, idealistic young people who may be looking for answers to troubling questions. So what is so wrong about a bit of Bible study, anyway, particularly guided by this benign-appearing group who offer unconditional love and acceptance for followers? What is wrong, say critics, is that members must trade that love for unconditional and unquestioning belief in The Way's doctrine. In short, they are brainwashed just as prisoners of war in Korea were. "They sort of take your mind away behind your back," says one ex-member of The Way, a graduate of St. Lawrence University who was once in the Canton-Potsdam branch and who had planned to return to this area to lead the movement, as Tully is now. She is 24-year-old Carol Brandt, a 1979 graduate of SLU who finally left

The Way only after she was "kidnaped" by her parents and "deprogrammed," a process she described in detail in two lengthy telephone interviews with The Courier and Freeman. "Their goals aren't so bad," she said of The Way, "but they deceive people. They're getting rich. I don't believe anybody in The Way is operating with their free mind." Miss Brandt was once one of those gifted, affluent young people with a lot of questions — hers particularly about religion. Today, the former biology student is working with a network to help ex-members of many cults. She is not afraid to use her name, but she

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## LAST WEEK'S WEATHER

	Hi	Lo	Pcp
Tues.	44	37	0
Wed.	51	30	0
Thurs.	64	28	0
Fri.	56	37	0
Sat.	35	25	2.5 SN
Sun.	48	22	TR RN
Mon.	50	21	TR RN

# Courier Freeman



Ham Ferry travels a long way to bowl. Story, page 13.

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## Major Water Rate Hike Is Suggested

Trustee Paul Claffey dropped a small bombshell Monday night at a hearing on proposed increases in village water rates when he suggested raising the rates to \$3 per 1,000 gallons now, instead of the 20 percent proposed for 1982 with other increases to follow. A handful of residents attended the hearing; some had predicted a large crowd. Claffey said the proposed 20 percent increase, from \$1.17 per 1,000 gallons to \$1.40 would be "little more than bringing the rate up to date with the rate of inflation." Claffey said bond financing for the village's \$5 million-plus water filtration plant might be more easily obtained if the village can demonstrate to potential bond buyers that it is willing to take the necessary steps to pay the construction and operating costs of the plant. Village Attorney Richard Dudley suggested to Claffey that a sharp increase would unduly penalize local water users next year, while the plant's construction will provide long-term benefits for all village residents. The financial analyst whose firm will be handling the bond marketing told Claffey that permanent financing may not be completed for five years, that financing will be accomplished in

the interim through bond anticipation notes, which presently carry a ten percent interest rate for one year. The village may be able to obtain 25 or 30 year financing for the filtration plant project, instead of the 20 year financing often required at present, according to the analyst. Other water rate increases will be required, the analyst said, and while he stopped short of naming a figure, it could approach the \$3 per 1,000 gallons cited by Claffey. One resident, Larry Demo spoke at the hearing. Demo, who owns Potsdam Laundry and Dry Cleaning, described himself as the third largest user of water in Potsdam after the two colleges. "I don't mind paying my fair share," Demo said. "I didn't ask for a new water treatment plant, the state mandated it, and it wouldn't make a difference to my operation if the water is pure or like it is now. "But if my water cost goes from \$8,000 to \$24,000 how could I face my customers to tell them a three-piece suit has gone from \$5 to \$15?" Demo continued. Demo maintained that the proposed increase would place a heavier burden on the village's large water users than on residents who use far smaller amounts of water, and he said

the burden would fall on the few businesses in the village that are large users. "The colleges are big users of water — they don't pay taxes — I pay taxes," Demo said. The proposed increase in rates is necessary to finance the filtration plant, village officials have said. Both real estate taxpaying and tax exempt water users pay for village water, which is metered. The last increase was in 1976. At the sewer rate increase hearing, which followed the first hearing, Village Treasurer Mary Welch explained that payments on the sewer plant construction bond issue are due until 1991, that some \$847,000 has yet to be paid off on that bond issue. Mrs. Welch said the expected \$52,000 annually in increased revenues from the rate increase would go into the sewer plant reserve fund to pay off the bond issue. Demo maintained that a smaller increase will still allow repayment and he questioned why the proposed rate increase is greater than he termed necessary. Proposed is a jump from 92 cents per 1,000 gallons to \$1.10. Passage of a local law, which would go into effect Jan. 1, 1982, is required to raise the rates.



CONGRATULATIONS — Town Supervisor Leslie Cook, left, accepts congratulations on his re-election from Alan Reasoner, a colleague on the town council who had challenged him in this year's campaign. Cook was re-

lected to another two-year term and Reasoner, falling in his bid, will remain on the board. Election results on pages 5, 13 this week. (Hal Stokes photo)

## LaForty Steps In With Taxi Replacement

Potsdam may soon have a public transportation system to replace Robar's Taxi, which went out of business last Wednesday. Potsdam Mayor James Pennock said Monday that Leon LaForty,

owner of LaForty Bus Lines, Inc., Oxford, plans to present village officials with a proposal for local service by two vans and a car. LaForty spoke with Mayor Pennock and Village Administrator Sanford D.

Dewey on Monday. Robar's went out of business last Wednesday in the wake of a long distance transportation scheme that left local college students stranded over an October long weekend. Robar's fired Robert Londraville, the consultant they say was responsible for the scheme, and Robar's announced that they plan to refund money to students who paid in advance for a ride they did not receive, but the taxi firm was unable to continue its operation. LaForty plans to propose two vans and a car for local service, according to Mayor Pennock, to operate either on a dial-a-ride basis or on a pre-arranged schedule at locations in the village. The mayor said LaForty has the necessary permits from the state Department of Transportation for the operation. He would require a local taxi operator's permit from the village. Investigators from the DOT were in Potsdam recently collecting information on the failed long distance plan of Robar's; they said the plan envisioned by Robar's would have required DOT permits.

Pennock said he has received numerous calls from local residents on the lack of taxi service. The mayor said the Village Bus, operated when the colleges are in session, is not only for students. Village residents may ride that bus as well.

## Giannell Offers To Settle Feud

A. Steven Giannell has offered to settle his lawn mowing feud with the Village of Potsdam, but village officials are unlikely to agree to Giannell's terms for settlement, and Giannell has apparently not contacted any village officials directly with his proposal. Giannell sued the village for \$7 million, charging that the village attempted to force him to mow a vacant lot he owns on Bay Street and that the village enforced its mowing ordinance in a discriminatory manner because Giannell is foreign born. Giannell says 2,000 pine tree seedlings are planted on the lot. In August State Supreme Court Justice Edmund Shea granted Giannell a temporary injunction prohibiting the village from forcing Giannell to mow until a trial can be scheduled, which could be two to three years. And late last month Justice John Dier refused to dismiss Giannell's suit, citing the state's anti-

discrimination policy. Offers "Reasonable Solution" Citing his victories in court, Giannell, in a letter to the editor of the Courier and Freeman, said he is prepared to be "unanimous" and "reasonable" in offering a solution to the matter "to the taxpayers of Potsdam and to the Potsdam Board of Trustees." Giannell wants the village to admit that his lot is farm land and "as such exempted from the application of the provisions of the village mowing ordinance," and he wants "no further harassment on (the) part of village officials" and "no further attempts of selective ordinance enforcement." He also wants the village to negotiate with him "regarding just compensation for the past violations of my civil rights and regarding proper compensation for the time I had to spend on legal work to protect my civil rights." Giannell has defended himself in court in this matter. And Giannell wants the village to publicly reprimand any public official who "at any time regarding this matter showed conduct unbecoming a public servant."

Village Has Had No Word Both Potsdam Mayor James Pennock and Village Attorney Richard Dudley said Giannell has not contacted them with his proposal. Mayor Pennock said Monday that he has "no intention of taking him up on his proposal." The mayor said: "It is extraordinary to me that a person who appears to be so concerned with law and order would go to such means to avoid the application of the village code to some property he owns."

Giannell warned that if "defendants (James) Pennock, (Sanford) Dewey, (Herb) Crump and (Richard) Dudley do not accept these reasonable conditions" and if the trustees and village taxpayers "do not exert their influence on the defendants to stop pursuing their egotistical ego trip," village officials, trustees and Potsdam taxpayers "can blame themselves for all future consequences." In a related matter, Giannell said in his letter that he expects to be joined in his legal action against the village by the state Attorney General's office. Philip Wardwell, of the Watertown offices of the Attorney General, said his office has received papers from Giannell. Wardwell said he will read the papers and determine "if it's anything our office has jurisdiction over."

Old Church Will Be Filled Again At Bucks Bridge BUCK'S BRIDGE — The old Methodist church here, vacant for nearly 20 years, will once again be filled with worshippers on Nov. 22, when a "back home" service will be held at 2:30 p.m. The service will mark a local effort to revitalize the church and to once again make it place for regular weekly worship. At this point, volunteers say that a pastor is needed to serve the congregation. For the special service Nov. 22, Rev. Ray Morgan, Morley, will be the speaker. The old building has been revived by a group of interested people from Bucks Bridge, Morley, and Lisbon who donated glass, paint and "a lot of hard work," said one of the volunteers. A coffee fellowship will follow the Nov. 22 service.

## Trash Rules Issued

Fall clean-up days for the Village of Potsdam have ended and the Department of Public Works crews will not pick up any types of material and debris left at curbside.

In the preceding two week period trash and debris of any type was taken by the Village crews. However, from Nov. 9 on, pick-ups will be limited only to leaves, refuse and garbage which has been properly packed or bagged. Refuse containers can not be larger than 26 gallons or weigh more than 50 pounds. Newspapers, magazines, and cardboard must be tied in tight bundles. Wood and limbs have to be tied in bundles weighing no more than 15 pounds and not more than four feet in length. Oil drums, baskets, wooden or cardboard boxes can not be used as refuse containers. Violation notices will be served on residents not complying and a five day grace period will be allowed before an appearance ticket is issued for Village Court. Materials resulting from repair, construction, alteration, excavations, trees, concrete, brick, lath, roofing materials and chemicals will not be collected. Violation of the Garbage and Refuse Chapter 60, Village Code, can result in a fine of \$50 for each offense.

## Old Church Will Be Filled Again At Bucks Bridge

Bus Driver Says He Was 'Passed Over' A substitute bus driver in the Potsdam Central School District plans to notify the school board by letter that he has a grievance with the administration over hiring policy. The driver, James Gotham, 23 Pine St., was not hired recently when two full time driver's slots were filled by the district; Gotham said he has been attempting to find out why. In a letter to the editor of the Courier and Freeman, Gotham outlined his grievance, saying he has "already determined that probably nothing will be done about this," but adding that he "would like the residents of the Potsdam School District to know what my grievance is." Gotham said he has had a school bus driver's license since 1968, has six years' driving experience, three in the PCS district. "I have had no accidents nor received any tickets," Gotham continued. "I know of no complaints concerning my work." Gotham said he believes he should have been recommended for one of the full time positions filled last month. Gotham said he has talked to both Gary Snell, district transportation coordinator and to district superintendent Kenneth Daniels, and that he is not satisfied with the explanations given by the two for not hiring him. According to Gotham's letter, Snell said "he did not believe he owed me an explanation of why I was not hired but stated that many factors went into the decision including certain 'intangibles.'" Snell also told Gotham that substitutes have no rights or expectations of a full time position according to any policy of seniority, according to Gotham's letter. Gotham said in his letter that

Daniels "would not give me an explanation of why I was hired and could not tell me where I was deficient." Gotham's letter stated: "Whenever the criteria by which a full time position is filled are not consistent and known by everyone, then this leaves the door open to possible charges of discrimination, prejudice, favoritism, or nepotism concerning the appointment." Snell, who made the decision not to hire Gotham, said Monday that he has spoken with Gotham on the matter. "He feels personally he should have been hired — that's his opinion," Snell said, adding that he had interviewed seven people and sent five names to Daniels for another round of interviews. Snell said: "In my opinion he (Gotham) was not the best qualified person for the job, it was a judgment call." The district lost two full time drivers this fall, one to retirement and one in a non-school-related traffic fatality. One of the full time drivers hired was Tad Evans, nephew of Stewart Talcott, another employee of the district. Snell said that Evans had been hired last spring to replace a driver who died, and let go in the fall, when two positions were cut. Evans was rehired last month. Snell said that Talcott was not involved in the re-hiring of his nephew last month, although he was involved in Evans' hiring last year. And Snell said that if Evans had not been re-hired when the position opened Evans might have had a grievance based on seniority.

## Bus Driver Says He Was 'Passed Over'

School Board To Discuss Buses At Meeting Scheduled Tonight The Potsdam Central School Board of Education, at the regular monthly meeting scheduled for tonight, will hear a report from elementary school principal Gary Snell concerning the propane-fueled buses the district has been operating this year. Snell is the administrator in charge of pupil transportation. Two problems encountered so far with the alternate-fuel buses are a carburetion problem and one bus that caught fire. The fire was ignited by the tankfire which was the result of the timing being off and, according to Snell, could also have happened to a bus fueled by gasoline. The carbure-

tion problem, however, is a direct result of the propane fuel, and has put one bus temporarily out of service. Also on the agenda for the meeting are reports from Superintendent of Schools Kenneth Daniels on Superintendent's Day, held Oct. 30, and on a superintendent's meeting held in Albany last weekend. Also during the meeting will be a report from the Program-Policy Committee concerning the by-laws of the high school athletic Booster Club. The by-laws were requested from the club by the committee at a meeting held earlier this year.

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