

Legislators Using Kitchin As 'Whipping Boy,' LaBaff Says

BY JIM REAGEN
CANTON — St. Lawrence County legislators are using the Social Services Director Donald Kitchin and his programs as the "whipping boy" of the county budget, "slashing" programs like the handicapped children's program because county legislators know such cuts are popular, Norwood Legislator Ernest LaBaff said.

"I'm concerned about slashing all these programs," LaBaff said last Friday.

LaBaff said he plans to try to bring the cuts to the attention of the county legislature when it meets Monday night for a hearing on the 1983 budget. "I'm going to make an effort to stop it."

"I think there's a move against Don Kitchin," director of the county Social Services Department, LaBaff said. "He's been a whipping boy ever since I first got on the county legislature."

Kitchin "Able And Skilled" "Don Kitchin's a very able and highly skilled administrator," LaBaff said. "He just has unpopular duties. He does his job the way it's supposed to be done."

LaBaff said other legislators have made numerous cuts in the department's staff, cut programs, and even tried to take away the department's attorney during the budget work.

"There are so many people who are against the Social Services programs, it makes a legislator very popular," LaBaff said. "That's a crowd I do not wish to be a part of."

Typical of the cuts, LaBaff said, is a move to abolish a program run by the Social Services Department which provides three social workers who work with families of handicapped children.

The handicapped children's program is being transferred to the county Health-Mental Health Department, but the three social worker positions are being abolished.

Legislators say that currently both the Health and Social Services department have been running their own programs, but Social Services provided additional services for handicapped children who met income re-

quirements. Legislators who favored the cuts said the county can not afford to give additional services to poor residents who already receive assistance from social workers through their regular public assistance programs.

Poor People Unpopular But LaBaff said legislators want to cut the programs because poor people are unpopular.

LaBaff said that if legislators don't want to provide extra programs to assist poor people, they could use the same arguments for the entire welfare program.

"These children are going to be losing services," LaBaff said. "Somebody's got to keep an eye out for the underprivileged and the handicapped."

The county is currently suffering from severe economic problems from the recession, LaBaff said. But

Women Educators Meet

The Lambda Chapter of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society, an honorary society for women educators, met Nov. 6 at the Town House Restaurant in Potsdam.

A brunch was held at 10:30 a.m. followed by a business meeting. Rita Murphy, president, presided at the business meeting.

Ruth Chisholm, Canton, was winner of the Afghan drawing. Proceeds go to the Lambda Chapter Scholarship Fund.

Request for transfer of membership was accepted from Georgiana Wransh, Whispering Pines, N.C., formerly of Richville.

Resignations were accepted from Charlotte Cullen, Potsdam; Florence Bowen, Massena; and Rosemary Dolan, Massena.

Mrs. Murphy, announced the applications are needed for the Friends Of Education Award. This award is given to a person who has exhibited outstanding service to the field of education. The applicants need not be members of Delta Kappa Gamma.

legislators want to chop out social programs at a time when they are needed most.

"It's being done on the federal level, on the state level, and now they're trying to do it on the local level," LaBaff said.

But LaBaff noted that local legislators are trying to sell the cuts as consolidating programs that are being duplicated by different county departments, even though the handicapped program is not a duplication.

Criminal Mischief Charged

NORFOLK — State police in Massena charged a Spencerport, N.Y. man with criminal mischief after he allegedly broke a pool cue at a local bar, police said.

Thomas K. Miller, 26, of Spencerport, was arrested at 2 a.m. last Thursday on a charge of fourth degree criminal mischief, police said.

Miller was arraigned before Norfolk Justice John Tanski, pleaded guilty, and was released after payment of a \$100 fine, police said.



STUDENTS VISIT — Carlton Stickney, in background, president of the Stockholm Historical Organization, is shown above explaining items in the Stockholm Museum

to fourth and fifth graders from St. Lawrence Central School, Brasher Falls, during the students' recent visit to the museum. (Mildred Jenkins photo)

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