

LAST WEEK'S WEATHER

	Hi	Lo	Pcp
Tues.	37	8	3.5s
Wed.	28	7	tr.s
Thurs.	22	-10	0
Fri.	30	7	1.0s
Sat.	24	-1	0.2s
Sun.	12	-6	tr.s
Mon.	4	1	1.5s

Courier Freeman



Mayor blasted for interfering. See story this week.

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ROAD FLOODED — High waters caused the road west of the Hewittville Bridge to be closed for a time last week. Above, Town of Potsdam crews work to make the road passable. (Ron Robertson photo)

With Code Enforcement Claffey Interfering, Murphy Claims

BY RON ROBERTSON
Saying "the mayor has been putting his body where he doesn't belong," Potsdam Village Trustee Richard Murphy criticized Mayor Paul Claffey for apparently interfering with the duties of the building inspector.

Controversy erupted at the Monday night regular meeting of the trustees concerning the enforcement of alleged building code violations stemming back to 1983.

Murphy blasted the mayor for apparently interfering with Building Inspector Herbert Crump's enforcement of building codes on a 33 Market St. building owned by Charles and Eileen Gerrish.

Crump was present at Monday night's meeting and to protect the trustees with a letter in late December 1984 for alleged violations of the state building codes when the building was renovated in 1982-83.

The building currently houses U.S. armed forces recruiters.

The Gerrishes were fined \$500 for building code violations as a result

of a September 1983 village court trial.

The alleged violations, Crump said Monday, have not been corrected, despite the court findings.

The Gerrishes face a court appearance Thursday. Village Attorney Peter Lekki told the board the case would likely be adjourned until a later trial date.

Murphy criticized Claffey's actions including a letter the mayor sent Monday morning to the New York State Department of State asking for a report on the Gerrish building.

A state code officer was in Potsdam several months ago at the request of the village to inspect the Gerrish building, but the official reportedly said that only the local code enforcement authority could and the authority to inspect buildings in the village.

"The mayor has been putting his body into places he doesn't belong," Murphy said.

Crump told the board that he has at times had problems enforcing building codes because of the actions of the mayor.

The mayor, according to Crump, has been attempting to intercede in the case against the Gerrishes.

The mayor did not respond to the accusations.

Trustee Girard Mulherin told Crump that he should enforce the codes despite whatever actions that mayor might take.

"If you know you have the authority and if the mayor intercedes, you just ignore him," Mulherin said.

But, Crump said, "I hope that the mayor and the village board realize that they are my ultimate bosses."

The building inspector can en-

force the codes, but "only as much as the mayor and village board back me, or I am lost," said Crump.

"That authority that everyone thinks I have is contingent on the village board," Crump concluded.

Dragged Out

Murphy alleged that enforcement of Gerrish's alleged violations has been dragged out after two years, although "it was obvious from the word go" that the building was in violation.

Murphy authored a resolution calling for the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code to be strictly enforced in the village and that the mayor leave enforcement up to the building inspector.

After about a minute of discussion, Murphy later withdrew his motion, saying that he would offer it again at in a "more sophisticated" version.

Although Trustee Mulherin said that he would like to see strict enforcement of the state codes, he also indicated that he could see nothing wrong with the mayor's request for a report from the department of state in Albany.

"Paul (Claffey) is the mayor and he's got the right to write a letter to anyone he wants to down there," Mulherin said.

In his resolution, in a sentiment that met with the approval of other trustees, Murphy asked that "the case be brought to trial as speedily as possible."

Mulherin added that "our instructions to Peter (Village Attorney Lekki) are that we want the law to be enforced." Lekki will be prosecuting the case against the Gerrishes.

Water Receding, But Flooding Problems Persist

BY RON ROBERTSON
HEWITTVILLE — Flooding of the Racquette River in Hewittville has subsided, officials said Monday, but at least one family's home remains in high water.

Potsdam town highway Superintendent Donald Jones said Monday morning that the river in Hewittville was "going down pretty good" after intensive work last Friday by town crews and employees of Raquette Hydro Power Ltd., the firm that operates the hydroelectric project in Hewittville.

Malcolm Preston, a managing partner in the hydro firm, said Monday the problem is corrected in Hewittville as a result of work Friday by "his in cooperation with the Town of Potsdam."

Preston said Raquette Hydro crews removed the obstructions on the power project to allow the water to flow more freely over the dam and relieve the pressure that forced water around the side.

"If anybody has any problems," Preston said, "they're certainly welcome to get on touch with us."

Preston said that incident was reported to authorities "as required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)."

VerSchneider said he had contacted the FERC last week. That agency, which licenses all hydroelectric projects, had inspected the Hewittville project last summer and reported that the dam meets all federal specifications, VerSchneider said.

Based on that inspection, VerSchneider said the FERC decided the flooding of the road and private property in Hewittville was not the fault of the dam, but was a result of the large amount of water flowing through the Racquette River.

Town crews were at work Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday digging a ditch to re-route the overflow so that it did not cross the

road. Crews also placed sandbags along the flooded section to slow the flow of water across the road.

The Hewittville Road on the east side of the bridge was flooded. The road was closed until late Friday.

Town Supervisor Leslie Cook had declared that section of Potsdam a disaster area Thursday night, according to St. Lawrence County Emergency Services Coordinator Patrick VerSchneider. That action would make Potsdam eligible for any emergency relief aid that might be granted to flood-stricken areas.

VerSchneider noted that damage assessment has been underway this past week throughout the county. Towns of Pierrefield, Colton, Parishville, and Potsdam, he said, have reported road damage.

Those areas, he said, could be eligible for federal supplemental highway funds to repair the damage.

For private landowners,

VerSchneider said "St. Lawrence County is receiving Small Business Administration assistance for any private landowner whose property was damaged" by the recent flooding.

Water Still High

One Hewittville homeowner was still battling high waters at his residence early this week.

Almost directly across the road from the hydro project and in an area like a natural catchbasin, William Smith's home and yard were flooded all last week, he said.

Smith said he hadn't seen such flooding in the almost 40 years he has lived there.

The back yard, he said, was covered with ice and water, while two sump pumps were working to keep the water in the basement from getting any higher.

The house's septic tank, Smith said, was flooded, preventing his family from flushing the toilet or using any of the drains.

Village Benefits As High Water Boosts Power Sales

BY RON ROBERTSON
With St. Lawrence County towns and private property owners recovering from recent flooding, at least the Village of Potsdam is seeing some benefit from the high water flow through the sale of hydroelectric power to Niagara Mohawk.

However, according to the village's mayor, the large water volumes might not be helping the aging wooden dam on the west side of the Racquette River flowing through Potsdam.

While the final figures for sale of hydroelectric power in late December and early January were not yet available, Mayor Paul Claffey said Friday the village's hydro plant has been producing a steady 650 kilowatts.

The maximum ever produced by the plant was some 670 kilowatts, the mayor said.

The village, Claffey said, "can't complain about the availability of water" with the rate flowing about 7,000 cubic feet a minute.

"My goodness, we've got a lot of water," the mayor said.

Even without the income from Niagara Mohawk for the last weeks of December and the first weeks of the new year, Claffey said in 1984 the plant produced the expected \$220,000 worth of power.

Added to the \$60,000 the village board set aside in the general fund, the village will be able to pay the almost \$300,000 in debt service it owes on the plant. That payment is due later this month, Claffey said.

A low water flow over the past

several months was offset, Claffey said, by a lack of ice congesting the plant's intake area.

Last year the hydro facility was inoperative for almost two months.

Special Meetings Set By Trustees

The Potsdam Village Board has scheduled two special meetings this week, one dealing with the budget process for the next fiscal year, and the other dealing with possible alternatives to the village's current administrative structure.

At 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, the board will meet in open session to discuss the details of the budget process for determining the fiscal plan for 1985-86 and the priorities for scheduling maintenance on village streets and buildings.

At 7:30 p.m. Thursday, the board will discuss alternatives to the village's present administrative structure.

Possible changes include combining the administrator and treasurer positions, engaging an engineer-manager to supervise all physical plant activities, and assigning certain village administrator duties to an assistant to the mayor.

The second meeting will also be held in open session. Both meetings will be held in the Civic Center boardroom.

because of ice blockages.

Dam Concerns

In other water-related matters, the mayor said that during a trip to Washington, D.C. later this month, he will visit officials to try to seek federal funds to rebuild the wooden west dam in the village.

From his researches, Claffey said he has discovered wooden dams usually last between 20 and 30 years.

Potsdam's dam, he said, was built almost 50 years ago.

It would like some \$700,000 to \$800,000 to build a new, concrete dam, Claffey said.

The Village of Potsdam is already too far in debt on the hydroelectric and water treatment plant projects to seriously consider taking on such a major renovation.

If the wooden dam — for which the mayor said he can find no design specifications — gives way, not only will there be some flooding downstream, but the intake to the water treatment plant on the other side of the river would be left some three feet out of the water.

While in Washington, the mayor said he will consult with an organization called the Wood Council, a lobbying group, "to see what we can expect out of a 50-year-old wooden dam."

Clarkson Shares Air Force Contract For \$8 Million

Clarkson is one of eight universities that will be sharing a five-year, \$8,236,000 contract with the U.S. Air Force to research artificial intelligence (AI).

Under the agreement, Clarkson will be receiving about \$100,000 a year for the next five years.

The AI consortium, sponsored by the U.S. Air Force's Rome Air Development Center (RADC) has four main goals: to improve the Air Force's technical AI abilities; to improve the training of Air Force technicians and scientists; to stimulate business involvement in AI research and development; and to establish a productive, cooperative relationship among institutions distinguished by their research in the field.

Scientists and engineers believe AI techniques will enable them to develop advanced computer systems that not only process vast amounts of information, but also interpret, predict, analyze, and explain such data.

The consortium was founded as part of the RADC's long-range plan to become a center of artificial intelligence research, a field expected to have a significant impact on computer technology in both the military and private sectors.

Artificial intelligence refers to the application of computer systems to problems that could previously only be solved by human intelligence.

The two principal investigators at Clarkson are Professor Robert Meyer and Professor Susan Conry, both members of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. Professor David Bray, dean of Clarkson's Educational Computing System, is also

involved with the project.

The Clarkson professors will be primarily involved with the areas of distributed problem solving, which involves solving problems when computation is distributed over several different computer processors. These processors could be in widely separated geographical areas.

Part of their research will be devoted to determining how a group of processors can come to a common assessment of what a problem is and how to solve it.

One practical application of the research will be monitoring communication networks, such as a telephone system.

A network of computers would determine whether or not the system is functioning properly and how to correct malfunctions. Such monitoring is currently carried out by individual persons.

The Air Force is interested in the research because it is essential that its communication systems function completely at all times and not be interrupted for repairs.

Clarkson is supporting the AI research by purchasing a \$100,000 Symbolics LISP computer.

Other universities involved in the project include prime contractor Syracuse University, Colgate University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rochester Institute of Technology, State University of New York at Buffalo, the University of Rochester, and the University of Massachusetts.

Fire Department Needs \$8,000 For New Truck

The Potsdam Fire Department is expecting delivery of its new pumper/tanker by mid or late January, but some \$8,000 is lacking in the department's fund to buy the fire truck.

According to Fire Chief Steve Miles, the \$65,000 truck, manufactured by the Pierre Thibault firm of Canada, will arrive sometime in January, or possibly early in February.

However, the chief said, the department is still trying to raise funds for the remainder of the purchase price.

A coin card fund drive, he said, is currently underway, but the cards will not be collected until sometime in March.

So the fire company is soliciting donations toward the purchase of the truck, Miles said. Donations may be sent to P.O. Box 756, Potsdam, or dropped off at the fire station, he said.

The truck, Miles said, will have a 1,800 gallon capacity and feature a 750-gallon mid-ship pump.



QUICK RESPONSE — Quick response by the Potsdam, Norwood, and Racquette River fire departments was responsible for preventing a major fire Jan. 2 at Elevation Motors on the Potsdam-Norwood Road. Firefighters reported that a heat gun caused sparks which ignited a rag and some paint thinner, resulting in the blaze. The fire was confined to a single bay of the shop area. (Ron Robertson photo)

Info Hotline Highlights State Financial Aid Week

Gov. Mario Cuomo has signed a proclamation declaring Jan. 7-11 as Financial Aid Awareness Week in New York State. The week is being sponsored by the New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association, representing all sectors of the higher education community.

The goal of Financial Aid Awareness Week is to assist college-bound students and their parents in their quest for information concerning Financial Aid and their eligibility requirements.

"It is fitting that the State with the first and — currently — largest student grant, scholarship and loan program recognize the importance that (Financial Aid) plays in the access, choice, and utilization of post-secondary education," Gov. Cuomo indicated in his proclamation.

Members of the New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association (NYSFAAA), comprised of over 750 Financial Aid Administrators from over 350 New

York State Post-Secondary Institutions will be available during Financial Aid Awareness Week (Jan. 7-11) to offer advice to students, parents, and high school counselors at its toll free Financial Aid Hotline: 1-800-FIN-AID-0.



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Wyant Plans To Retire Sometime In '85

Potsdam Museum Director Kay Wyant said Monday she plans to retire sometime in the next year, after 12 years with the museum and eight as its director.

Mrs. Wyant said that she has communicated to the museum's board of directors "my intentions of retiring sometime within the next year."

The exact date of her resignation, she said, will largely depend on when a replacement will be named.

The museum board is scheduled to meet tonight (Tuesday), at which time Mrs. Wyant's pending resignation is expected to be discussed.

Mrs. Wyant has been with the museum since the fall of 1972.