

LAST WEEK'S WEATHER

	Hi	Lo	Pcp
Tues.	32	26	.04
Wed.	18	10	.03
Thurs.	18	6	0
Fri.	13	4	0
Sat.	35	3	0
Sun.	37	32	0
Mon.	32	-6	0

# Courier Freeman

A PARK NEWSPAPER

See the business year in review in special "Progress 1985" section.

VOL. 133 NO. 48

COURIER & FREEMAN, (USPS 1354-0000) POTSDAM, N.Y. — TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1986

20 PAGES

25 CENTS



**CLEARING THE WAY** — This front end loader, owned by Chet Bisnett Inc., was hard at work Monday morning clearing snow at the St. Lawrence National Bank on Market Street in Potsdam. Hundreds of other snow removal vehicles — municipal plows, pick-up trucks, tractors and snowblowers — kept busy Sunday night and Monday morning keeping streets and parking lots clear for travel. (Ron Robertson photo)

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## Highway Supers Urge Reappointment

**BY MICHAEL HIRSCH**  
CANTON — Approximately 20 town highway superintendents said this morning (Tuesday) they hope county legislators put "personal differences" aside and reappoint John Cook as St. Lawrence County highway superintendent.

The county's highway committee last week recommended that the county advertise for other candidates to fill the post that Cook has held for the last 12 years.

"I wonder if this all involves more personal gripes rather than any wrongdoings," said Massena Highway Superintendent John LaRue.

"I think there are a lot of politics, personal things involved," agreed David Geba, Stockholm highway superintendent and president of the St. Lawrence County Town Highway Superintendents Association. The association met in Canton this morning.

"When we were down and out, the county highway superintendent came to our rescue," said Russell Highway Superintendent Robert Ellsworth.

The town of Russell's trucks and plows were knocked out of action

by vandals early in the year and the county highway department immediately helped the town, Ellsworth said.

"They're tops with me," he said. "If it wasn't for them, we would be in a mess."

Oswegatchie Highway Superintendent William Dashnaw said Cook has helped him throughout his five years on the job.

"John has been very cooperative in the problems I had," Dashnaw said.

"I feel we are very fortunate to have a professional in that position. I have never been refused on anything we needed."

Although the association invited the highway committee to the meeting, legislator Robert McNeil (R-Lisbon and Madrid) was the only committee member to attend.

LaRue said he was disappointed that more legislators did not attend the meeting.

"I would like to know just what the intentions are of the highway committee," he said.

The Massena highway superintendent said that filling the position through advertising would

cost the taxpayers thousands, upon thousands, upon thousands of dollars.

"I really can't see your thinking," he told McNeil.

John Cook said that while he appreciated the association's support, he didn't want to hurt the relationship between the county and towns.

"I hope it won't come to war with the county over me," he said. "You have to maintain a working relationship with the county whether I'm there or someone else is there."

Cook was also supported by representatives from the New York State Department of Transportation.

"I think the tendency is to politicize the highway department," James Norris, community assistant engineer for the DOT.

"You should set aside personal feelings in this and look at the facts," he urged McNeil.

In a prepared statement, he stated: "I have dealt with 13 county highway superintendents in the past 18 years and I rank the present St. Lawrence County Superintendent among the top three."

## Merchants Consider Norwood Chamber

**BY RON ROBERTSON**  
NORWOOD — A Norwood businessman is attempting to revive a Chamber of Commerce in that community to promote activities that will boost the local economy.

Joe Bregg, owner of Jeremiah's Tavern, has set a meeting for 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Norwood Municipal Building for local businessmen and residents interested in forming a Chamber.

Bregg said he has talked to owners of some 20 different businesses and many have expressed interest in forming a Chamber.

The last Norwood Chamber, he said, folded in 1977 or 1978.

Bregg said he organizes several events sponsored by his bar during the course of the year that draw a relatively large number of people to the community.

Jeremiah's Tavern, he said, sponsors a winter weekend, a fishing derby, a rabbit hunt and other, smaller events every year.

Similar events sponsored by a Chamber of Commerce, he said, could draw even more people.

"Every community has a winter weekend," he said, citing Potsdam, Watertown and the Brasher area as communities with wintertime events.

Norwood, he said, could sponsor its own weekend with an ice fishing derby on Norwood Lake and a foot race.

Bregg, as a member of the St. Lawrence County Fish Advisory Council, has been active in stocking Norwood Lake with fish.

Norwood could also sponsor a weekend in the summer, Bregg said, with such events as boat racing and a softball tournament.

"I think we could have four good days, two in the winter and two in the summer," he said.

Bregg also suggested organizing a large fishing derby among the three communities of Norwood, Norfolk and Potsdam.

Norwood and Norfolk, he said, have easy access to the Raquette River and Potsdam has the eating and lodging facilities needed to host out-of-town fishermen.

"I figure we can get a Chamber of Commerce started and get a little program going in Norwood," Bregg said, "and maybe we can get something affiliated with Potsdam and then we can work hand in hand."

Bregg said he is also trying to talk Potsdam and Norwood recrea-

tion commissions, the Potsdam Paper Mill and Niagara Mohawk into providing funds to stock ponds formed by the numerous dams in the Raquette River.

"The state doesn't stock here so somebody's got to put some fish in here so you can have a viable der-

ty," Bregg said.

"Once you get it set up a little bit, it could really take off."

"This water's here been laying dormant for years and years and nobody's done anything with it. It's a beautiful place in the summer," Bregg said.

## Insurance Outlook Hopeful

**BY NADENE DONOVAN**  
Potsdam College Student Intern

COLTON — The town of Colton has a glimmer of hope in getting general liability insurance coverage, its newly elected supervisor says.

The town has been without coverage since Jan. 1 of this year when its carrier, Utica Mutual, informed town officials that the policy would not be renewed.

"We have had no claims ever," said Supervisor Timothy P. Hennessy, who took office Jan. 2.

Hennessy believes that insurance companies are refusing to renew

policies because of the vast number of damage suits. "The awards given by the courts are too high," he said.

Hennessy called the New York State Association of Towns, a service group, to help him find coverage. They referred him to the N.Y.S. Insurance Department which has set up a municipal market assistance plan run by independent insurance people. Their job is to convince insurance companies to provide general liability for townships.

Hennessy said it's probable that Travelers Insurance Co., which was the town's carrier five years ago, would pick up their coverage.

"The paper work is being shuffled through right now. We just have to wait and see," he said.

But Hennessy isn't sure what the premiums will be if they do get covered by Travelers. Most companies are now charging \$30,000-\$40,000 yearly premiums where Colton previously paid \$6,000 yearly premiums for their \$975,000 worth of coverage, he said.

Meanwhile, there is nothing to do to protect the town against suits. "If we were sued for \$2 million," Hennessy said, "taxes would have to go up to raise that \$2 million. We couldn't go bankrupt. We would possibly dissolve ourselves as a town, but it's not going to come to that... If a suit came along, the first thing I'd do is sue the State of New York... I don't know if my board would let me... but that's what I was thinking."

Another aspect of the insurance problem that has Hennessy worried is the B.T.I. program, scheduled to begin this spring in the township. This is a program designed to kill blackflies by treating the waterways with insecticides. Hennessy says it's the safest there is but it is required to have a minimum of \$300,000 general liability coverage, without it, the program can't get off the ground.

## Challenger Explodes On Liftoff

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Space shuttle Challenger exploded into a gigantic fireball moments after liftoff today, apparently killing all seven crew members, including schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe.

There was no announcement of the fate of the crew, but it appeared there was no way they could survive.

The \$1.2 billion spacecraft, one of four in NASA's shuttle fleet, appeared to be destroyed.

It was the first in-flight disaster in 56 U.S. manned space missions, although three astronauts were killed in a 1967 launch pad explosion during the Apollo program.

The explosion was a devastating setback for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration after successfully carrying out 24 space shuttle missions in slightly less than five years.

tion commissions, the Potsdam Paper Mill and Niagara Mohawk into providing funds to stock ponds formed by the numerous dams in the Raquette River.

## Stiffer Enforcement Urged Board Briefed On Revised Ordinance

**BY RON ROBERTSON**  
While Potsdam village trustees applauded efforts to revise the zoning ordinance, a committee of planners and zoners sent a clear message back to the village board to initiate stiffer zoning and housing code enforcement procedures.

Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board have been working with St. Lawrence County Planning Board staff member Margo Fenn for the past 2½ years to revise the zoning code and master development plan.

These boards presented the result of their efforts to the Board of Trustees at a meeting last week.

Mayor Paul Claffey said a resolution setting a public hearing date on the revisions will be on the agenda for the Feb. 3 village board meeting.

"Regardless of what kind of regulation we come up with here, it's not worth a hill of beans if it's not enforced," said Planning Board Chairman Alfred Rothermel.

"Without enforcement procedures, it doesn't matter what law you're not enforcing," added ZBA Chairman Mark Coleman.

Village Administrator Robert Burns, who attended the Jan. 22 meeting along with members of the three boards, noted that officials are working on an enforcement procedure, whether it will use existing or new ordinances.

Unrelated People

More than any other single issue, members of the joint planning and zoning committee addressed ways to improve housing conditions and their effects on neighborhoods.

Hotly contested was the issue of whether to reduce the maximum number of unrelated people living together in a single-family house or apartment.

After first suggesting limiting the number to three, then four, the committee finally decided to recommend that the number remain at five.

Planning Board member Helen Brouwer said "at one time everyone (on the joint committee) agreed on three" to solve overcrowding and density problems seen in many neighborhoods.

Local landlords protesting the change "have been representing their interests very well" at committee meetings, Brouwer said.

Four was to be a compromise number, she said, then "some

(members of the committee) thought there was not much of a difference in impact between four and five," so the number remained at five.

"It's certainly more politically palatable and expedient to keep it at five," Brouwer said.

"It's obvious the public participation process works because we've made some compromises," said Fenn. "There's a balancing of interests involved here."

Rental housing units are a business enterprise and should be treated differently from other types of housing, Rothermel said.

"They should be willing to be inspected," he said. The village, he said, has to come up with some method of inspecting rental housing to ensure proper enforcement of existing regulations.

Trustee Jeffrey Belodoff said that "one of the best ways to do it is to enforce the parking regulations." Strict enforcement of the parking rules, he said, will limit the number of people living at a particular residence.

Problems normally associated with student housing, Belodoff said, are independent of the number of people living at a particular house or apartment.

"If they're making too much noise, they're making too much noise. That's what we have to enforce," Belodoff said.

## New Code Outlined

**BY RON ROBERTSON**  
Close to 2½ years of effort has gone into the proposed revision of the Village of Potsdam zoning ordinance.

Despite the apparent lack of major changes, much effort during the series of meetings on the revisions — held as frequently as twice a month — went into making the ordinance clearer and easier to understand.

Members of the village's Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board, and Margo Fenn from the St. Lawrence County Planning Office, presented their efforts to the village board last week.

A date for a public hearing on the proposed new ordinance is expected to be set at the Feb. 3 village board meeting.

Following is a brief summary of some of the changes in the proposed zoning rules. A complete copy of the text is on file at the office of Margaret Robinson, village clerk.

**Revisions in Definitions**

Many definitions in the existing ordinance are considered inadequate, ambiguous, contradictory, or not there at all.

In the proposed ordinance, definitions have been clarified. Some definitions in the old ordinance contain regulations that belong in the ordinance's text.

**Format Changes**

The format of the text has been changed to have uses permitted in each zone along with the specified area requirements for each.

In the existing text, the uses and their regulations are difficult to find and it is not easy to determine what requirements fit what uses.

**Special Permit, Site Plan**

Site plan review for a special permit is currently done by the Planning Board before the special permit is granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

In effect, the Planning Board must act on a site plan that might not be appropriate in the zone in question.

Under the new ordinance, the special permit is granted by the ZBA before the Planning Board reviews the site plan.

The revised special use standards include more detailed requirements for a number of uses, including fairly stringent standards regarding adequate parking and maximum lot coverage.

**Sign Regulations**

In the existing sign regulations, the rules are difficult to read and are poorly organized. There is also no guidance regarding sign design.

In the proposed regulations, the requirements are divided into sub-headings such as construction and maintenance, location, type, specific district requirements and supplementary requirements.

An administration section has been added to provide guidance on the sign review process, which is a duty of the Planning Board.

Standards are included for design to provide guidance in regulating scale, materials, and other sign design matters.

**Leeway in Parking Standards**

Parking standards remain largely unchanged in the proposed ordinance.

A provision has been added to allow some leeway by the Planning Board in the review of a site plan, the ZBA in reviewing a special permit application or the village board in review of a planned unit development to modify the parking requirements for an individual project.

The downtown parking study is to be used as a guideline in making any modifications.

**Accessory Dwelling Unit**

The revised ordinance calls for a new type of use allowed by permit in a single-family residential zone in recognition of the problem of keeping the larger family's use.

An accessory dwelling unit is an apartment added to a home and would be allowed only if the owner is the occupant of one of the two apartments.

**Residential Development Downtown**

No provisions are made in the existing ordinance for residences in the downtown district.

In the revision, one- and two-family dwellings are standard uses; multiple-family and group dwellings are special uses.

**Improved Zoning Map**

Improvements have been made to the zoning map as part of the revisions.

Small changes have been made in some of the zoning districts to more closely correspond with what exists.

The old map contained several errors in property lines and boundaries. The revised map is based on the tax map and is more accurate.

## Stoners Host Gouverneur

The Potsdam High boys basketball team hosts a tall and talented Gouverneur outfit Friday night at 8 p.m. (JV game begins at 6:30).

It will be the homecoming for Gouverneur Coach George Gordon, who coached and taught at Potsdam Central. It will also renew one of the NAC's most exciting and newest rivalries.

"Gouverneur is the biggest team in the league. They average five to six inches more per player than us. Their point guard is 6'3", our center is 6'2". They are in first place and they beat us in a nail-biter in Gouverneur. What more could you want as a challenge?" asked Potsdam Coach Steve Knack.

The Stoners, now 6-3 in the league, needs to beat the Wildcats if they have any hopes for an NAC title, or a share of it. "I hope to see a huge turnout for the game. Our kids deserve a large following. It should be a real battle," said Knack.

There will be a pep rally at the high school Friday afternoon at 1:15 p.m. to help charge up the student body.

## Lord Wilson To Receive Honorary Degree

The Right Honorable Lord Wilson of Rievaulx, former Prime Minister of Great Britain, will receive an honorary Doctor of Law degree from the State University of New York. The degree will be conferred by Potsdam College at its 152nd Commencement on May 24.

The awarding of State University of New York's highest honor to Lord Wilson was approved Jan. 22 by the SUNY Board of Trustees and announced by Potsdam College President Humphrey Tonkin.

"Lord Wilson is one of the great figures in British post war politics. He has made major contributions to the promotion of Anglo-U.S. understanding and cooperation. It is, therefore, a great privilege for the State University and Potsdam College to honor him in this way," Tonkin said.

Educated at Jesus College of Oxford University, Lord Wilson began his career as lecturer in Economics at Oxford's New College. He remained in academia until the outbreak of World War II, when he joined the British civil service.

Wilson was first elected to parliament in 1944 and was immediately



**LORD WILSON OF RIEVAULX** included in the new Labour government as Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works (1945-1947), Secretary for Overseas Trade (1947) and President of the Board of Trade (1947-1951). In 1961, Harold Wilson resigned

form government in protest over cuts in welfare expenditures. He returned to national service in 1963, having won the Labour party's leadership election. The party's victory in 1964 installed Lord Wilson as prime minister. He was defeated in 1970 but returned to lead a minority government in 1974.

Upon his resignation from government service in 1976, Wilson was made a Knight of the Garter by Queen Elizabeth II. In 1983 he was named Lord Wilson of Rievaulx of Kirkstall in the County of West Yorkshire.

This will be the second time Lord Wilson has visited Potsdam; the college welcomed him as its first convocation speaker in 1979.

**NEWSBRIEF**

This is the last week to take advantage of Tax Amnesty. New York State's Tax Amnesty Program ends Jan. 31 and with it the opportunity for taxpayers to file and pay back taxes and interest due without fear of civil or criminal penalty.

Call the Amnesty hotline, 1-800-CALL TAX, for more information.