

LAST WEEK'S WEATHER

	Hi	Lo	Pcp
Tues.	35	28	tr.s
Wed.	34	25	0
Thurs.	33	19	0
Fri.	28	21	4.7s
Sat.	28	14	tr.s
Sun.	22	4	0
Mon.	30	19	0

Courier Freeman

A PARK NEWSPAPER

Village officials look at November elections. See story this week.

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'EMERGENCY' — Chris Taylor, a make-believe victim of a mock all-terrain vehicle accident, is lifted by members of the Potsdam Rescue Squad into a four wheel drive pickup truck for transport across snowy Lenham Park to an awaiting ambulance. Lifting

Taylor are, from left, Mark LaBrake, Kern Ford and Brian Kurish. The Jan. 3 drill took unsuspecting squad members 28 minutes from the time the alarm sounded until the two "victims" were on their way to the hospital. (Ron Robertson photo)

Village Planning Switch To November Elections

BY RON ROBERTSON

Despite protests that local candidates might get lost among the shuffle of regional and national elections, the Potsdam village board passed a resolution Monday night affirming its intent to switch village elections from March to November.

It is unlikely, said Administrator Robert Burns, that the process could be completed in time for November 1987.

Although holding elections in March costs more than having them in November, "I think it's worth it to take the time to elect (village) officials separately," Rogers said.

Belodoff said he prefers March elections. "I think it would be very easy to get lost" among national races, he said.

"I'm not sure it's true the local candidates would get lost in a national election," said Trustee Helen Brouwer.

The national race, Brouwer said, would probably generate more interest in the local elections.

Claffey and Sprague said that people are more interested in their local candidates than in national elections and the village races would probably help draw voters to the polls in November.

Some Have Switched

Claffey pointed out that three St. Lawrence County villages have already switched their elections from March to November: Canton, Waddington and Heuvelton. Gouverneur, Claffey said, is in the process of changing election months.

When new village officials are placed on the board in April, Claffey said, it's difficult for them to deal with a budget that is almost already in place.

Village budgets must be approved by the end of May. By April, many of the budgetary decisions have been made.

let the party carry the people in" instead of voters choosing among the individual candidates for the best choice, Rogers said.

Rogers noted that while voter turnout is much greater during November elections, many would not know who was running for the local seats.

In March elections, she said, voters turn out specifically to support the candidates of their choice.

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If new board members are in place by January, Claffey said, they are involved in the entire budget process, which usually begins sometime that month.

Burns said that March elections cost the village close to \$2,000 in direct costs such as election inspectors' salaries and voting machine rentals.

There are also undetermined indirect costs such as the time the board spends in the budget process, and the time it spends in the budget process, and the time it spends in the budget process.

All of those services would be handled by the town and county if village elections were in November, Burns said, although some of the costs would probably be charged back to the village.

Burns said that the final decision to switch the elections could be made by referendum if a petition to bring it to a public vote garners enough signatures.

If there is no referendum petition, Burns said, the decision could be made by the village board following a public hearing.

If there is a referendum, Burnd said, it probably could not be ready for the polls in March because the process would not be completed in time.

Village Sues For \$10 Million

BY RON ROBERTSON

Potsdam Village Attorney Peter Lekki has served several people and firms with papers suing them for a total of \$10 million in damages the village claims it suffered from inadequate planning and construction of its hydroelectric plant.

Included in the suit are the Rist-Frost engineering firm of Glens Falls and several individuals who are members of that firm.

Lekki told the village board Monday night that he and special attorney Vincent Kirsch decided to wait until December before filing suit in case the other parties involved decided to settle out of court.

In June, the village board authorized the attorneys to pursue legal action to recoup damages incurred from the plant's inadequate power production.

By Dec. 19, Lekki said, it was apparent that "no settlement was forthcoming" and one firm, Shawinigan, a subcontractor on the plant, was served.

At about the same time, he said, Rist-Frost was also served. At-

torneys for the engineering firm, Lekki said, have asked for an extension "because of the complexity of the issues."

Also named in the suit are Kavaener Hydro Power Inc., the current owners of the firm that used to be known as Axel Johnson Engineering Corporation, and Firemen's Fund Insurance, the firm that holds the bond on the project.

Since the hydro plant was completed and went on line in late 1983, village officials have complained that it did not produce power at the level predicted by its Rist-Frost designers.

Rist-Frost claimed the plant would produce some 800 kilowatts of power. Officials have said it has produced a maximum of only some 650 to 680 kilowatts.

The village's plan for financing the plant was based on the income on the amount of power it was told the facility would produce. The income from the plant has come far below the annual cost of financing its construction.

Moon Rocks Here

Some of the famed moon rocks brought back to earth by United States astronauts from the 1969 moon landing, will be in Potsdam from Jan. 12-24, according to a local chemistry teacher.

L.W. Rudiger, chemistry instructor at Potsdam High School, said he was certified to receive the moon rocks after his participation in a summer 1986 workshop for math and science teachers.

Any group or school interested in having Rudiger exhibit the moon rocks along with a videotape and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) program may contact him at the high school, 265-2000.

Rudiger will exhibit the moon rocks in his chemistry classes from the 12th through the 24th.

During the summer, Rudiger was selected to attend the NASA and National Science Teachers Association National Educational Workshop for Math and Science Teachers (NEWMAT) at Langley, Va.

Rudiger teaches Regents chemistry and PASCAL programming, is the high school computer coordinator and teaches computer courses at Mater Dei College. He has served as an instructor for Empire State College.

Potsdam Man Gets 60 Days

BY MICHAEL HIRSCH

CANTON — A 45-year-old Potsdam man was sentenced Monday to 60 days in St. Lawrence County Jail and three years probation for a conviction of sexual misconduct.

Richard J. Rockefeller, 45, of 11 Maynard St., Potsdam, was also ordered not to have any unsupervised contact with children under the age of 18.

Rockefeller had originally been charged with a felony sex offense based on Superior Court information. He pleaded guilty on Nov. 20 to sexual misconduct, a class A misdemeanor.

During sentencing in St. Lawrence County Court Monday, Potsdam attorney Verner M. Ingram, Jr. argued that his client should not be given a jail term.

"The nature of the charges is grievous, the ability to arise in righteous indignation is great, but it is shortsighted..." he said.

Ingram said that Rockefeller has already lost his job with the U.S. Post Office as well as his name and his reputation in the community.

"This man has suffered as a result of this...he is surviving and showing a willingness to show that a non-incarceration sentence is appropriate to this..." the Potsdam attorney said. "There is relatively little the court can do to erase the scars left on all involved because of this."

A prison sentence for Rockefeller, Ingram said, would be "little more than a tweaking of this person's nose or a kick in the ribs for a person already down."

St. Lawrence County Court Judge Eugene Nicandri, however, said that a jail term was appropriate even though he told Rockefeller a pre-sentencing report indicated that he had "worked very diligently for your community and church and your family."

"But these actions involving this offense are such that I'm not inclined to slap you on the wrist and say, 'Go and sin no more,'" Nicandri said.

The county court judge said that Rockefeller's actions involved a "breach of trust."

"The impression I get reading the pre-sentencing report is that a lie is being lived or has been lived and that has to be corrected..." Nicandri said. "But by the same token, your case is not an isolated case. It is an activity that is prevalent in this society and one the criminal justice system struggles to deal with by the very nature of the act involved."



PLUM BROOK FIRE — A house on the Brothers Road near Plum Brook in the town of Norfolk was gutted by fire Dec. 31. The house was leased from the Ray Ladue estate by a couple, James and Janet Scott, who had reportedly resided there for only a few months. (Ron Robertson photo)

Consulting Firm Changes Views On Hydro Plan

BY RON ROBERTSON

O'Brien and Gere of Syracuse, the village of Potsdam's consulting engineering firm for hydroelectric matters, has somewhat altered its earlier summation of a hydro company's proposal to operate the village's hydroelectric plant.

In a recent letter from O'Brien and Gere, a village trustee said during a meeting Monday night, the firm gave much higher marks to a proposal from Adirondack Hydro Development following a meeting in Syracuse this fall between representatives from O'Brien and Gere, Adirondack Hydro and the village.

In an earlier report, O'Brien and Gere engineers gave low marks to Adirondack's plan to operate the village's hydro plant in conjunction with a second facility the Potsdam-based firm plans to build on the opposite bank of the river.

According to Administrator Robert Burns, who attended the meeting in Syracuse, engineers from both firms exchanged information that changed O'Brien and Gere's outlook on the proposal.

At Monday night's meeting, Trustee Helen Brouwer said that O'Brien and Gere's first report "made the proposal look very bad."

"In this one," she said, "it looks much better."

Village officials said they hope to receive a third letter from O'Brien and Gere that would summarize the conclusions of the first two letters.

Following discussion, the board approved payment of \$986 to O'Brien and Gere for the firm's analysis of Adirondack Hydro's proposal.

Payment was postponed at a meeting last month because village officials had not received O'Brien and Gere's final report. According to Burns, the Syracuse engineers said earlier Monday that the report is in the mail.

Mayor Paul Claffey said Monday night that Adirondack Hydro representatives will be invited to the board's Jan. 19 meeting to discuss O'Brien and Gere's report.

Adirondack Hydro has proposed that it take over the village's hydro plant on the east channel of the Racquette River in downtown Potsdam and operate it along with another the firm wants to build on the west channel.

Operating both plants together would maximize the profits from both plants, Adirondack Hydro representatives have said.

Adirondack Hydro operates hydro facilities downstream from Potsdam in Hewittville and Unionville.

Foreman Serving As DPW Chief

BY BETSY BAKER

NORWOOD — For just over two weeks, since Dec. 13, Norwood has been without the services of its superintendent of public works, Danforth J. Peacock, 44, Norwood.

On the evening of the 13th, Peacock was injured in a one-vehicle accident on Rt. 56 in Norwood when he lost control of his truck on ice and the truck hit trees at the roadside, according to Canton-based State Police.

Troopers said Peacock received a broken clavicle and bruises in the accident. He was taken to Canton-Potsdam Hospital for treatment.

Peacock was charged Dec. 14 with driving while intoxicated and speed not reasonable, troopers said.

According to Potsdam Town Court Clerk Janet Carey, Peacock is expected to be arraigned on the charges at 1 p.m., Jan. 15 before Town Justice Malcolm MacGregor.

In Peacock's absence, the DPW is being supervised by foreman Roy Garrow, according to Norwood Mayor Joseph Mariano. Mariano said that Peacock, who is on sick leave from his job with the village, had surgery last week for shoulder injuries and may be facing more surgery.

Mariano said he does not know when Peacock will be able to return to the DPW.

Smith To Seek Nod For Mayor

BY BETSY BAKER

NORWOOD — A former Norwood mayor, Willard E. Smith, is the first candidate to announce plans to seek the mayor's post in the 1987 March village elections here.

Smith, a Republican, was Norwood's mayor from 1981-83, and subsequently ran unsuccessfully for mayor and for Potsdam town supervisor.

In a letter to the editor of the Courier-Freeman this week, Smith said he wants to return three essentials — leadership, pride and basics — to Norwood.

"Leadership can not come by sweeping 'dirty laundry' under the rug," Smith said in his letter. "Controversy can make the taxpayers take a heightened interest in running Norwood and make people think," Smith continued.

Smith was controversial, both as candidate and as mayor; before the election he drew the ire of GOP regulars by supporting an Independent trustee candidate over the Republican candidate, and he won the mayor's post by just one vote in March 1981.

In the first month of his term, Smith attempted unsuccessfully to convince the Norwood village trustees to vote to repeal the

village budget prepared by former Mayor Joseph Hopsicker.

In his letter, Smith said he left office in 1983 "with a \$33,000 surplus in the budget and a tentative budget approved by all four board members which would have resulted in a thirteen percent cut in village taxes."

Mariano Ponders

Meanwhile, Democratic Mayor Joseph Mariano says he has not yet decided if he will seek a full term as mayor.

"I really haven't made up my

mind yet," Mariano said Monday night. "Probably yes, but I just don't know for sure."

Mariano, a former village trustee, was appointed mayor in September 1985 after former mayor Michael LaComb left the area for a job in Florida. Mariano was elected to a one-year term to complete LaComb's term, in March 1986.

Both Republicans and Democrats will caucus later this month to choose candidates for the March elections.

Town Council Okays Secretary

Minutes of the Town of Potsdam planning and zoning boards will be taken and transcribed by a paid secretary, following action of the town council last Tuesday afternoon.

Meeting in special session to handle year-end business, town councilmen agreed to seek a paid secretary to handle minutes for the two boards.

In asking the council's approval of the move, town Supervisor Leslie Cook said, "The minutes should be well kept."

The council also agreed to approve the attendance of town code enforcement officer Donald Adams at three, week-long training sessions to be held in January, February and March at Montour Falls, N.Y.

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