

# 'Selective Enforcement' Briggs' Problem, Ford Says

**BY JIM REAGEN**  
**PIERREPONT** — Pierrepont's Town Supervisor William Ford says the town's code enforcement officer ran into problems with the town board because of his "selective enforcement" of the building and fire code, not because he made the town supervisor and town justice fence in their swimming pools.

In a story in the Sunday Advance News, Briggs said he believes Pierrepont town officials are trying to force him out over the swimming pool controversy.

"I'm a little disturbed," Ford said Sunday about Pierrepont Code Enforcement officer William

someone else for the job. Instead, he says, he suggested the town board reappoint Briggs for 30 days and ask the code officer to attend the next meeting of the board Jan. 21 to discuss problems town council members have found.

Ford says he was shocked when he learned that Briggs is claiming that anyone who wants to hold their town job in Pierrepont has to go along with the town supervisor.

"I resent that," Ford says. "I'm one vote on the town board. If I was a vindictive person, I could have had him on a three to two vote. But I felt, let's not dump him cold. Let's bring him in and tell him our concerns. I was being fair and honest

fact. It was grandfathered in." "That's what I was told, so I took it down," Ford said. "In fact, I sold it to Herb Crump (Potsdam's Code Enforcement Officer). He never said a word about it."

Crump signed a letter on behalf of the code officers association supporting Briggs.

"After Bill was appointed he told me that I was required to have a fence," Ford said. "I balked, naturally. I'd been told that I didn't have to have it."

About a year later, Briggs went to Pierrepont's Town Attorney Charles Nash and asked for a legal opinion on whether swimming pool owners were required to have a fence or whether pools were "grandfathered" under the law. Briggs did not tell Nash that Ford and Town Justice Michael Jackson owned the pools in question.

Nash researched the law and issued a legal ruling that all pools were required to have fences regardless of when they were built.

Afterwards, Briggs told Nash who owned the pools.

Ford says that after he learned that Nash had researched the law, he and Jackson installed the fences.

"Once we found out that it was the law, we did it. We didn't have any problem. It's a good law," Ford said.

Briggs says that after he first notified Ford of the law, Ford and the former deputy supervisor met with him and told him he couldn't do such things.

"That's absolutely not true," Ford said.

Ford says there was a meeting, but "I never told him he couldn't do it. We explained that this is Pierrepont. It's not New York City or Syracuse. You don't go around hassling people. We told him that we felt the fire and building code was to insure that there were safe dwellings and no health hazards. He blew it all out of proportion."

"I'm just going to have to have people base their opinions on this based on what they know about me," Ford said. "I have no way to prove it. But the swimming pool has nothing to do with this."

Ford says town board members have "concerns" with what they consider to be Briggs' selective enforcement of the code.

"In one case he'll make someone follow the letter of the law, and in another case he'll ignore it," Ford says. "There are also concerns about what some people think are selective interpretations of the law."

In one case, town board members were upset when Briggs told the town board that the fire and building code required that a seasonal road be kept plowed all winter. The town attorney checked and found that the code officer was mistaken.

When the town highway superintendent contacted a family that was building a seasonal road on the road to be plowed, he and Ford did not ask that the road be plowed all winter. When he offered

to plow it when they needed it, they agreed.

"It makes us wonder how many other things he's told us aren't true," Ford said.

Ford says the town board wants to talk to Briggs about what they consider to be "improprieties" and "dishonesty."

"I didn't think it was fair to just get rid of him," Ford said. "I thought we should talk to him. But I felt backed into the wall. I knew that if we did anything, he'd blame it on the swimming pool. That's why I abstained. But here it is right in print."

"I think he's jumped the gun,"

Ford said. "I take a lot of abuse as supervisor. But I guess that goes with the territory. I just want people to know that this isn't a personal thing between Bill and I. I bent over backwards to accommodate him."

Ford says he and the town board members had hoped to discuss their concerns with Briggs quietly and in private. But Briggs is now urging town residents to attend the Jan. 21 meeting.

"He wants a shooting match in public," Ford says. "I don't know how we'll address it. If its his wish that wants to have it in public, well, I don't have anything to hide."

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Briggs charges that Ford and two town councilmen are trying to oust him over Briggs' decision to force two officials to fence in their pools.

"He hates me," Ford says. "He makes no bones about it."

"The swimming pool doesn't have a thing to do with it," Ford said. "That's why I didn't vote on it. I knew damn well he'd twist it."

Ford says that when the town board was considering whether to reappoint Briggs to the town post, the town board members locked in a tie on a 2-2 vote. Ford says that if he had not voted against Briggs, he could have won the tie and had the deciding vote on who

with the guy."

Ford says the fence that Briggs required Ford to put around his swimming pool has nothing to do with the board's problems with the code enforcement officer.

"But I'd like to clear the air on it," Ford says. "I had a green vinyl fence around my pool. I talked to my insurance company and they said that it was classified as an attractive nuisance and that I was liable for it whether I had a fence or not. I talked to the code enforcement officer the town had before he hired Bill, and he was told that if there were a fence around the pool it was there before the law took effect."

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## Parents Of 8th Graders Asked To Attend Meeting

Parents of all Potsdam Central School District eighth graders are asked to attend "Parents Night" Jan. 15, starting at 7 p.m. in the high school cafeteria.

The main purpose of the program is to help parents to better understand what courses their student should select for grade nine. Ability and achievement scores, as well as teacher recommendations will be explained. Another purpose is to aid parents in helping their student set up a four year program. New educational requirements for grade 9 and 10 will be presented.

Parents will be welcomed by

Douglas Huntley, high school principal. He will introduce several faculty members representing each subject area taught in the high school. They will present an overview of the high school's instructional program, including new courses developed as a result of the recent regulations of the Board of Regents.

Overall, the program is designed to help parents to better understand the decision their son/daughter will be making in the next few years.

Registration will be open at the Parent/Teacher/Student Association.

## Wixted Retires From Clarkson

Edward J. Wixted, treasurer and chief financial officer at Clarkson University since 1977, will be retiring on March 1, after being with the school for nearly 19 years.

"Ed has played a vital role at Clarkson," said Allan H. Clark, president of Clarkson University. "His service has been much appreciated and we all wish him well as he begins his retirement."

Wixted, a native of New York City, is a graduate of Queens College and Pace University where he earned his B.A. in Mathematics in 1951 and his B.B.A. in Accounting in 1955, respectively.

From 1951 to 1968 he held a variety of financial managerial positions with R.T. Vanderbilt Company Inc., the Gouverneur Talc Company, Inc. and American LaFrance Company.

Wixted joined Clarkson in 1968 and served as comptroller and assistant treasurer for nine years. He assumed his current position as treasurer and chief financial officer in 1977.

His responsibilities have included long range fiscal planning, budget preparation, control and reporting accounting, auditing and purchasing policies and procedures as well as management of all other financial and business operations of the university.

He has also been president of Weston's Inc., in which capacity he oversaw the operation of the Clarkson Inn; treasurer of Golden Knight Enterprise Inc., the Clarkson Development Corporation, and the Clarkson Alumni Association; assistant treasurer of the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley and of Northern Advanced Technologies Corporation (NATCO).

In addition, Wixted has served as Clarkson's representative to the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU) Legal Affairs Network and as the Syracuse region representative to the Professional Development Committee of the Eastern Association of College and University Business Officers.

He served as treasurer of the Potsdam Town and Country Club and the Gouverneur Country Club and is a past director of the Potsdam Rotary Club.

His professional affiliations include the National Association of College and University Business Officers, Eastern Association of College and University Officers and the Association of College and University Auditors.

He was also active in the Northern New York Chapter of the National Association of Accountants in which he served in a variety of capacities including president and national director.



EDWARD J. WIXTED

## People

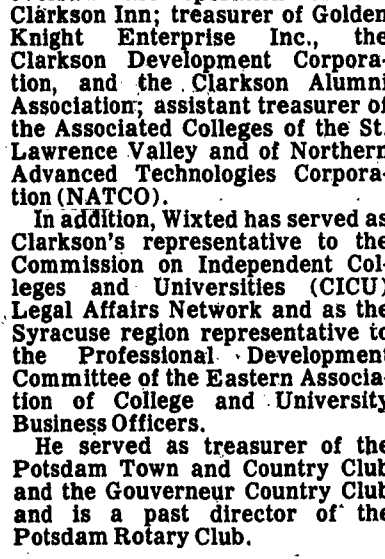
**AWARDED GRANT**  
 Richard Molz of the School of Management at Clarkson University has been awarded a Canadian government grant for research.

Molz' research topic is "The Crown Corporation and Canadian Stakeholders: An Assessment of Changing Relations."

A total of 54 grants were made, selected from 91 applications.

## CAT OF THE WEEK...

Cyndi Mae is a long haired calico with a beautiful coat and a very lovely personality. She's 1 1/2 years old, has her distemper shot and is spayed. She gets along well with other cats and loves to be petted. A very sociable cat, Cyndi Mae would love to move in with a loving person or family.

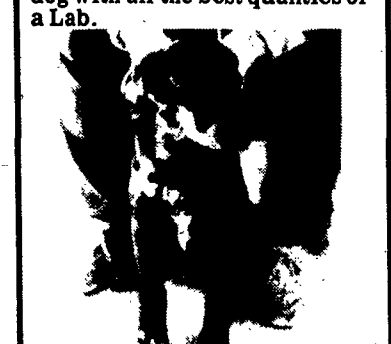


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## PUPPY OF THE WEEK...

Holly is a Lab/Shepherd puppy. She looks Lab, is black with a touch of white on her chest. She is about 4 1/2 months old and has her first vaccination. She's very playful and energetic but listens when she's spoken to. She will probably be a large dog with all the best qualities of a Lab.



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## DOG OF THE WEEK...

Duke is a Retriever mix, about 1 year old. He has his first vaccination. He has a beautiful glossy black and white coat and feathering on his legs. He's a large playful fellow and hopes you will give him a home soon.



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### Sleep Sofas

- \$1,071 Oak Trim Modern Queen Sleeper \$749
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- \$549 Solid Maple Table & 4 Chairs \$399

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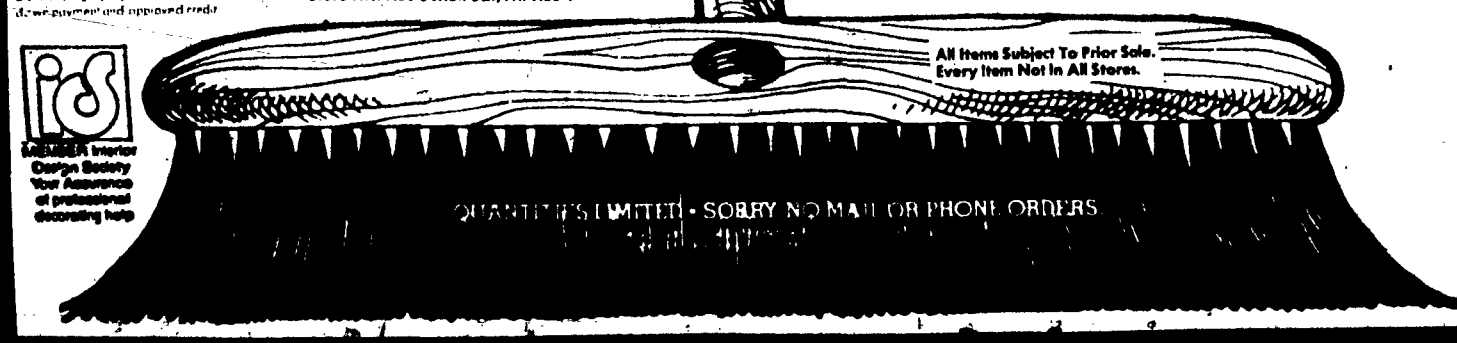
- \$499
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- \$329 Oak Double Pedestal Desk \$199
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- \$439 Oak Entertainment Centre \$299
- \$910 Oak Grandfather Clock \$599

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