



BOOKWORM HEAVEN

BOOK SALE TO BE HELD AT EAST CORNING FIRE HALL



The LEADER

KROEGER SENTENCED

Prattsburgh man gets 4.7-14 years in abuse case

BY JOHN ZICK
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BATH | A former Prattsburgh man who sexually abused a 14-year-old boy then fled the state after his arrest was sentenced Wednesday to 4.7 to 14 years in state prison.

Anthony P. Kroeger, 48, pleaded guilty in February to use of a child in a sexual performance and second-degree bail jumping. Had he been convicted at trial, he would have faced up to 19 years in state prison.

"I told you I'd give you a long lecture, but I don't know that it would do any good," Steuben County Judge Joseph Latham said Wednesday. "I expect you to obey the law (when you are released). You will be in prison a long time."

Prosecutors reached the plea agreement with Kroeger to avoid having the young victim testify at trial.

"The compromise here was a long prison sentence and protecting the victim," said county Assistant District Attorney Brooks Baker. "This represents justice in this context."

Baker described the relationship between Kroeger and his victim as one of trust. He said Kroeger is a smooth talker who has the ability to gain someone's confidence.

"That's something he's good at - generating trust and then abusing that trust," Baker said. "The crime he's charged with is disturbing. The evidence is more disturbing."

Beyond breaking the trust of the victim and the victim's family, Kroeger was able to persuade someone to post his \$25,000 bail after his arrest in October 2006. According to police, Kroeger was caught in the act abusing the boy.

Kroeger was indicted on more than a dozen felonies related to the abuse in June 2007, but in October 2007, Kroeger fled the state, becoming a fugitive from justice. By missing a court appearance, Kroeger's bail was revoked and forfeited, meaning the person who posted the bail lost the money.



ERIC WENSEL | THE LEADER

Convicted sex offender Anthony Kroeger leaves Steuben County Court Wednesday in Bath after being sentenced for sexually abusing a 14-year-old boy.

Kroeger avoided capture until late December 2007 when he was arrested in Carrollton, Ga., an Atlanta suburb. He was captured after his roommate called police after typing Kroeger's name into an Internet search engine. By doing that, the roommate discovered Kroeger was wanted in New York.

Between October and December, Kroeger spent time in Chicago, although

it is unclear where else he may have been.

An exotic fish dealer, Kroeger has ties to Chicago, Georgia, Michigan and New York City, Baker said.

Kroeger will go before a parole board to determine his release after he serves his minimum sentence.

"We hope he will be gone for a long time," Baker said.

South side road project: Construction to begin soon

BY DERRICK EK
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CORNING | A major construction project on the city's Southside is expected to get under way in late April.

Large portions of Wall and Chemung streets will be reconstructed during the project, and water and sewer lines and drainage systems will be replaced in the process, said Mike Dawson, assistant superintendent of the city's Department of Public Works.

Chemung Street will be rebuilt from Third Street up to the city line at Spencer Hill Road, Dawson said. A portion of the street, between Fifth Street and High Road, will be

widened and made safer for motorists, he said.

Wall Street will be rebuilt from Denison Parkway to the alley between Third and Fourth streets.

"If everything goes perfect, we could start sometime next week, or the week after," Dawson said.

Both streets were in poor condition and had problems with runoff during storms.

Chemung Street is heavily traveled because it is a primary route to Corning Community College. Wall Street, though not as heavily traveled, was in even worse shape, Dawson said.

SEE CONSTRUCTION | 8A

Crews called to fight brush fires

BY SARAH GROSSMAN
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HORNBY | 'Tis the brush fire season and firefighters were called out to a rash of blazes across Steuben County on Wednesday.

The Hornby Volunteer Fire Department was called out Wednesday afternoon to help homeowner Eric Cram put out a fire he accidentally started on his Miller Road property.

There wasn't any serious damage, Cram said.

Cram said he normally burns off a small section of brush this time of year and never had problems before.

However, when his fire began spreading rapidly, he

quickly got on the phone and gave the fire department a call, he said.

Shawn Collins, Hornby fire chief, said brush fires are typical this time of year and they are often caused by homeowners burning brush or trash.

According to scanner reports there were also brush fires on state Route 36 and state Route 417 in Jasper and another off county Route 2 in Thurston.

Bill Meehan, a forest ranger with the state Department of Environmental Conservation, advised people to not burn anything outdoors until things have begun to "green-up."

"It is only going to get hotter and drier over the weekend," Meehan said.

Tag's announces summer lineup

BY DERRICK EK
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BIG FLATS | Tag's announced Wednesday the lineup of concerts it will host on its outdoor stage this summer, and it includes some big names.

Tag's, a restaurant, bar and music venue on state Route 352 in Big Flats, will host concerts by Blues Traveler, Boston, STYX, Ted Nugent, Lynyrd Skynyrd and others this summer, according to its Web site.

The season will include tribute shows to Bruce Springsteen, Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin on May 16, May 31 and July 12, respectively.

John "Dr. Dirty" Valby, known for his off-color comical songs, will perform June 7.



Ted Nugent

Blues Traveler, a jam band led by harmonica player John Popper, will perform June 13,

SEE TAG'S | 8A

Massa airs concerns on gas prices

BY BOB RECOTTA
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CORNING | Gasoline prices have recently hit an unwelcome milestone, surpassing \$3.50 a gallon, in many locations for the first time.

AAA reported Wednesday gas is averaging \$3.50 a gallon across the state, up a penny from the day before and up 10 cents in a week.

Eric Massa, the Democratic candidate for the 29th Congressional District, said gas prices are reaching crisis levels.

"I have watched over the past two days, as oil closed over \$110 a barrel," Massa said. "The real-



MASSA

ty is, the economy simply cannot sustain this. Men and women get up every morning go to work and will not be able to support their children and their needs because of gas prices at the pump."

Despite rising gas prices, Massa said Wednesday he rejects the suggestion of Arizona senator and Republican presidential candidate John McCain to temporarily suspend the federal gasoline tax.

SEE MASSA | 8A

Massa tops Kuhl in fund raising efforts

BY BOB RECOTTA
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CORNING | For the second consecutive quarter, Eric Massa, Democratic candidate for the 29th Congressional District, led incumbent U.S. Rep. John R. "Randy" Kuhl Jr., R-Hammondsport, in fund raising.

According to reports

released this week by the Federal Election Commission (FEC), Massa raised \$278,000 in the first quarter of 2008, which runs January through March.

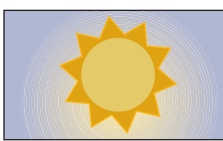
That was \$167,000 more than Kuhl raised in the same time period.

To date, Massa has

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