

Man in legal pickle over tossed burger

BY JESSICA PIERCE
GateHouse News Service

MANCHESTER | Ontario County deputies say an 18-year-old threw a hamburger out the sun roof of a car while it was headed down Route 21 Wednesday night.

It wouldn't usually become a police matter, except the burger wound up striking a passing motorcyclist and now the alleged burger tosser — Justin M. Cook — is in a legal pickle. He's facing a criminal charge of second-degree reckless endangerment.

Cook, 18, of Manchester, was charged at about 12:30 a.m. Thursday, some 2.5 hours after the alleged burger incident. Cook was a passenger in a car that was headed north, deputies said, when he allegedly threw the hamburger out the window; the motorcyclist, a man who deputies have not identified, was passing in the southbound lane.

Pieces of the hamburger struck the headlight, handlebars and leg of the motorcyclist, said Sgt. David Frasca of the Ontario County Sheriff's Office.

The motorcyclist turned around and followed the car to a driveway in Hopewell. He got the license plate number, called 911, which then resulted in Cook being charged.

"When you throw something out and it hits a motorcyclist, I would assume it startles them and it very possibly could cause an accident," Frasca said.

The reckless endangerment charge is a misdemeanor. Cook is to appear in Manchester Town Court at a later date.

Professor faces pot, sex abuse charges

BY BRIAN QUINN
AND JOHN ANDERSON
GateHouse News Service

HOUGHTON | An adjunct professor and executive-in-residence at Houghton College faces charges following several allegations involving female students.

Amity-based state police Wednesday charged Craig W. Fellenstein, 55, of State Route 19, Houghton, with first-degree sexual abuse, forcible touching, unlawfully dealing with a child and fifth-degree criminal sale of marijuana.

He was released after posting \$1,000 bail.

At the time of his arrest, Fellenstein was wearing a Houghton College Inventor's Camp shirt. He is an adjunct professor of business and executive-in-residence, according to the college's Web site.

SEE POT | 5A

Kids' events offered at Michaels

ELMIRA | Michaels, the arts and crafts store has announced its upcoming events for kids aged 5-12 who are invited to come and create their own fun craft. This Saturday from 10 a.m.-noon is Knack Saturdays Summer Cookie Kit. Aug. 16 from 10 a.m.-noon will be Knack Saturdays Monogrammed Canvas. The cost per child will be \$5 which includes all supplies. There will be half-hour sessions running at 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m., and 11:30 a.m. Wilton Cake Decorating Classes begin Sunday and run until Aug. 24. Participants will learn techniques to create cakes, cupcakes, cookies, and more. Classes are offered at a 40 percent discount during the month of August. The cost is \$35 for supplies. For more information, contact Lisa Vulovich at 739-2084 or stop by a local Michaels store for a flyer of events.

PROMINENT REPUBLICANS SUPPORT DEMOCRAT



JASON COX | THE LEADER

Eric Massa, Democratic candidate for the 29th Congressional District, center, is surrounded by veterans as he announces the endorsement of two prominent Republicans in the district, retired Major Gen. John Batiste and Sherman Moreland, former Horseheads Republican Committee Chairman.

Massa gains 2 big endorsements

BY BOB RECOTTA
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CORNING | Eric Massa, Democratic candidate for the 29th Congressional District, brought out some big names Thursday to illustrate the bipartisan support for his candidacy.

Massa was joined in Centerway Square by retired Major Gen. John Batiste and Sherman Moreland, former Horseheads Republican Committee chairman, as well as more than a dozen veterans.

"I'm here to endorse Eric Massa," said Batiste, former commander of the 1st Infantry Division in Iraq. "I'm a Republican. I'm never going to change those views, but this is an important election."

Batiste, who lives in

Monroe County, said he supported Massa because he said the Corning Democrat understands national defense and the needs of veterans. He also said Massa understands the economic plight of western New York.

"I'm appalled by how our government is dealing with veterans today," Batiste said. "How we take care of vets defines our national character. At this time, it's broken."

Moreland said he's been involved in every Republican presidential campaign since 1948 except the campaign of George W. Bush. He said he's crossing party lines to support Massa because Bush and U.S. Rep. John R. "Randy" Kuhl Jr., R-Hammondsport, have abandoned the core

principles of the Republican party.

"The Bush administration has been a constitutional disaster," Moreland said. "They've involved us in an unending war that has more to do with oil than terrorism and has led to torture and rendition. They've scrapped the rule of law and habeus corpus. I want a man with the qualities to lead this country to change."

Massa said he was grateful for the show of support by many of his fellow veterans.

"I am deeply honored to be here today to receive the endorsement of so many people from both major political parties," Massa said. "Families in this district are demanding an

SEE MASSA | 5A

Kuhl: New boating law cuts red tape

BY THE LEADER STAFF

WASHINGTON, D.C. | President George W. Bush signed the Clean Boating Act Thursday that protects recreational boating in areas like the Finger Lakes.

"By the president signing the Clean Boating Act into law, he is preventing unnecessary bureaucracy that would have damaged the recreational boating industry around the nation," said John R. "Randy" Kuhl Jr., R-Hammondsport, a co-sponsor of the bill. Kuhl said the bill is a response to a recent San Francisco court ruling mandating all recreational boats be subject to the same ballast tank pollution laws as commercial ships.

The ruling would have mandated recreational boats obtain permits or face fines up to

\$32,500 a day. The court ruling was aimed at preventing the introduction of non-native species of plants and animals into the country's waterways.



KUHL

which were inadvertently introduced into the lake's ecosystems.

"In the Finger Lakes, recreational boating contributes greatly to our local economy and way of life," Kuhl said. "If Congress and the president had not acted fast on this legislation, millions of boaters would have been required to wade through bureaucratic red tape before enjoying the water."

County investigates two probation officers

BY ALEX BAUER
GateHouse News Service

HOPEWELL | The head of the Ontario County Probation Department and a senior probation officer are on paid leave as part of an investigation of the department.

John Garvey, head of the county Human Resources Department, said Terry Lee, director of probation, and Rick Geno, senior probation officer, were placed on leave so the county attorney's office could "examine facts related to internal complaints."

He would not comment on the nature of the complaints.

Last week Gary Curtiss, assistant county attorney, said employees of the department had "made allegations that they didn't feel safe."

He did say people who made the complaints did not allege criminal activity. Garvey said the investigation would continue through the end of next week.

Lee has been the county's director of probation since January of 2004. His annual salary is \$76,854.

Geno is paid \$56,648 annually. He began working for the county in January of 1989.

County seeks cat that scratched child

ELMIRA | The Chemung County Health Department is trying to locate a cat that scratched a child July 24 on the 800 block of Laurel Street in Elmira. The cat, which is

described as friendly, sometimes is referred to as "O.J." Anyone with information is asked to contact the SPCA at 732-1827 or the Chemung County Health Department at 737-2019 (737-2044 after hours).

■ Staff report

New principal appointed at Notre Dame High School

THE LEADER STAFF

SOUTHPORT | The Elmira Notre Dame High School board of trustees announced Thursday it has appointed Monica Phillips Nix, of Avon, Conn., as the school's new principal.

Nix will start in her new position on Aug. 18. She is a graduate of Regis College with a bachelor's degree in

English. She also earned a master's degree in English from Georgetown University.

"We are pleased to have someone with Monica's talent coming to Notre Dame," said Sister Mary Walter Hickey, president of the school. "We are confident our nationwide search has resulted in finding a truly

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