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Photo courtesy Adirondack Paddlefest

Adirondack Paddlefest on the Old Forge lakefront.

Paddlefest makes its return to Old Forge this weekend

The tenth annual Adirondack Paddlefest is coming to Old Forge this weekend, May 16—18, and will feature more than 75 of the leading manufacturers of canoes, kayaks and paddlesports accessories.

The event, organized by John Nemjo of Old Forge's Mountainman Outdoor Supply Company, is the nation's largest on-water

canoe and kayak expo. The weekend includes clinics, on-site test paddling, speakers, instruction, chances to win free canoes and kayaks, live music, food, fun for the whole family, with over 1,000 canoes and kayaks for sale. More than 5,000 people are expected to attend the event.

Please see PADDLEFEST, Page 17

AEDC chooses Mike Conway as new director

By M. LISA MONROE
 Express News Staff

The Adirondack Economic Development Corp. has named Mike Conway as its new executive director. The AEDC is a non-profit organization founded in 1976 to further economic development in the Adirondack Park.

"We provide financial and technical assistance to existing and emerging small businesses," said Conway.

Before taking the job with the AEDC, Conway spent some time researching the organization and speaking to people in the region about what role they felt the AEDC should play in the development of the area. He was also impressed with the organization's interest in building cohesion between disparate groups.

"Particularly impressive is the work that is being done to build partnerships and com-

monalities of interest among groups that may have been somewhat antagonistic in the past," he said.

Conway has worked in economic development for over 20 years in places as different as Buffalo, Cleveland and rural Maine. He knows there are challenges unique to the Adirondack Park, but he finds some similarities to the other regions he has served in.

"I have worked in enough communities to understand the complexities of economic development. Here, we have the Blue Line challenge; in Cleveland, an industrial exodus; in Buffalo, downtown disinvestment. I also hope to offset my inexperience in working in the park by hiring staff that are familiar with the area, understand the complexities, and are process-oriented," said Conway.

Conway sees the environment as a key area of focus. **Please see AEDC, Page 16**

Top three students in Webb class of '08 are listed

MORGAN LEVI
 Valedictorian



LEVI

Morgan Levi transferred to the Town of Webb Union Free School District from the Inlet Common school in seventh grade. She has always loved school, and when she was named Valedictorian of the class of 2008, she had plenty of warning.

"Guidance called me in about a year and a half ago and told me that unless my grades dropped drastically, I would be Valedictorian," Morgan said.

"I work hard, but I don't feel like it's as hard as people say it is. Ever since I was little, I always wanted to get things done. It gives me a sense of accomplishment. If it's not done, then I feel like I haven't worked up to my potential—because if you can, why not?"

Morgan has been on many sports teams and has participated in many of the activities that the TOW UFSD has to offer. Of all the things she's done, her trip to Honduras this year stands out as one of her favorites. She went to work as an interpreter for dentists who were volunteering to help people in the region.

She plans to major in International Studies and Language at Elmira College in the fall. J

ADAM JOSEPHSON
 Salutatorian



JOSEPHSON

Adam Josephson is proud of the fact that he has been on the Superintendent's Honor Roll every year in high school.

He says that the key to his success is good time-management.

"I do not find school hard because I am able to manage my time well. I don't let homework pile up, so I am able to spend more time doing things I like to do like playing sports. I think that I am successful because I put in the effort necessary to get high grades, I try to be respectful to teachers and others around me, and my parents are also always there for me and encouraging me to do well," Adam said.

Adam has been the Varsity Basketball Captain for two years and has done over 30 hours of community service each year for the last four years with the Key Club. Both experiences will serve him well with his major in business management at Binghamton University.

"I want to work with people and have a job where I am in a position to make important decisions." J

TREY SOCASH
 Laureate



SOCASH

Trey Socash is proud to be the laureate of the Class of 2008. He says that, although some aspects of school are not difficult for him, part of it is just plain hard work.

"I'm very proud. School comes easily to me, but I also study hard and work hard. I try to balance it all out with the sports," Trey said.

Sports factor highly in Trey's life. He's a cross country runner, and he plays baseball, soccer and basketball. Last year, he won the Babe Ruth Leadership Award, which meant a lot to him.

"It's a sportsmanship and leadership award. I'm glad that people saw me as a leader and a good sport, not just an athlete. It makes me feel really good that they respect me."

Trey has also received the Bausch & Lomb Honorary Science Award at the University of Rochester. It is a very competitive award at a competitive university. Over the next four years, the award will pay \$30,000 toward his education.

Trey is trying to decide between pre-med and architecture as a major at the University of Rochester. J