

# Utica sailor drowns

► He wasn't wearing life vest when boat capsized on Oneida Lake.

By Michele Breidenbach and Edwin Acevedo Staff Writers

CONSTANTIA — Rescue workers pulled the body of a Utica man off the floor of Oneida Lake Sunday morning, less than a day after the Boy Scout leader plunged into choppy waters while riding a Hobycat.

Allen Espinoza, 39, a Constantia native, was not wearing a life jacket, said Cleveland Fire Chief Jack Cottet, who led rescue attempts.

The Hobycat a double-hulled sailing craft, capsized about 2:30 p.m. Saturday in the middle of Oneida Lake, two miles off the hamlet of Bernhards Bay, Cottet said.

Searchers returned to the area at 8:30 a.m. Sunday and found Espinoza at the bottom of the lake about an hour later, Cottet said.

Espinoza left behind a son and a daughter, who live with their mother. He shared a trailer with a friend in Utica after he and his wife divorced, said another friend, Larry Ellis of Constantia.

"He was a good athlete, but the lake claims the best of us," Ellis said. "Al was a survivor, and that's

one of the reasons this hits me so hard."

Espinoza, a 1976 graduate of Paul V. Moore High School in Central Square, was a carpenter. He was also enrolled in classes at Mohawk Valley Community College.

"He wanted to do something else with his life," Ellis said. "He wanted to be a BOCES teacher."

Espinoza loved animals and the outdoors, and spent his free time teaching children to do the same. In the winter, he would drag an ice shanty filled with Boy Scouts onto Oneida Lake to feed hot chili to the people who were fishing, Ellis said. He taught young boys to clean fish and skin rabbits — something that didn't always make him popular with other Boy Scout leaders.

He was scoutmaster of Troop 723 Hiawatha Council until about a year ago, when parents protested his skinning animals in front of their children.

Espinoza breathed life into a woman who nearly drowned on Oneida Lake two summers ago longtime friend David Schwalm said.

Several "Hobycatters" were hanging out near the shore when they saw a woman floating in the water.

"None of us were real adept at CPR and she was turning blue," Schwalm said. "Al just took over. With one swipe of his hand, he wiped off her mouth and planted his mouth around hers and blew. We saw her stomach rise."



GARY WALTS/Staff photographer

Oswego County rescue personnel remove the body of Allen Espinoza, 39, from the marina in Constantia Sunday. About 75 people from dive teams in Madison, Oneida, Onondaga and Oswego counties helped with the search. A Sandy Creek Fire Department boat brought the body ashore.

Espinoza grew up on county Route 17 near Bernhards Bay where his friends still keep their boats. He was just learning how to sail small sailboats when he drowned.

Espinoza knew the lake and, at 6 feet tall and 225 pounds, was in good shape, Ellis said. He said Espinoza borrowed the Hobycat from a friend to sail on Saturday.

Espinoza was sailing alone but had companions with him in three other boats, Oswego County sheriff's deputies said. Cottet said one of Espinoza's friends jumped into the water after the Hobycat capsized, but was unable to rescue Espinoza because of the wind and waves.

Cottet said it took about 45 minutes for the friends to return to shore and pull the body ashore.

A helicopter and water search for Espinoza was called off about 5:30 p.m. Saturday after about two hours because high winds kicked up waves of three to four feet. Divers need to be able to get in and out of the boat, Cottet said, and high waves made it dangerous for them.

Sunday, Cottet said, winds were only about 5 mph, with foot-high waves. About 75 people from dive teams in Madison, Oneida, Onondaga and Oswego counties — from as far away as Cazenovia and Sandy Creek — helped with the search, Cottet said.

Sgt. Robert Lighthall, in charge of the marine division at the Oswego County Sheriff's Office, said the case will go to county coroner Dennis N. Hawthorne Sr. If there is an autopsy, Lighthall said, it will probably be performed by Cayuga County Medical Examiner Dr. Janice Ross.

Gail Sofia, also a Bernhards Bay sailor, said Espinoza could be alive today if he had worn his life jacket.

It's sad that a boat could come to shore with a life jacket still attached," she said. "That's the hard part to accept — that it could have been prevented. Boaters do not understand the value of the safety equipment they have until a tragedy happens."

# Doctor loses his license

► Utica obstetrician admitted drug use and is accused of causing accident.

The Associated Press

UTICA — The state Department of Health has revoked the license of a doctor who admitted to being a regular drug user and was involved in a May car crash that critically injured a woman.

Gary Lee Games, 45, an obstetrician-gynecologist, was involved in a May 1996 car crash that critically injured a woman.

Games, 44, of Onskray to University Hospital in Syracuse with skull fractures. She remained at the hospital for several weeks and is recovering at a rehabilitation center.

Doctors have said that recovery for Markowicz, who is suffering memory loss, could take one to two years.

Games was charged with nine vehicle and traffic violations, including reckless driving, six days after the crash. He failed to take an alcohol breath-screening test at the scene.

Games surrendered his medical license to the state July 4 after admitting to the charges. He can apply for reinstatement in three years, state officials said.

Games admitted to alcohol and cocaine abuse. According to the charges, he abused several drugs within the past year.

This is not the first time Games has been in trouble. His Connecticut medical license was placed on probation for three years, according to the Federal Register, and Connecticut state records show it expired in September 1989.

His Georgia medical license was revoked because he failed to renew by the end of the penalty period, according to a letter from the Georgia Composite State Board of Medical Examiners. The board said it was concerned about allegations of marijuana possession and false swearing in while Games was in the Army.

Games served in the Army on active duty for a decade and was discharged as a major in 1987. His application in 1989 for a Drug Enforcement Administration license to handle controlled substances was denied in 1992, according to the Federal Register.

The order for that denial stated Games could apply for the DEA license one year later. An administrative law judge said Games' use of cocaine and marijuana in the Army and false statements on his application for the license made him unfit to handle drugs.

# 15,000-plus drawn to antiques

► But one vendor shutdown when he tries to sell Beanie Babies.

By Erin M. Duggan Staff Writer

For the thousands of folks hunting for everything from dollar bills issued in 1935 to turn-of-the-century Grantware dishes, Liverpool's 14th annual Antiqufest was a great find.

"There's a little romance to buying something with a history to it," said Sue Liberman of Syracuse deliberating between two antique bracelets Sunday.

As the crowd wound its way through Onondaga Lake Park, 520 vendors offered deals on antique furniture, tools, kitchenware, collectibles — even player pianos.

Antiqufest co-promoter Bobi Dallas estimated the three-day event went well over last year's attendance of 15,000.

"This is a great weekend to be out and about in Syracuse," Dallas said.

"I've always liked old stuff, ever since I was a kid," said antique-jewelry dealer Dave DeLap. "The quality of workmanship was much higher, the stones were cut nicer."

So, apparently, were the dishes. Even one piece of the swirled porcelain Grantware does not come cheap — a plate from the late 1800s runs nearly \$100, said

Lorraine Zavorskas, an antiques dealer from Connecticut.

"A lot of folks like it because each piece is different," Zavorskas said. "It's a grandma's kitchen-type thing."

Grantware was discontinued in the mid-1900s, and the hunt is on for collectors trying to amass a full set. And the red king — forget about it.

"Collectors have it all," Zavorskas said.

Buying antiques is more than just acquiring old furniture, antiques lovers say.

"It's the nostalgia," said Dallas, whose work with Antiqufest has liberated a focal point in her life. "We remember the sights and smells of when we were small. It evokes memories for people — that's the greatest appeal."

Lovers of antiques say they're always searching to find that piece of work that's unique or hard to find.

"It's the value and difference of things that you can't just go out and buy now," antiques dealer Glenn Adams said. "It's the thrill of the chase, I guess they say."

Adams said he and his wife began The Old White Barn Antiques after they "collected" so many it was time to start getting rid of them.

Pat Musick and her husband, Dana, have a similar story. Tired of their jobs — she worked at IBM, he was an electrician — the

couple decided four years ago to devote themselves to their love of antiques.

It has paid off, and they couldn't be happier.

"I don't know how I worked for someone else for so long," said Pat Musick. "We choose our own shows and the money is very good."

The Musicks specialize in furniture from the mid- to late 1800s, and sell at about 20 antiques shows a year. Their larger items bring in thousands of dollars, and at the end of the day Sunday, Pat said they sold their own old dining room table.

One of the most talked-about items at the antiques fair wasn't old at all. This year's hottest toy — Beanie Babies — turned up at a number of booths at the Antiqufest. And organizers weren't happy.

Dallas declared Beanie Babies to be contraband, and ordered vendors to stop selling them. One vendor was even shut down after he sold 150 of the toys.

"There is a market for Beanie Babies," Dallas said, "but the venue for the sale of Beanie Babies is not at an antique show."

Dallas said the contract signed by vendors banned items such as Beanie Babies.

But vendor John Downey of Johnson City said he brought \$15,000 worth of the toys to the show, and sold 150 of them before he was shut down Sunday afternoon.

"For a kid to be happy today," he said, "what's the harm?"



KATHARINE GIGARELLO/Contributing photographer

NIL BATRUCH, 11, of Elbridge and Brendan Montgomery, 8 of Aurora, left, play Uno to pass the time Sunday at the Antique Fest at Long Branch Park near Liverpool.

# GOP has been in power for 20 years

■ GOP Continued from Page A5

legislature. "They'll be throwing money we can't even fathom at some of the races."

Conservative Party members account for less than 2 percent of all the county's registered voters. But they wield influence beyond their enrollment numbers. Over the years, more voters have looked at the Conservative line as a cue.

Eight years ago, 5,352 voters cast ballots on the Conservative line for county legislature candidates. They accounted for 5 percent of the 107,029 people who voted.

In the 1995 races, 8,110 people — 8.5 percent of those voting — voted on the Conservative line.

In four election years since 1989,

**"It'll be difficult to take the majority from Republicans."**

— Edward Ryan, legislator

county legislature candidates who appeared on the Conservative line won 49 times and lost 20. In contested races, however, the difference narrowed. Conservative-backed candidates won 32 races and lost 20.

One statistic is dispiriting for Democrats: Of the 10 Democrats

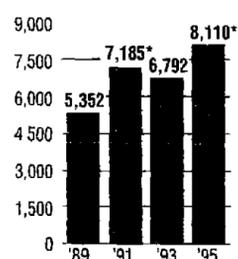
who had the Conservative line in their races against Republican incumbents since 1989, only one won. That lone Democrat victor — Delaney of North Syracuse in 1995 — defeated a Republican who had been appointed to serve out a year remaining in the term.

If Democrats hang onto the Conservative line, they think they can run close races against Andrews and Boehlert — perhaps close enough to win.

In 1993, Andrews had the Conservative line and won his first election by 965 votes over his closest competitor in a three-candidate race. In 1995, without the Conservative line, Andrews won by just 488 votes.

## The Conservative choice

The number of voters choosing Conservative Party candidates for the Onondaga County Legislature is increasing.



\*These years featured races for county executive, which may have drawn more voters to the polls.

Source: Onondaga County Board of Elections

Syracuse Newspapers

# Cash registers put to work

► Nobody knew how to program the cash registers.

By Sue Weibezahl Staff Writer

Four computerized cash registers sat in unopened boxes for two years at City Hall because no one knew how to program them.

The registers are operating and have streamlined business at the city's finance department.

Common Council members discovered in March that the computers, which cost \$1,000 each, had not been installed two years after they were purchased.

Employees of the city's information systems department completed a software program to connect each computer's data to the city mainframe, said Dan Boccardo, first deputy finance commissioner.

All four were running by early April — just in time for the busy property tax payment season, he said.

The registers are used in the finance department to take in money for property taxes and water bills.

The registers used for the past two decades were programmed to keep track of only their own transactions. Employees would then have to combine the reports to store all the information. Now, registers keep running tallies and transmit the data automatically to the main city computer lines, Boccardo said.

The old registers also broke down regularly, often stalling operations for weeks.

# Nine Mile nuclear plants start operations review

► Nuclear Regulatory Commission orders systems check.

By Mary Jo Hill Staff Writer

SCRIBA — The three nuclear power plants at Nine Mile Point have started a lengthy review to make sure the facilities operate the way they were originally designed.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is requiring all the commercial nuclear power plants in the country to certify that they conform to their designs.

The NRC's request came after problems were found at other plants.

All three Millstone nuclear plants in New London, Conn., were out of compliance with their plant designs, said Diane Screnici, an NRC

spokeswoman. Changes to the designs hadn't been documented or the plants hadn't followed the right process for making the changes, she said.

Similar problems were found at the Maine Yankee plant in Bath, Maine, Screnici said.

Niagara Mohawk Power Corp. started its review in late May at Nine Mile Point 1 and 2 in Scriba, said Alberto Bianchetti, a utility spokesman. The work is expected to be done by the end of next year. About 18 people are dedicated to the project, Bianchetti said.

The group is making sure the plants are operated and maintained in a way that is consistent with their designs, Bianchetti said.

The utility will look at the base-line blueprint for the plants and at the documentation that supports the design, Bianchetti said.

For example, a check might be made on a system that is supposed to have 3,600 gallons of

water per minute flowing through it, Bianchetti said.

Workers would examine whether calculations and engineering work show the system is able to pump that much water, Bianchetti said. Niagara Mohawk would also check whether the system has been tested at 3,600 gallons per minute, he said.

The review requires a significant financial cost, said Bianchetti, but he wouldn't give a specific figure.

So far, Barry Norris, the NRC's senior resident inspector for Nine Mile 1 and 2, said he hasn't been informed of any significant instances where the plants aren't complying with the design.

The James A. FitzPatrick Nuclear Power plant, said Mike Redding, a spokesman for the New York Power Authority. The work is expected to take at least one to two years, he said.

# Merchants don't sing the blues

■ MERCHANTS Continued from Page A5

is closed," said John Lyons, working Sunday at the Liverpool Sport-center sporting goods store, pushing in-line skates. "They don't have a clue what's going on."

Parker heard the same type of questions from his customers over the weekend.

"No one came around before the event asking me to post anything," he said with a shrug.

There are merchants, event coordinators, museum directors and politicians who want that to change.

The Metropolitan Development Association has been asked by Assemblyman Michael Bragman, D-Cicero, to develop a plan to coordinate marketing and promotion of the entertainment and retail assets and events in Central New York.

In about a week, the MDA will present that plan to Bragman to see what money-fueled action can be taken.

The study can take a hint from Bruce Block, owner of Antique Underground in Syracuse's Armory Square.

"I used to be closed Sundays," said Block, showing an antique diamond ring to a customer Sunday afternoon and acknowledging festival-goers were straggling into his shop. "Now, I'm open on Sundays straight through the year because there's so much going on. Sundays have been profitable."

The last to clean up from one of the festivals would be counting their money in nickels.

Four men pushing shopping carts down Clinton Street Sunday night will be pointing them toward redemption centers. They had the empty beer cans and bottles that overflowed trash cans and the lawns around Clinton Square.

"It's not you there's 200 cans in there," said one of them. They didn't want give their names. "That's a lot of cans."