

County elects "kid councillor"

from Amherst Island

"I'd like to see the courthouse project finished this year, not on budget, but underbudget."

— Steven Willard

By Julie White
Beaver Staff Reporter

A few more pages have been added to the history books of Lennox and Addington County.

On Wednesday, the youngest-ever warden of the county was elected to guide L & A through 1994. Twenty-three year-old Steven Willard, reeve of Amherst Island has swiftly climbed the ladder of municipal politics.

Known as the "kid councillor" who then became reeve, Willard has proven he is ready to take

the reigns of county council in what is expected to be a fiscally-challenging year.

Accepting the ceremonial gavel from outgoing warden Lorraine Berger of Denbigh, some county councillors noted they have now had representation from the northernmost part of the county to the southernmost tip in two years.

The last time county council elected a warden from Amherst Island, Willard was still in diapers. A seemingly endless knowledge of county history emanates from the new warden, who has, over his term on county council, expressed his pride in being able to represent L & A's unique Amherst Island.

"There have been three wardens in the 19th or early 20th century from Amherst Island," he recalled. "The last warden from the island was over 20

years ago; it was Vince Aitkins."

Willard has graduated with an English history degree from Queen's University and plans to return in the future to begin a career in law.

Nominated by Napanee reeve Bud Calver and seconded by Camden reeve Duane Williams, Willard won the wardenship on two ballots over his county council colleagues Wayne Parks of North Fredericksburgh and Howard Cuthill from Richmond.

In making the nomination, Calver said, "I think (Willard) has quite a political future ahead of him if he decides to stay in politics."

Williams agreed, adding Willard has stood at county council and effectively expressed his opinions and was very effective in debate.

In his campaign speech, Willard provided county resi-

dents with a bit of hope for their next tax bill. "We are facing, as taxpayers of this county, an increase in taxes in the last number of years. Times are tough," he added, calling for no increases in 1994's taxes.

Noting how his municipal council of Amherst Island was able to hold the line in its 1993 budget, Willard also knows it is difficult to achieve.

One area where he has already decided to trim the fat is on the annual warden's banquet. "Times are tough, I think we have to be really careful and set the tone. Let's make it a little more lean, more streamlined.

"Similar to this," he continued, "I'd like to see the courthouse project finished this year, not on budget, but underbudget." He said this request is



New warden Steve Willard.

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