

# New Colton Dems Seek Party Coup

By LARRY ROBINSON

COLTON - A new slate of Democrats in the town of Colton is hoping that the promise of creating a primary-based system of choosing candidates for office instead of holding a traditional Democratic caucus will lure Democrats to the polls on Sept. 9 and sweep some of the party's old guard aside.

In a letter to the editor published in today's newspaper, four Democrats running for a seat on the town's Democratic Party Committee on Sept. 9 say they are hoping to take over the party in hopes of getting more people involved in the political process.

The town of Colton has two election districts and the four incumbents who now oversee party operations are all up for re-election.

Currently on the Colton Democratic Committee are Joan Kilroy and Sally Seymour in District one, and Dan McNamara and Mary McKinley in District Two.

They are being challenged for control of the party by Roger Dusharm and Christine Murphy in the first district and Dennis Eickhoff and Al Gotsch in district number two.

In today's letter to the editor the challengers suggest they are hoping to take over the Democratic Party in Colton with the promise of getting rid of the old caucus system and having open primaries in order to choose candidates for general elections.

"Colton's current procedure for selecting Democratic candidates for the general election is a caucus. This has long been the Town's practice and we feel it is time for a change," write Dusharm, Murphy, Eickhoff and Gotsch. "The last caucus was held in Aug. 2007 with only 28 voters participating, currently there are close to 400 registered Democrats in Colton's two districts."

The letter writers go on to say that in their opinion the main responsibility of the Colton Democratic Committee is to recruit and support candidates to represent the community.

Elected officials in Colton include the town supervisor, members of the town council, highway superintendent, assessor and town clerk.

"We believe a primary would better serve the people of Colton by increasing the

**See COUP Page 2**

## Continued From Page 1

opportunity for voter participation," argue the Democratic challengers. "Whereas a caucus might only last an hour or two, a primary would run from Noon until 9 p.m."

All four positions on the Democratic committee are up for grabs next month with the winners serving a two year term at the party's helm.

In addition to the Democratic party committee election the Republicans will also be

selecting new committee members in Colton as well.

Currently serving on the GOP committee in Colton's District one are Grace Hawley and Ronald Robert, and District two is represented by Nancy Shea and Marion Thomas.

Challengers to the GOP incumbents are Peggy Mousaw Reginald Stowe in District one and Richard Wood and Edwin Wright.

Wood holds the distinction of being the only deputy town

supervisor in St. Lawrence County not elected in a general election.

He was appointed by Republican Supervisor William Swafford who did not want to appoint any of his fellow board members to the deputy post following a bitter election season in which fellow GOP councilman Hawley challenged him in the primaries and lost and then ran an unsuccessful general election campaign against him as a member of the Conservative Party.