

Deerfield's WGAJ Rides The Airwaves

By Henry LeMieux

Deerfield's radio station, WGAJ, after nearly one year's delay, began regularly scheduled program test broadcasting last week. The Federal Communications Commission's final approval is expected early next month.

The station's 150-watt transmitter, after what Technical Director Mark Beaubien called "red tape and studio and audio equipment delays," passed mid-February tests and began regular broadcasting on FM 91.7.

The F.C.C. license will upgrade WGAJ's status from test to official, according to Beaubien, although it will not affect already established programming. "Now we can join the ranks of any other professional station in terms of quality", he announced.

The non-commercial, educational station's format is tailored to meet the needs of the Acad-

emy, which were determined after a mid-winter poll. Pop, Rock n' Roll and jazz were determined to be the students' preferences, Beaubien revealed, adding, "We want to be diverse."

The tentative broadcast hours, derived from the poll, will be 6:00 to 10:00 a.m., and 4:00 to 10:00 p.m. weekly; and 8:00 a.m. to midnight on weekends. This allows 78 hours of weekly broadcasting, creating a large disc-jockey demand.

Requirements for DJ's include original show format, private record collections, and an F.C.C. license. Fifty tryouts were held February 17-19, and with one-hour shows, there is room for more. But Beaubien warns, "We have to adhere strictly to good operating practices."

Dean of Students Brad Hastings, prospective DJ, added, "It can be fun and serve worthwhile functions in the community."



photo by Higgins

Technical Director Mark Beaubien spins a disc for Deerfield's WGAJ, assisted by Bill Kaufmann.