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Municipal Experts Offer Advice to Council on Search

St. Ignace City Council To Choose New City Manager This Month

By Ryan Schlehuber

St. Ignace City Council will begin shaving its list of 31 applicants for city manager at a special meeting Thursday, November 3, at 4 p.m., and hopes to reduce the list to five or less. Council members have been reviewing each application and have been asked to come to the meeting Thursday with a list

of their top five candidates. As a group, they will then try to arrive at a consensus as to their top candidates to be interviewed.

Council hopes to make a selection on or near November 15.

The *St. Ignace News* asked three experts and leaders in the public administration field to offer their advice on finding the right person

to fill the post, which will be vacated December 31 by Gary Heckman, who has retired.

Joe Ohren is a professor in the Political Science Department at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti. His areas of concentration are public administration, public budgeting, local government politics, and management.

John Amrhein is a district, state, and local government educator for Michigan State University Extension office in Cadillac. He conducts a series of county commissioner workshops, budget and finance workshops, and lectures on media rights and intergovernmental cooperation throughout the state, including Mackinac County.

Dan Gilmartin is the executive director for Michigan Municipal League (MML). Mr. Gilmartin has been with the organization since 1996 and served as the organization's State and Federal Affairs director from 1996 to 2000. During his time with the MML, Mr. Gilmartin has played a lead role in increasing the effectiveness of the

league's advocacy efforts and improving its vast array of programs for municipalities.

Professor Ohren, Mr. Gilmartin, and Mr. Amrhein were asked just what makes a good candidate and what type of experience and characteristics that person should have to be successful as St. Ignace's city manager.

Today's City Managers

"Historically, managers came from technical fields, primarily

**Please turn to page 2*

Mining Operation May Have Major U.P. Impact

Will Sulfide Project Compromise Economy, Water?

By Paul Gingras

At the western end of the Upper Peninsula, a sulfide mining operation proposed by Utah-based Kennecott Minerals Corporation has sparked controversy and led to speculation that the Upper Peninsula could become a new sulfide mining region, possibly leading to the disruption of the tourist economy.

Mackinac County Commissioners Dawn Nelson, James Farero, and Joe Durm were among those attending an October 6 meeting called by the Upper Peninsula Commission on Area Progress (UPCAP) to educate county commissioners on a variety of issues, including the pros and cons of a proposed sulfide mine near Marquette, called the Eagle Project.

"We got both sides of the issue," said Mr. Farero. "At this point, I'm not sure it will be a boom to the economy or destroy the environment. I will be doing further research."

Commissioner Nelson agreed.

"It appears to me that there needs to be more study done on sulfide mining," she said.

"I don't think we should allow the project due to the potential dangers to the environment," Mr. Durm said. "There is not a strong enough economic reward. If this mine were to provide jobs that lasted 30 years, that would be one thing, but it offers only a three-to-four year employment base."

Mr. Durm also objected to the generators and other heavy equipment Kennecott would operate in the field.

Mining is old news in Michi-

gan, said Hal Fitch, State Geologist and director of the Office of Geological Survey of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), but the mining operation proposed by Kennecott deals with a different type of ore than U.P. mines are traditionally known for.

Most mines in the U.P., he said, have extracted iron oxide and native copper. The ores that Kennecott proposes to mine are metallic sulfides, combinations of metals like nickel with sulfur. When these types of rock are exposed to air or water, a chemical reaction produces sulfuric acid, the same acid used in car batteries. According to Mr. Fitch, the process can also release heavy metals like lead, zinc, and arsenic into groundwater and streams.

"If not properly controlled and managed," Mr. Fitch said, "it could lead to serious concerns over water contamination."

Jon Cherry, project manager for Kennecott, said if approved, the mine will employ about 120 people for a time period between 8.5 and 11 years. In a public information meeting at Northern Michigan University, he said 75 percent of these workers would be local.

The mine being proposed, he said, would be a relatively small one compared with existing iron-ore mines in the region. It would have what Mr. Cherry called a "direct ship" option, meaning that the rock would not be processed on site, thereby avoiding the storage of highly toxic debris left over, called tailings.

**Please turn to page 8*

Old-Fashioned Barn Raising at Hessel...

Neighbors, Friends Join Together To Help Build Barn for Family Who Lost Father



Volunteer workers place siding on the addition to the Leach family barn. (Photograph courtesy of Debbie Swaffield)

By Amy Polk

A group of friends turned a tragedy into a demonstration of neighborly kindness as nearly 60 people gathered to help the Leach family of Hessel build an addition to their barn.

Suzie Leach and her children, Kevin and Stephanie, lost a husband and father, Jesse Leach, when he died as the result of an accident in September. Mr. Leach had been preparing to build a large addition to the family's barn, and bought all the materials the week before his death. Mr. Leach's friend and employer, Tim LaForest of River

Country Stone in Hessel, organized an impromptu "barn raising" with the help of some of Mr. Leach's friends, including Jimmy Lee of Hessel, Goose Windsor of Les Cheneaux Dock and Dredge, Carl Reich of Pickford, and Steve Autore of Cedarville, among many others who came forward to offer assistance. Yogi Gugin and J.C. Cardinal of Mackinac Island also helped, and Brian Blowski, who owns Brian's Barbecue on Mackinac Island, donated hot dogs and bratwursts for the day-long event. Mr. Leach worked for many years on Mackinac

Island, and drove horse teams on the Island, Pickford, and in the Les Cheneaux area.

Friends and family of the Leaches gathered Saturday, September 24, to build the 20-foot by 24-foot addition to the barn. Most of the families who came brought food to sustain the workers throughout the day.

"We had a big turnout, starting at about 9 a.m., and we got it done around 6 p.m.," Mr. LaForest said. "A group of us is planning to go back and finish the stalls inside one of these days,

**Please turn to page 10*

Great Waters Eco-Tourism Conference Set for Thursday, Nov. 10 in St. Ignace

By Paul Gingras

A workshop designed to unite Eastern Upper Peninsula businesses in promoting nature-based tourism under the banner, "The Treat Waters," will be held in St. Ignace Thursday, November 10, from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the Econo Lodge Inn & Suites on US-2. Organizers seek to bring more tourists into the area by focusing on the unique natural features provided by the close proximity of Lakes Michigan, Huron, and Superior.

Following the session in St. Ignace, a second workshop will be held in Sault Ste. Marie at the Best Western in the I-75 business spur. The meeting will be begin at 1 p.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. November 10.

For businesses farther west, a third seminar will be held Friday, November 11, at the AmericInn in Munising. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 12:30 p.m.

The Great Waters project is designed to serve visitors with specific interests in such things as lighthouses, but who are open to other outdoor activities, such as exploring shipwrecks or bird watching, said Linda Hudson,

committee chair for the workshop. The concept promotes nature tourism by streamlining interests, focusing travelers on particular nature spots, and linking these spots and the people who visit them to businesses through brochures and a Web site.

Under nature-based tourism, visitors pass through interesting natural places purely for enjoyment's sake. Nature tourism focuses on ecological patterns and natural events and is conducted in a way that protects the natural places visited, as well as the human communities nearby. Visitors have a low impact on the sites, thus keeping the areas visited unspoiled for future generations.

Ms. Hudson is a member of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Nature Tourism Alliance (EUPNTA), which is a collaboration of five of the easternmost counties in the Upper Peninsula. The Alliance is comprised of tourism professionals, conservation groups, regional, local and tribal governments, non-profit partners, public land managers, and hundreds of U.P. businesses all working together to develop an experiential tourism product. This "product" does more

than simply show off unique places, Ms. Hudson said. It educates tourists about the locations themselves, why certain areas were settled, and how communities evolved, while focusing on the unique aspects of the natural world which surround them.

It's called nature-based tourism, but it is intended to include history, culture, with nature as the platform on which everything stands.

"For example," she said, "if you go to Cedarville Bay, you see a lot of reeds. This type of program would explain that these reeds are part of a rare Great Lakes marsh ecosystem which supports unique birds, fish, and wildlife." EUPNTA focuses on the nature, history, and culture of the EUP. Ms. Hudson added. The goal of the Alliance is to increase entrepreneurial opportunities, creating jobs and markets for local products by enhancing the traditional tourism industry.

Marketing EUP destinations together under The Great Waters project will help visitors understand links between areas such as Pictured Rocks and the Soo Locks

**Please turn to page 9*

County Officials Get Raise

By Karen Gould

County Commissioners finalized 2006 salary increases for the county's elected officers, including raising their own salaries at a meeting Thursday, October 27. All elected officials will receive a two percent increase effective January 1, except for the county clerk, who will receive a three percent raise. In addition to the two percent increase, the prosecutor will receive a \$3,000 one-time bonus. Commissioners will not see their two percent increase until January 2007. They also raised the mileage rate paid for travel.

Beginning January 2006, salaries will be \$44,278.96 for the clerk, \$42,826.55 for the treasurer, \$41,800.69 for the register of deeds, \$73,993.61 for the prosecuting attorney, \$47,435.99 for the assistant prosecuting attorney, \$48,708.22 for the sheriff, and \$44,270.40 for the undersheriff.

Commissioners gave Clerk Mary Kay Tamlyn the added increase to compensate her for potential new duties now that they have eliminated the assistant to the board. Commissioners were not sure what additional duties she would take on, but Mrs. Tamlyn speculated they might need help with situations involving the building and grounds. Grant seeking was not discussed.

The \$3,000 bonus for Prosecutor W. Clayton Graham was proposed by Commissioner Joe Durm and tied to the vote for the raises. Prior to that, Commissioner Jim Farero had proposed elected officials receive their raises and he and Larry Leveille voted in favor, but Dawn Nelson and Joe Durm voted against the motion. With Commissioner Carl Frazier was absent, the tie vote was considered a "no" vote, which then opened up

**Please turn to page 9*

Ready for Halloween Fun



First grade students Melissa Worden (left) and Calie Kammers shared witching ideas as they prepared to parade through the St. Ignace Middle School gymnasium Friday, October 28. The students are in Kari Visnaw's class.

Polls Open Nov. 8 for City Election

St. Ignace voters will go to the polls Tuesday, November 8, to fill three open seats on City Council. Only three candidates are running for the three vacant four-year terms, incumbents Don Gustafson and Susan Tamlyn Massaway and newcomer Tom Della-Moretta. Also running unopposed is Mayor Bruce Dodson, who seeks another two-year term.

Election profiles of each candidate were published in the October 27 issue of *The St. Ignace News*.

Polls open at Little Bear East Arena at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m.