

County Commissioners To Consider Funding Requests From Social Agencies

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Ruegg, to meet with commissioners.

"Your local board is probably one of the best boards that I've ever had," said Mr. DesArmo. "They are very compassionate, but they don't waste money, either, and that's probably the perfect combination you want in a board."

The Human Services agency now receives \$9,000 from the county. It serves poor people and administers the food stamps program for 253 families in the county.

"Contrary to public perception, the families we have on food

stamps are all basically working families," said Mr. DesArmo. "They are making so little amount of money that they are eligible for food stamps. Most of these families are working full time, but they are making minimum wage and can't make enough to get by."

The agency also assists seniors to stay in their home by providing help with daily needs like house cleaning, putting up storm windows, and assisting with shopping. Nursing care in a nursing care facility costs about \$4,500 a month, but when seniors are able to receive nursing care at home, it costs the agency approximately \$800 a month.

Mr. DesArmo provided commissioners with an example of a family of three that receives assistance. Based on rent of \$350, the family would receive \$794, he said.

"Mackinac County people are so community-oriented and there is such a strong sense of caring, I've never been worried about anybody going without in this community," said Mr. DesArmo.

He told commissioners the Human Services agency, which also is supported by tax dollars, is "basically broke." He added, "It's not good in the State of Michigan."

The agency administers finan-

cial assistance and social service programs, including food stamps, children's protective services, child care services, medical assistance, state emergency relief, and foster care.

Mackinac County contributes \$8,000 to the EUP Regional Planning and Development, which comprises part of a 25-percent local fund match for a federal Economic Development Administration grant. The grant allows the region to be an economic development district. The funding also covers any planning or zoning projects for any township or municipality in the county, said Mr. Hagan. Last year, the agency worked with Portage Township to update its land use plan.

The multi-county agency is a

Grief Program Set at Pickford Dec. 8

The families and friends of people who have died can learn methods for coping with grief, particularly during the holidays, at a program Thursday, December 8, at Reamer Galer Funeral Home in Pickford.

Helpful Hints for Coping with the Holidays will be led by Wanda Erickson, bereavement group coordinator for Hospice of Chippewa County. The program will start at 7 p.m. and end at 7:45 p.m. A candle lighting memorial service will follow at 8 p.m.

Anyone who needs transportation to the program, can call the funeral home at (906) 647-3400.

Local Families Open Homes to Adoption

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Reaching the Happy Ending

Thursday, November 10, marked the beginning of a new life for Noelle Brant, as Pam and Terry finalized the adoption through the Mackinac County Probate Court in St. Ignace.

"She sees us as mom and dad," said Noelle's new mother.

Mrs. Brant said her brother, Noelle's biological father, is happy for Noelle and continues to be a part of her life.

"She calls him Uncle Ralph," said Mrs. Brant.

Noelle's new sisters, Leah and Felicia, "treat her like a little Cabbage Patch doll," she said. "They have definitely taken her in."

"It's the greatest thing that probably has ever happened to me," said Mr. Brant, fighting back tears of joy. "I'm very proud of her. It's an awesome feeling to be able to help her and get her out of the state system and make her one of ours."

"It's a wonderful feeling," said Noelle's grandmother, Mrs. Borski. "The process took so long, but it was so worth it."

Mr. Brant said the family eagerly awaits Christmas and plan to make Noelle's first Christmas with her

new family a special one.

Noelle, who will celebrate her fourth birthday on New Year's Day, will begin school next fall.

To Morgan, now two, and Marissa, now three, life is "business as usual," said Ms. Sherwood. She completed the adoption process Tuesday, November 22, and for her and Mr. Buskirk, life after the adoption process is now a little sweeter.

"We've always been mommy and daddy to them," said Ms. Sherwood. "It's been a long process, but I'm very happy for them. It feels great."

The girls even call him by his nickname, "Buzzy," said Mr. Buskirk.

"I have 10 grandkids, so raising them won't bother me a bit," he said. "My family has welcomed them in. Most of them have already babysat for the girls, even my ex-wife!"

Seeing Elisabeth for the first time was a bit difficult, said Mrs. Penner, mostly because they were unsure what she looked like, having only been given a small portrait of her when she was younger. But once Elisabeth was brought into the arms of Mrs. Penner, their bond became strong.

"For the first few minutes, she

held on tight to me," said Mrs. Penner. "She cried a bit in the beginning, but it was only for like 10 seconds."

After spending almost a week with Elisabeth in China, the Penners began helping their new daughter get accustomed to her home in St. Ignace.

At first, she did not go to her new father much, mostly because she was used to being cared for by females, said Mr. Penner. She gradually warmed up to both of them, however.

Today, the two-year-old happily clings to her mother and father, reserving no signs of shyness to them or to others, asking for kisses and hugs, and warming to new people with the repeated greeting, "Hi." "I don't feel like this was a second-best choice for us," Mr. Penner said. "Looking back at it all, we are very glad God worked it out this way. It was God's best plan to have Elisabeth in our lives. He worked out all the details."

The Penners are now in the process of adopting another baby from China.

Mackinaw City Tourism Plans Set

*Continued from page 3

lar images and these organizations also are involved in revamping of Mackinaw City's image.

The Chesapeake Group, Inc. of Baltimore, Maryland has been hired to work on the new marketing concept with Mackinaw City and has spent the past summer and fall processing surveys and holding discussion groups with business owners and residents.

When the analysis and new images are finished, Ms. McFarland said, a task force formed by members of the Chamber of Commerce, the Village Council, and the Visitors Bureau will decide whether to implement the plan.

"This should happen by the end of the year," she added, "and the new marketing strategies will be phased in slowly over the next two years."



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Lakeshore Condominiums-In town convenience with waterfront perks are yours in this 2 bedroom loft unit located at the north end of the **SOLD** Ignace. Great views of Rabbits Back Peak from your private deck overlooking Lake Huron. 300 ft. shared frontage, someone else cares for the yard. \$139,900 #234151

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#337-05-0011 - GOULD CITY - 3 bdr, 3 bath home with custom built kitchen cabinets and ceramic tile. Good hunting area and State Land nearby. Not far from Lake Michigan or the snowmobile trails. Located on a year round paved road. If you like privacy, this is sitting on 16 acres. **Seller's are MOTIVATED!!! \$185,000**

#337-05-0031 - ENGADINE - PRICE REDUCED!!! 3 bdr, 1 bath home close to School and walking distance to town. Could use a little TLC. **\$65,000**

#337-05-0039 - CURTIS - Great cabin in an association with 300' of sand frontage on South Manistique Lake with 2 bdr & 1 bath. New dock & comes with a boat hoist and row boat. Comes completely furnished. Yearly association dues apply. Located across the street from Fish and Hunt. **\$100,000**

#337-05-0047 - NAUBINWAY - NEW LISTING!!! 3 bdr, 2 bath cottage on Millecoquin River on the Hiawatha Sportsman's Club with attached garage & sun porch. Comes furnished & appliances. Open floor plan and a fireplace. Back up wood stove in the garage. Prior membership approval required. **\$155,000**

#337-05-0048 - NAUBINWAY - NEW LISTING!!! 3 bdr, 2 bath manufactured home that would make a nice starter home or use as a rental. Could use some TLC & does not have any appliances. There is room for a garage on the property. **\$59,900**



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Mr. Harma from Hiawatha Behavioral Health told commissioners the \$45,900 in funding they provide the agency is the amount of funding given in 1997 as frozen funds, which was the rule established when the agency was formed that year. That amount could be reduced, if state funding is reduced, said Mr. Harma.

"Counties are responsible for 10 percent of the net cost of services provided by the department to their residents, either directly or by contract," said Mr. Harma.

Last year, \$1,659,000 was spent in Mackinac County. He noted 254 child cases were handled last year. Hiawatha Behavioral Health provides mental health services to residents in Mackinac, Schoolcraft, and Chippewa counties.

The agency's total budget for 2006 is \$15,653,000, with 73 percent coming from Medicaid, 16 percent from the state's general fund, and 11 percent in matching funds from counties, Mr. Harma said.

Commissioners next meet Thursday, December 1, at 1:30 p.m. in the commissioners' room in the county's annex building.

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New listing! \$350,000, Cedarville, a rare, one-of-a-kind sandy beach, 232.65' deep waterfront located on Les Cheneaux's Moscoe Bay in Lake Huron. Parcel is secluded with a crib dock (parcel can be split). 2.96 acres.

2. **\$160,000, 100 acres**, hunters' paradise, deer, bear, game in abundance, adjoins 3 Federal land tracts, near Brevort Lake, St. Ignace (5 miles past Moran down Worth Road).

3. **\$125,000, 80 acres**, Aldrich Road, M-48, well, creek, trailer.

4. **Reduced! \$90,000, DeTour Village**, 60 acres with a mix of pine and cedar, south Caribou Lake Road.

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ST IGNACE - Chain Lake property with well & septic in place & electric underground. 2 car garage with a portion being finished & livable. Storage building & boat dock! (93712) \$175,000

TROUT LAKE - 3 BR, 2 bath home in like new condition on nicely landscaped 150'x155' lot. Detached 2 car garage & 8'x12' storage building. (93695) **Reduced! \$98,500**

ST IGNACE - 263 acres, mostly wooded & approximately 1/2 of a private fishing lake with fish plus extensive 3700' 4 BR, 2 bath year round home! (05-237) \$555,000

CEDARVILLE - 3 BR, 3 bath custom built home on the southern shore set among massive cedars & evergreens. Crib dock w/deep water boat shelter. (04-94106) \$795,000

CEDARVILLE - On Cedarville Bay, cottage/home with 126' of waterfrontage, fantastic views from large deck! Custom woodwork, stone fireplace & more. (05-72) \$279,900

HESSEL - 3 BR, 2 bath on 5 acres of hardwoods. Affordable. Up north recreational getaway, rental, retirement or starter home. (05-979) **Reduced! \$63,000**

HESSEL - Beautiful hardwoods w/partial clearing & 3BR home. Hunt, garden, horseback, snowmobile & nature walk right out your back door. (05-994) **Reduced! \$148,000**

VACANT LAND

ST IGNACE - Great building site with 2.66 acres on M-134 with 226' on the road. Wooded property with culvert already in. (04-92651) \$22,000

CEDARVILLE - 637' hard, sand bottom shoreline w/southern exposure. 10 acres from Sheppard Bay to Kromiller Rd. Blacktop road access. (04-93075) \$675,000

CEDARVILLE - 100' Lake Huron lot with deep water frontage. Semi-private lane to pristine waterfront building site. (04-93455) \$249,900

HESSEL - Rare find with over 1400' of shoreline. 4.8 pristine wooded acres & spectacular view in all directions. Short boat ride from Hessel. (05-404) \$649,000

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CEDARVILLE - Prime commercial building on busy main highway in Cedarville. Suitable for any type retail or office business. Great location! (04-93066) \$279,000

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