

First Ice Fishing Contest Draws 192 to Raber Area; Mike Pelak Takes Top Prize



Mike Potoczak of Goetzville draws for a door prize in the children's division of the Raber Area Sportsmen's Club ice fishing tournament Saturday, March 11. (Photographs courtesy of the Raber Area Sportsmen's Club)

Bruce Bigger Wins Second Place Prize

Mike Pelak of Raber won the first Raber Area Sportsmen's Club (RASC) ice fishing contest with a 1.3-pound yellow perch he pulled from Raber Bay Saturday, March 11. He won \$300 and also won another \$100 for catching the only whitefish, which weighed 4 pounds, 4 ounces.

Bruce Bigger of St. Ignace took second place and \$200 with a 1.1-pound perch, while Alec LaPoint of DeTour won third place and \$100 for his .675-pound perch.

Samantha Pontbriand of Lapeer won first place in the children's division for her perch, which was just over two ounces. She received a new fishing pole set.

Don Laitinen of Sault Ste. Marie won \$350 for the best hand in a poker run held during the tournament.

The first ice fishing contest hosted by the club drew 192 participants, who took off from the shores of Raber Bay on snowmo-



Raber Area Sportsmen's Club member Chuck Warner of Raber shuttles fisherman to the fishing grounds.

biles and on foot on a bright, warm Saturday afternoon. Air temperatures were warm, but the ice was cold because of stiff winds on the bay, RASC Secretary Andrea McDonald said.

Club members prepared an 80-acre area of the bay before the event by drilling 1,000 holes in the ice. Contestants selected their holes and were allowed to fish for

only four hours. The contest was short, but sweet, netting large cash prizes for the three largest perch and one largest whitefish caught that day.

Every child who caught a fish received a prize, and approximately 20 youth participants were registered in the contest.

The sportsmen's club gave free Polish sausage to help keep con-

testants warm, and a carnival-like atmosphere pervaded the event.

Encouraged by the support, the club hopes to make the tournament twice as big next year.

A portion of the proceeds from the event has been earmarked for the Raber Area Sportsmen's Club's walleye planting program on the St. Marys River and for clubhouse construction.

Clark Twp. Adopts 3% Pay Raises for Elected Officials

By Amy Polk

Clark Township will give 3.38 percent raises to its supervisor, clerk, treasurer, and two trustees, the township board decided Thursday, March 16. Clerk Cathy Nordquist made the motion to adopt the raises, which are based on a federal cost of living adjustment, and to maintain office hours at the township hall from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

An ad hoc Clark Township Compensation Committee last month recommended officials receive no more than two percent raises, but that "any increase in salary over and above the recommendations of this committee should reflect an increase in township office hours, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m."

Trustee Tammy Cruickshank voted against the motion and individual pay resolutions for each position. The raises were effective Friday, March 17.

Supervisor Linda Hudson, Clerk Cathy Nordquist, and Treasurer Katie Carpenter will now be paid \$770.28 on a bi-weekly basis, or \$385.14 per week for 30 hours of work. They previously received \$745.10, or \$372.55 per week. The two trustees, Dana Leach and Tammy

Cruickshank, will now make \$556.32 per quarter, up from \$538.13; and will continue to get \$75 per meeting.

The board received a letter from James Romanuk of Hessel, owner of Hessel Bay Inn, requesting action on sidewalks he said need repair and parking problems in downtown Hessel.

To address parking problems in the summer, he recommended that Clark Township paint parallel parking lines along Pickford Avenue and suggested the township widen the road to accommodate parking on both sides of the street.

"It would also be good to address the abuse of overnight parking by the public, sometimes leading into days before a vehicle is moved," he wrote.

Mr. Romanuk's primary parking is on the street, and people who park overnight on the street next to his business take up spaces that could potentially go to morning breakfast customers.

He complained that the sidewalk in front of his business needs repair and has tripped pedestrians. He recommended the sidewalk be extended to the Hessel Post Office.

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Texas Hold'em Tournament Planned by Historical Society

A Texas Hold'em poker tournament is being scheduled for Saturday, April 8, at Little Bear East Conference Center and Ice Arena by the Michilimackinac Historical Society. The group is seeking at least 25 volunteers to deal cards and to help operate the event.

Volunteers who do not know the game of Texas Hold'em will be trained by Keith Massaway, Michilimackinac Historical Society president, and others who know the game. Training, Mr. Massaway said, may only take half an hour.

The no-limit poker game is played with up to 10 people per table and has been made popular by tournaments that are televised over cable television. The winner in St. Ignace will be awarded \$500 and a trophy, and all proceeds will be used by the Michilimackinac Historical Society for its projects, said Mr. Massaway.

Participants must be 21 or older and pay an entry fee of \$55 per person, which includes snacks and one beverage. No alcohol will be served.

The historical society is also forming an oral history committee to record interviews with residents of the Eastern Upper Peninsula about their memories. The inter-

views will begin this fall.

Vice President Jennifer McGraw is collecting names of interested people and is making a list of potential interviewees for the committee. Dennis Rippet of Brevort Lake is the committee chairman.

Mrs. McGraw is also seeking to add a number of Michigan history books to the St. Ignace Public Library that are recognized by the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries as "essential to Michigan history." The list was selected by a team of noted historians and includes a authors from Mackinac Island, including former Mackinac State Historic Parks Deputy Director David Armour and Island summer resident Brian Dunnigan. Dr. Armour's "At the Crossroads: Michilimackinac During the American Revolution," co-written with Keith Widder and published in 1986, is on the list, as well as Mr. Dunnigan's book, "Frontier Metropolis: Picturing Early Detroit, 1701-1838," published in 2001.

Also on the list is George Weeks' book, "Stewards of the State: The Governors of Michigan," published in 1991. Mr. Weeks' syndicated Michigan Politics column is published weekly in *The St. Ignace News*.

Tribal, City Police Undergo Stun-Gun Training Exercise

By Ryan Schlehuder

Getting shot with 50,000 volts of electricity was all part of the training program for a dozen tribal and city police officers at Little Bear East Conference Center in St. Ignace Wednesday, March 15. Enduring the five-second jolt is required to be certified in the use of the non-lethal stun gun, which police use to subdue unruly law-breakers.

The course for Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians police officers was taught by tribal officer Rich Cullen and St. Ignace City Police officer Ryan Diehl. It lasted more than three

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- Officer Rich Cullen

hours, but the anticipated five seconds of high voltage made the trainees anxious.

"It's an indescribable feeling," Mr. Diehl said about being shot with the electric gun. He and Mr. Cullen were trained and certified as instructors a week earlier at Northern Michigan University in Marquette. They used a TASER X26 brand device, manufactured by TASER International of Scottsdale, Arizona. The training exercise allows officers to appreciate and understand the power of the electric gun and teaches them the responsibility of using the weapon properly, said Officer Cullen.

Training is voluntary, but recommended, and each officer took a turn "riding the lightning," a term Mr. Diehl uses to describe the experience. Held by two other men to prevent falling, each officer was shot and shocked by Mr. Cullen from behind. The five seconds of high voltage they experienced is the standard length of time an officer would use the weapon to subdue a combative person as a means of defense.

The officers are encouraged



Tribal police officers are now equipped with the TASER X26, a non-lethal, defensive device which discharges two probes attached to wires that send 50,000 volts of electricity to temporarily incapacitate a person. The gun weighs less than a pound and can shoot the darts more than 20 feet.

to experience what it's like to be shot with the electric gun, Mr. Cullen said, to understand the effect it has on a person.

The seven-ounce device is loaded with a cartridge with two probes tied to high-voltage insulated wire. A probe is discharged by a nitrogen propulsion system and transmits powerful electrical pulses along the wires and into the body of the target, through up to two inches of clothing.

The probes are like straight fishing hooks, no longer than an inch, and are not painful to the subject when removed, said Mr. Cullen. Officers can also press the gun directly to the body to administer a shock.

According to TASER International, the 50,000 volts for five seconds is well within a safe range for even a two-year-old child or a 75-year-old man. The company states that the weapon is not dangerous to the heart and will not damage implanted pacemakers.

"Static electricity from a doorknob, for example, is measured between 30,000 and 100,000 volts," explained Mr. Cullen.

The patented technology used by TASER International is what it calls "Electro-Muscular Disruption" to temporarily override the sensory and motor nervous system and interferes with

At left: Ray Severance, a police officer for Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, reacts to 50,000 volts of electricity shot by fellow officer and instructor Rich Cullen. Holding Mr. Severance are tribal officer Dan Frechette (left) and Sault Tribe Chief of Police Fred Paquin.

muscular control.

St. Ignace Police Chief Tim Matelski also participated in the training program and plans to hold a similar session for his officers.

"I couldn't move," he said of the effects of the gun. "It felt like forever."

Tribal officer Ray Severance, a day later, said his calves were still sore from tensing up.

"I penciled right up when I was hit," said Officer Cullen, describing how his body became stiff. "I was planning to fall to the ground and cover my face so no one would see my expression, but I couldn't move."

He said the use of the electric device is at the officer's discretion, most likely during combative situations, such as those where pepper spray may alternatively be used.

"The bottom line is saving lives," he said. "Officers do not want a situation to escalate to where he or she has to use deadly force, where they would have to draw their gun." Electric stunning devices, he said, allow them to subdue the subject without using deadly force.

"It's one more tool to use for which we are able to avoid hurting ourselves and someone else," said Officer Diehl.

The tribal police department purchased 20 new TASER X26 devices with the help of some small grants, said Tribal Police Chief Fred Paquin. Officer Cullen each device costs between \$900 and \$1,000. Cartridges are \$20 apiece.

Chief Paquin, who also participated in the training, intends to hold a demonstration program on electric guns for the tribal board.

TASER stands for Thomas A. Swift's Electric Rifle, named after the boyhood hero of Jack Cover, the weapon's inventor, from Thomas Appleton's Tom Swift book series published from 1910 to 1941.

US-2 Safety Program Wins Awards, To Be Extended This Year

1,900 Speeding Tickets Issued During Effort; Now To Go Until November 1

Last year's joint law enforcement effort to improve safety on US-2, dubbed Operation SABRE (Speed, Aggressive Driving, Belts, Rural Enforcement), has received two awards from police and a state traffic safety agency.

The effort, which ran from May 15 to September 15, received the

2005 Award for Excellence in Traffic Safety Applications from the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police and the 2005 Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission Award for Outstanding Contribution to Traffic Safety.

The operation was a joint effort

among several police and safety agencies to reduce the number and severity of crashes along the busy two-line highway by increasing awareness, education, and enforcement between Rapid River and St. Ignace.

More than 3,500 contacts were made between drivers and officers, and more than 1,900 speeding tickets were issued during the operation.

The campaign will be extended this year to November 1.

Participating agencies include the Michigan State Police, county Sheriff's Departments, local police agencies along US-2, Michigan Department of Transportation, Upper Peninsula Tourism Council, Chamber of Commerce offices in the area, the Michigan Center for Truck Safety, and the Governor's Office.