

Experts Seek Local Ideas for State Tourism Plan

Team Drafting First-Ever Strategy To Guide Travel Industry in Mich.

By Ellen Paquin

While Michigan has some of the best natural resources and most attractive tourism draws in the nation, experts say, one thing has been overlooked in the drive to capitalize on those advantages: a solid strategy to guide the growth of the

state's \$16 to \$17 billion tourism industry. A team of planners from Michigan State University (MSU) and Travel Michigan are now working together to develop the first-ever comprehensive plan for guiding Michigan tourism, and they are inviting local people to help shape

the statewide plan at a conference Thursday, June 1, at Sault Ste. Marie.

Called a listening session, the conference is slated for 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Spruce Room of Kewadin Casino Hotel. The "listening" will be done by the tourism experts, who want to know what trends and needs people have seen as they work at hotels, attractions, campgrounds, parks, and Chambers

of Commerce and Visitors Bureau offices around the state.

"We are calling this a plan for the industry, by the industry," Dr. Don Holocek told *The St. Ignace News* Friday, May 19. Dr. Holocek is the director of Michigan State University's Tourism Center, and one of the organizers of the project who will attend the Sault Ste. Marie session. He also leads a research team that has been tracking traffic trends on

the Mackinac Bridge for 20 years as one indicator of the health of the Upper Peninsula's tourism industry.

"This is an industry-supported project," Dr. Holocek said of the Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan Project. "We have formed an 80-member council of people who are working on a comprehensive, statewide tourism plan, and we are going around the state to seek feedback about priorities of the indus-

try."

The conference will be open to the public, Dr. Holocek said, and will be of particular interest to "anyone who has ties to travel and tourism, economic development, hoteliers, restaurant owners, and planners." No reservations are required to attend, and the session is free of charge.

A conference has already been

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John Lipnitz Is St. Ignace Ambassador of the Year

Hospital Auxiliary, Brad Silet, Music Teachers Also Recognized by Chamber of Commerce

By Ryan Schlehuber

John Lipnitz was named the 40th recipient of the St. Ignace Chamber of Commerce Ambassador of the Year award at the group's annual dinner at Little Bear East Conference Center Thursday, May 18. He was recognized for his longtime service to the business community and his work with the Lions Club, Downtown Development Authority, and school board.

"Now I know why Maureen wanted me here on time," he

laughed as he accepted the award.

Mr. Lipnitz was selected by business colleagues who are members of the Chamber of Commerce.

"From the information we received, there was a lot on John," said Janet Peterson, the Chamber's executive director. "Overall, he is a pretty quiet guy, but if you start looking at what he has been involved in over the years you see that he's been quite active in the community. He quietly does what

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White Triplets Born at Ranch



Harold and Sally Kriesche, owners of the Deer Ranch in St. Ignace, are holding their first triplet white fawns, (from left) Luke, Kimmer, and Michael, born Friday, May 12. The mother white-tailed deer is brown and the father is white, but not albino. This is the third set of triplets born at the Deer Ranch during the 18 years that the Kriesches have owned the business, but the first all-white set. The newborns add to the herd of 27 adults and five fawns. The Kriesches expect 40 additional fawns this summer.

Massaway, Lambert Are Top Candidates in Tribal Primary

Keith Massaway, with 408 votes, and incumbent Robert Lambert, with 285 votes, were the top two candidates in the St. Ignace area's Unit 3 for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians board of directors. The primary election was Thursday, May 18, and unofficial results were announced Friday, May 19, by the tribe.

Mr. Massaway and Mr. Lambert will advance to the June 22 general election, where they will be candidates for one available board seat.

Other Unit 3 candidates in the primary election were Patrick Rickley (233 votes), Michael "Chico" Belonga (206 votes), Ilene Moses (158 votes), and Bridget Sorenson (146 votes).

Two representatives serve Unit

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Good, Clean Fun

Mud Run Draws 600 to Moran

By Paul Gingras

By noon Saturday, May 20, the Moran Mud Run had checked in more than 300 spectators and minutes later, they witnessed a Jeep called the Irish Hammer, enhanced with nitrous oxide, make a full pass down the 150-foot long runway, a brown streak that lay like a churning mire across the center of the Brevort Township fairgrounds. It was the only truck to make it the full distance for several hours.

Six hundred participants and spectators took part, cheering on drivers of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and trucks as they ground down the track, one after another. Most got stuck quickly in the four-foot-deep pit track, so the competition, in most events, was judged by distance rather than time.

The success of the Moran Mud



Bridget West of St. Ignace rains mud down on the crowd during the first Moran Mud Run Saturday, May 20. Mrs. West took first place in the Second Class Women's Open. She drove her family truck, the Animaniac, and made it 59 feet down the 150-foot track before sinking to a halt.

Run surpassed even its long-standing counterparts in Dafer, said organizer Jim West. Approximately 80 trucks and 21 ATVs were entered. All told, the event brought in \$3,700 (before expenses) to the Mackinac County Sportsmen's Off-Road Vehicle Association (MCSORVA), which promoted the event in association with the St. Ignace Visitor's Bureau.

"It's very exciting to think that

this many people came out for the first run," said Mandy Fenlon of St. Ignace, who served as the event's announcer. "The best thing about it is the excitement of bringing an event to Moran. The kids were really cute," she added.

There were three tracks. The first was a 100-foot-long, six-inch-deep mud track built for kids' ATVs. The 12 young riders were not timed, and their track was shal-

low, but according to event organizer Steve DuFresne, the kids run was the one of the best parts of the show. Each rider got a ribbon for taking part, he added.

"The best part of this is the mud," said Jake McGrath of St. Ignace.

"It's great that they're finally using the fairgrounds," added fellow racer Marty Wilson of Trout

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Disaster Drill Finds Hospital, Rescuers Well Prepared

May 17 Exercise Draws Responders to Long Term Care

By Paul Gingras

To build competence and confidence among members of the county's emergency response network, one unit of the Long Term Care Facility at Mackinac Straits Hospital was evacuated as part of an emergency drill that simulated a large structure fire Wednesday, May 17. The drill involved city, county, and state police, the Red Cross, the St. Ignace Fire Department, Mackinac County Emergency Services, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and the hospital staff.

During debriefing, all agencies involved agreed that the project was a success, and special praise was given to the hospital staff for exceptionally quick evacuation of residents, which took place immediately after a fire alarm was set off at 10:49 a.m. The simulated fire was caused by a sock that had found its way into a toaster.

Twenty-five LaSalle High School students took part in the exercise. They occupied the living quarters of the facility's regular residents, who were taking part in unrelated activities elsewhere in the building.

Just after the drill began, Jenny Massaway staggered outside and collapsed in front of the hospital. She played the role of an 80-year-



Mackinac County's Local Emergency Planning Team practices its emergency response in a mock disaster at the Long Term Care Facility May 17. Nurses and aides prepare residents for evacuation to Little Bear East Conference Center. The residents are played by students from LaSalle High School. Administrators in charge of the evacuation are wearing vests. They are (from left) Helen Marks, director of nursing, Tom Alkire, a registered nurse and Long Term Care unit manager, and Greg Potter, the hospital maintenance director who is the designated Safety and Security Officer for the exercise. In the background, a fireman looks toward Unit One.

old resident whose oxygen tank had exploded. Her face was painted to look as though it was burned and bleeding and a bolt from the tank was made to look as if it were embedded in her forehead.

"They put me on a stretcher right away and took me to the emergency room," she said. "I was supposed to be air-lifted to

Petoskey, but the ER caught on fire, and I was taken to the hospital at the Lutheran Church, where they took my vitals. Then they got ready to drive me to Petoskey."

Miss Massaway said that she felt well taken care of throughout the process.

"It was very lifelike," she said. "They were quick and good at

what they were doing."

"The drill revealed that everyone knows their job," said Miki Della-Moretta, the director of Emergency Services for Mackinac County. "Hospital personnel are clearly ready for this type of incident. They concentrate on saving people first, and worry about struc-

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**The St. Ignace News
DEADLINE AND OFFICE HOURS
Memorial Day**

The St. Ignace News office in St. Ignace will be open
Monday, May 29, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

DISPLAY ADVERTISING DEADLINE
will remain Friday 5 p.m.

DISPLAY CLASSIFIED DEADLINE
will remain 1:00 p.m. Monday.