

Community Action Hosts Groundbreaking for Senior Housing Project



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Ground was broken for the senior citizen housing project to be built on the former Mackinac County Road Commission garage site on State Street and Lake Avenue in St. Ignace June 23. The architectural sketch shows the proposed appearance for the 24-unit project, which will occupy approximately 28,000 square feet of the 1.75-acre site. Attending the groundbreaking are (from left) St. Ignace Mayor Paul Grondin, former mayor Bruce Dodson, County Commissioner Dawn Nelson, County Commissioner Jim Farero, City Manager Eric Dodson, Don Wright of Community Action Agency, Al Stempki of Community Action Agency, County Commissioner Larry Leveille, Bernie Augur of Oakwood Companies, Mark McDaniels of Great Lakes Capital Fund, and Jim Logue of Great Lakes Capital Fund. The project will be Community Action Agency's first senior citizen housing development in St. Ignace, and will be managed by the agency. (Photograph by Community Action Agency, drawing by Integrated Designs, Inc.)



Readers Stock Up at Library Book Sale

Les Cheneaux Community Library volunteers staffed the library's summer book sale in Cedarville Wednesday, July 5, through Friday, July 7. Pleasant weather helped staff unload many older books and magazines over the three-day event.

Sault Merchants Offer Sidewalk Sales

Event Set for Fri., Sat.

Businesses in Sault Ste. Marie will host annual downtown Sidewalk Sales event Friday, August 4, and Saturday, August 5, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Ashmun Street will be closed between Library Street and Maple Street for the two-day event, which is free to the public and will include activities for all age groups. There will be a pancake break-

fast on Friday. During sale hours, games and inflatable toys will be available for kids, and food vendors will be serving as live bands and dancers perform. The event will mark the 26th Annual EUP Senior Day. On Saturday, sidewalk sales will continue with the addition of the Slashin' Ashmun Classic Car Show, which will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Cup of the Day will hold a ping-pong ball drop from its roof at 5 p.m. Prizes will be offered to participants.

'Pure Michigan' Ad Campaign Brings Image of State to Neighboring Areas

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Mr. Zimmerman said studies have shown that people in Cleveland are more likely to be interested in a city vacation, so the Michigan travel ad showing in Cleveland is aimed at adult nightlife. In Milwaukee, Cincinnati, and southern Ontario, three ads focus on the natural beauty of Michigan.

The advertising campaign is called "Pure Michigan" and is designed to promote the entire state. The ads offer an emotional image of Michigan with a focus on the environment and culture, yet not on any specific geographic area. One of the ads includes a film of water around the state including rivers and Lake Superior with the cliffs at Pictured Rocks, while another ad talks about trails, though not trails in the traditional sense. The 30-second ad shows Grand Hotel's porch and Hoban Street on Mackinac Island, among other state sites.

"The ads portray a positive, emotional image of what a great state Michigan is to travel in," said Mr. Zimmerman.

The point of the ads is to draw television viewers to Michigan's travel Web site, www.michigan.org, and Mr. Zimmerman sees an 80 percent increase in visitors to the Web site through June, over last year.

Once on the site, potential tourists to Michigan can learn more about the state, travel destinations, and vacation opportunities. The top searches made on the site by visitors so far this summer include beaches, camping, state parks, Traverse City, and Mackinac Island.

Though not being shown on television stations in this area, the Pure Michigan ads, which run 30 seconds each, can be found at www.travelmichigannews.org/ads.htm.

Mr. Zimmerman anticipates he will have data showing the results of this year's campaign by late fall, information he needs to determine next year's allocation of ads.

Travel Michigan is the state's official tourism agency and is a part of the Michigan Development Corporation, funded by the legislature. The agency promotes leisure travel destinations and does not target the convention and business

meeting markets. A 13-member advisory group to Travel Michigan, called the Michigan Travel Commission, is appointed by the governor and is comprised of industry people who are involved in the travel business, including Ken Hayward, vice president of sales at Grand Hotel.

"They provide input, feedback, a perspective, and a sounding board from the private sector," said Mr. Zimmerman.

In addition to Travel Michigan, four other groups support travel to Michigan, Time Coalition, Tourism Industry Coalition Association, Michigan Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus, and the Michigan State University Tourism Program.

The Time Coalition is a new industry group that works to get Travel Michigan funding increased. The group supports Travel Michigan's return on investment studies and wants the state to increase Travel Michigan's budget to \$30 million a year.

Tourism Industry Coalition Association is a combined group of other associations, including members from the hotel, boating, and restaurant associations. This group allows members to share information for their industries.

The Michigan Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus promotes meeting and convention travel within the state.

Michigan State University's Tourism Center is funded by the private sector and is working on a

statewide study to develop a Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan, in which Travel Michigan is involved.

Welcome Center Report Coming in Aug.

A final feasibility report for the Upper Peninsula Gateway Discovery Center, to be based at St. Ignace on the site of the current Welcome Center, should be released this month. A draft report now is complete and Sandra Clark, director of the Michigan Historical Center in the Department of History, Arts, and Libraries (HAL), and project coordinator, is in the process of preparing a final report to be released this month.

The report is expected to include the space allocation and conceptual design of the proposed welcome center building, estimated construction costs, and site selection information, Ms. Clark told *The St. Ignace News* Monday, July 31.

"We think the report will answer a lot of the questions that we had about the feasibility of the project," she said.

Before the information is released to the public, Ms. Clark will prepare a demonstration for administrators at HAL, Michigan Department of Transportation, the Department of Natural Resources, and Travel Michigan. She said the governor's staff also will view the draft report.

In March at St. Ignace, Ms. Clark gave local residents the opportunity to weigh in with their opinions on a proposed 45,000-square-foot building that could become a welcome center, replacing the current modular

building north of the Mackinac Bridge that now houses the Welcome Center.

Four departments are working cooperatively on the project, including Transportation, Natural Resources, HAL, and Travel Michigan.

In 2004, DLZ, Inc., an architectural and engineering firm from Lansing, was hired for \$138,651 to perform the feasibility study for the project.

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For more information, please contact me at:

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