

## Michigan Politics

By George Weeks



### Romney, McCain '08: Presidential PACs Spread Wealth Up North

All involved say their focus is on the '06 election, but two '08 Republican presidential prospects are duking it out on the political action committee front in Michigan — to the financial benefit of Up North GOP organizations and candidates.

At play in Michigan, possibly in a more competitive way than in any other state because both politicians have special ties here, are the Straight Talk America PAC of Arizona Senator John McCain, winner of the 2000 Michigan GOP presidential primary and a 2006 visitor to northern Michigan, and the Commonwealth PAC of Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, Michigan-born son of ex-Governor George Romney.

Romney's PAC, which this year has given more than \$120,000 to Michigan party organizations and candidates, last week announced a "Michigan Leadership Team" co-chaired by House Speaker Craig DeRoche of Novi.

McCain's PAC, which has sent about \$160,000 to Michigan, had not planned to announce its leadership team this early but may accelerate that now that DeRoche has been announced and is aggressively recruiting colleagues for the Romney camp.

Romney and McCain, although not announced candidates, are lining up activists in Michigan who could be helpful if they do run. Those willing at this early stage to align with a presidential prospect's PAC, beyond accepting contributions for their own '06 campaigns, do so with '08 implications.

Consider Representative Tom Casperson of Escanaba, who along with Representatives David Palsrok of Manistee and Howard Walker of Traverse City, was among those announced August 23 by DeRoche as members of Romney's PAC steering committee.

Subsequently, I heard that Casperson might be wavering. Not so, he said Friday, emphasizing that he was satisfied by Romney's responses to questions on issues he raised in a conference call that DeRoche arranged between Romney and GOP lawmakers.

Although the McCain leadership team had not been announced as of last week, his PAC organization said among those distributing the money to northern party organizations were Senators Jason Allen of Traverse City and Michelle McManus of Lake Leelanau, and Representative Kevin Elsenheimer of Bellaire. McCain earlier hosted a fundraiser for Elsenheimer's PAC.

One of McCain's biggest checks was \$5,000 to the party organization in the 2nd Congressional District, represented by Representative Pete Hoekstra (R-Holland). McCain's PAC sent \$1,000 checks to the party in the 4th District (Representative Dave Camp, R-Midland) and the 1st District (Representative Bart Stupak, D-Menominee, who won a sixth term in 2004 with 65.6 percent of the vote, but the district could be ripe for Republicans when he

retires.)

Romney cheerleader DeRoche told me that Romney has raised more than \$1 million in Michigan for his PAC. He also made the safe prediction that Romney would get substantial support here "if the governor were to run" for president.

At the Republican State Convention Friday night in Novi, Romney's PAC bought about 300 pizzas for a party he personally hosted in a tent outside the convention center.

Later that night, McCain's PAC put up most of the money for a party hosted by 14 of the 15 district chairs. Speakers included Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land and Attorney General Mike Cox.

Romney disciples were quick to note that the reception was not a pro-McCain rally. But one event at the reception was showing of a video message from Senator Trent Lott (R-Mississippi), the 1996-2001 Senate majority leader, who praised McCain as "a Reagan conservative... a man of faith, and he is pro-life... More than anything else, John is a good man."

Why would such a pitch from a Mississippi senator about an Arizona senator be played at a Michigan GOP convention, were it not for the fact that the latter just might be on the presidential primary ballot here in 2008?

*George Weeks recently retired after 22 years as political columnist for The Detroit News. His weekly Michigan Politics column is syndicated by Superior Features.*

## Voyager Motorcyclists Praise Warm Welcome

### AVA Visits Local Sites, Group Plans Return Visit

Motorcyclists with the American Voyagers Association visited St. Ignace for their annual rally for five days in August, and 231 bikers enjoyed a picnic and awards ceremony at Little Bear East Arena. Invited by the Visitors Bureau to visit St. Ignace, the group in turn invited Kelly Simmons of the Visitors Bureau, City Manager Eric Dodson, and Mayor Paul Grondin to join them for their banquet Wednesday, August 16, at which time Mr. Grondin presented them with a key to the city. Members of the group, the largest association of owners of Kawasaki Voyager motorcycles, visited several local attractions and paraded down State Street on their motorcycles on the evening of Friday, August 18.

After the event, Duane and Charlotte Ash, chairmen of AVA, wrote to their St. Ignace hosts, praising the warm welcome they had received from many local businesses.

## State Law Carries Felony for Bridge Trespassers

Pedestrian travel on the Mackinac Bridge, other than during the annual Memorial Day weekend run and the Labor Day walk, is prohibited by a state law and is considered trespassing. For violators, the new 2005 law carries a \$2,500 fine, up to four years in prison, and is considered a felony.

Signs are posted at both the north and south ends of the



Motorcyclists with the American Voyagers Association enjoyed visiting St. Ignace for their annual rally for five days in August. Members of the group, all Kawasaki Voyager owners, parked their bikes outside Little Bear East Arena to form the letters "AVA," and City Manager Eric Dodson took this aerial photograph of the arrangement.

"We have never received a better reception, met kinder people, had such an accommodating city, and saw such beautiful country all at the same time," Mr. Ash said. "St. Ignace is a phenomenal city!"

The association has members

from across the country, and in six other countries, and is headquartered in Idaho. Mr. Ash pointed out that a group of 48 couples is already planning a return visit to the city, and AVA members would like to return for another rally in coming years.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Investment Needed in City Tennis Courts

To the Editor:

I have been following the discussion through *The St. Ignace News* on repairing or replacing the city tennis courts. As a parent of two young children who both play competitive junior tennis, I cannot encourage you enough to replace your current city courts.

Tennis is a sport which can be played for a lifetime as an individual, team, or a family. It is a game that helps you keep in shape, improves flexibility, develops mental focus, as well as become more creative and assertive. Statistics have shown that young junior players develop a higher degree of confidence, honesty, self control, and have a stronger work ethic, not to mention that they achieve a higher grade point average than many other young athletes. Even if you don't play competitively, it is an inexpensive sport which requires a racquet and a can of balls. You need very little skill to go hit a tennis ball around.

St. Ignace could surely use the

replacing of these tennis courts as an added "benefit" to the thousands of tourists who visit the Straits annually. Advertise through the local hotels/motels or even conduct a small tournament annually. Develop a summer youth tennis league and you now have the potential to teach your young community members to become more honest, confident citizens. Personally, I don't see where investing the same amount of money in the local swimming pool or community skate park would reap the same benefits.

Having been a member of your community for many years, and now as we come back for visits, I encourage you to invest in your community where you would reap the most benefits. The young and old alike can play tennis on these courts for many years to come as they develop and maintain relationships, friendships, and become better citizens in and around your community.

Nonnie Struble

Holt

## Great Lakes Photojournalist Now Collecting Material For Third Book

Great Lakes photojournalist and author Jerry Roach of Durand will be in St. Ignace Sunday, September 3, to discuss his new book about Great Lakes lighthouses. Mr. Durand will sign his books at Book World from noon to 3 p.m. Proceeds from his series of books on Great Lakes lighthouses fund restoration efforts on historic lights, Mr. Durand said.

His newest book is "The Ultimate Guide to East Michigan Lighthouses." He has also self-published "The Ultimate Guide to West Michigan Lighthouses" and is now taking photographs for his third book, "The Ultimate

Guide to Upper Michigan Lighthouses." The guidebooks include information on each light as well as listings of museums, attractions, local points of interest, and annual fairs, festivals, and events.

Mr. Durand and his wife, Barb, an assistant in the project, are members of several nonprofit lighthouse preservation groups, including the Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association. He has written articles and provided photographs for several publications, including *The Beacon*, a quarterly magazine featuring lighthouses of the Great Lakes.

## Help Sought in Chain saw Theft

The theft of two chainsaws from a Chippewa County Road Commission building on West Depot Street in Brimley has prompted Michigan State Police to seek information about the larceny through the Crime Stoppers program.

The saws were taken sometime between June 30 and July 11. They are described as a red Shindawa chain saw with an 18-

inch bar, valued at \$490, and a white and orange Stihl chain saw with a 20-inch bar, valued at \$370.

Those who may have information about the theft or the missing chain saws are asked to call Crime Stoppers at (800) 465-7867. Callers may remain anonymous and tips leading to arrest may earn a cash reward of up to \$1,000.

## St. Ignace News Policies

### Letters:

All responsible letters will be considered for publication and may be edited. They must be signed and a telephone number must be included for verification. Personal thank-you notes, personal attacks against other people, form letters, and letters promoting political candidates are not accepted, although letters for or against ballot proposals are welcome.

### Obituaries:

The St. Ignace News maintains a policy of not charging for obituaries and we sometimes add information or rewrite them for clarity and reader interest. Obituaries that the family wants published exactly as submitted can be placed in the newspaper for \$75. Photographs are welcome at no charge.

### Weddings:

Weddings with photographs are published without charge within 45 days of the ceremony. After 45 days, a photograph can be included for \$32.80.

### Internet:

The complete edition of The St. Ignace News is available online at [stignacenews.com](http://stignacenews.com).

### Contact:

The St. Ignace News  
359 Reagon Street  
PO Box 277  
Saint Ignace, MI 49781  
(906) 643-9150 (phone)  
(906) 643-9122 (fax)  
e-mail: [news@stignacenews.com](mailto:news@stignacenews.com)

## The St. Ignace News

and Les Cheneaux Islands Weekly Wave

359 Reagon Street, PO Box 277, Saint Ignace, MI 49781

Telephone (906) 643-9150 • Facsimile (906) 643-9122

Hessel Office: 138 Pickford Avenue (906) 484-2268

[www.SaintIgnaceNews.com](http://www.SaintIgnaceNews.com)

USPS Periodical Publication Number - 462-380

ESTABLISHED 1878

Published each Thursday at Saint Ignace, Mackinac County, Michigan

Entered in Saint Ignace, Michigan Post Office as Periodical Mail Matter, Act of March 3, 1879

Periodical Postage Paid at Saint Ignace, MI • Additional Postage Paid at Gaylord, MI

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to St. Ignace News, PO Box 277, St. Ignace, MI 49781

Volume 127, Number 21, Thursday, August 31, 2006

### Publisher/Editor

Wesley H. Maurer, Jr.

### Associate Publisher

Mary R. Maurer

### Advertising Director

Dawn R. Huskey

### Publisher 1975-1995

Wesley H. Maurer, Sr. (1897-1995)



### Subscriptions:

\$35 in Mackinac, Chippewa, Emmet, Luce, and Cheboygan counties.

\$42 elsewhere in the United States and military post offices.

\$30 for the Web edition at [www.saintignacenews.com](http://www.saintignacenews.com)

We take Visa, MasterCard, and Discover

The quotation under the flag of *The St. Ignace News* on Page 1 is from the 10 triads written by Dr. Fred Newton Scott, creator and teacher of the first continuous course in journalism in the United States at the University of Michigan in 1890. The 10 triads are chiseled on the parapet of the Detroit News Building at 615 Lafayette Boulevard, Detroit. They were headed "Ideals of the Press" or "The Newspaper in a Free Society," and serve as a reminder of what a free press means to us.