

Council Wants To Introduce Weevils To Combat Watermilfoil in Cedarville Bay

\$34,000 Needed for Control Project

By Amy Polk

The Les Cheneaux Watershed Council has launched a fundraising campaign to raise \$34,000 to fight invasive Eurasian watermilfoil in Cedarville Bay, using a tiny insect hoped to bring invasive weed growth under control. The group is seeking tax-deductible donations from private and public sources.

The council plans to purchase native weevils known for their affinity for Eurasian watermilfoil and effectiveness at destroying the plant. Milfoil weevils are native to Michigan and the northern United States, and prefer to feed on the invasive Eurasian watermilfoil over other milfoil species. As demonstrated in the lakes treated with weevils, they will not entirely wipe out Eurasian watermilfoil, but they will significantly reduce the density of the plant growth, making it less of a threat to native plants competing for the same ground as milfoil does.

Eurasian watermilfoil has been identified in local lakes and other states as a growing problem because it is so prolific and competitive. Having few natural predators to keep it in check, the weed is free to expand its range. It easily spreads because if one piece is torn off by a

boat motor propeller and carried to another body of water, it can grow and eventually root and establish itself in the lake bottom.

In Cedarville Bay, resident complaints about the overabundant weed growth prompted the Watershed Council and Department of Environmental Quality to survey the vegetation in the bay, and large beds of Eurasian watermilfoil were found there. The plant's range has spread, and many suspect that this is the plant that has been getting caught up in boat propellers as people drive through the bay. As boats tear through the milfoil beds, they take up pieces of milfoil and carry them to other places in the Les Cheneaux Islands, and even to other bodies of water. Eurasian watermilfoil is now being found as far away from Cedarville as Voight Bay, on the outer shore of Marquette Island.

The milfoil problem has been further exacerbated by excess nutrients in Cedarville Bay, said retired microbiologist and Watershed Council member Robert Smith. Mr. Smith has coordinated most of the water quality testing that identified Cedarville Bay as needing help.

"Cedarville Bay is a naturally shallow bay rimmed with weeds

At right: Les Cheneaux Watershed Council volunteers (from left) Christine Perreault and Pat Carr pull a clump of Eurasian watermilfoil from Cedarville Bay during an aquatic plants survey of the bay in late summer.



and interspersed with weed beds. In recent years, multiple factors have contributed to increased sedimentation and dense weed growth that lead to accelerated and premature aging of the bay," Mr. Smith said. "Periods of low water have contributed to increased weed growth in the past. Dense weed growth occurred in the bay during low water years of the early 1960s. There are, however, significant differences between the dense weed growth of the 1960s and the intense, choking growth experience today."

The low water levels of recent years have allowed more light to penetrate deeper into the water and contribute to greater weed growth, he said. Another invasive species,

zebra mussels, filters its food from the water and has clarified the water even further. Mr. Smith added that

14 years of treated wastewater discharge into Cedarville Bay has added nutrients to the bay that act as

fertilizer for existing plants and invasive species like milfoil. Septic system discharge, surface water runoff, and a larger population also add nutrients to the bay.

Part of the Cedarville Bay redemption plan includes treating wastewater at the source: the municipal wastewater treatment facility north of Cedarville. Clark Township Board, the Les Cheneaux Watershed Council, and the Department of Environmental Quality are discussing future solutions, and possible state and federal funding opportunities for removing excess phosphorus from wastewater effluent before discharge into the bay. Another idea is to end discharge into Cedarville Bay and dump it further out into Lake Huron, beyond the islands, in water as deep as 70 feet.

For the time being, the Watershed Council has decided to move forward with introducing weevils to Cedarville Bay. The group has held two meetings, one in April among water ecology experts and Clark Township Board and Watershed Council members, and

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Incident at City Pool Will Not Change School's Procedures

By Paul Gingras

St. Ignace Area Schools doesn't plan to alter its procedures to allow out-of-state students to sleep at LaSalle High School in the summers. The alleged assault of an unsupervised 15-year-old lifeguard at the LaSalle High School pool August 4 by a New York youth is a city issue, said Superintendent Mike Springsteen, because the pool is operated by the city's Recreation Department. The alleged assailant was in a student group staying overnight at LaSalle High School on its way to Indiana.

Visiting groups must be approved by the superintendent, high school principal Don Gustafson, or elementary and middle school principal Bonnie Ledy. Visiting groups are student-based or nonprofit organizations en route to an event, Mr. Springsteen said. For example, the school has been used by Boy Scout and Girl Scout groups in the past.

In this case, it was used by the Vision Elite Drum and Bugle Corps, a part of the Brooklyn Music and Arts Program in New York. The group included approxi-

mately 49 students and six chaperones who were on their way to the Drum Corps International Regional at Michigan City, Indiana. They arrived at the school Tuesday, August 3, stayed the night, and departed the next day. No complaints regarding the group were made to the school.

School officials added that they do not require chaperones at the pool because it is under the control of the city. In this case, the students paid to swim, and they were supervised by the city-employed lifeguard, who was allegedly hit during an argument over the pool closing hour.

Mr. Springsteen said no one complained to him about the incident at the pool, and, therefore, the matter didn't reach the school board for discussion at its meeting, Monday, August 14. Most incidents of school violence don't, he added. Fights that occur on school grounds are usually taken care of at the lower administrative level. They seldom come to the attention of the school board, unless a repeat

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St. Ignace Township Sewer Bypass Plan Is on Schedule

By Karen Gould

The 3,000-foot sewer bypass plan is on schedule, the St. Ignace Township board noted at their meeting Thursday, September 14. The township awaits permits from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, construction is scheduled to begin this month, and the project is scheduled to be completed by November 15.

Engineers say the bypass will eliminate sewer odors that have been bothering some Evergreen Shores residents for a year.

"It had better be done by November," said Township Supervisor Dale Nelson; "that's all I can say."

Township resident Fred Schlehuder said the odor has increased and filter canisters were being replaced every couple of days.

"It's been awful," he said. In July, Les Therrian, director of the St. Ignace Department of Public Works, who did not attend the September meeting, reported changing the canisters every two to four weeks. The canisters are being used to help eliminate the sewer odor. At the July meeting, Mr. Therrian said canisters are replaced every six months in nearby Brevort Township.

The board also approved spending \$12,650 for culvert replacement and drainage improvement on the north section of Mackinac Trail.

The project is estimated to cost \$100,500, with the Mackinac County Road Commission and the

township each contributing \$12,650 and the remaining \$75,200 coming from federal funding.

The project covers Mackinac Trail from the Chippewa County line south to M-134.

Affecting the timetable of the project is a Department of Environmental Quality permit, which expires in December.

The board also approved the 2007 allocated millage. The township has a taxable value of \$27,866,469. Approximately \$38,377 would be generated with 1.3772 mills for operations. The road millage, which will be 1.8782 mills, and expires in 2007, would contribute \$52,338 to the fund, and the recreation millage of .4749 mills, which expires in 2008, would collect \$13,233.

A requested land division, which did not meet state specifications, was denied by the board. Paul Myers wanted to divide his Simmons Road property into five lots. Each lot would be 166 feet wide by 2,642 feet long. The state ratio is four to one, width to length, said Mr. Nelson.

During the Liquor Board meeting held prior to the monthly township meeting, the board approved the sale of a liquor license from Sherry Gould, who owned the Bayside Restaurant in St. Ignace, to Iron Triangle Enterprises, which owns Little Bob's New Frontier Restaurant in St. Ignace Township.

The township board next meets Thursday, October 12, at 6:30 p.m. at the Township Hall on Gorman Road.

'Old St. Ignace' Interview Project Shares Memories of Life in Town Over the Years

By Ellen Paquin

Recognizing the treasure trove of memories about "old St. Ignace" that must lie within the minds of older people who grew up here, Dr. Don McKinnon and his daughter, Mary Lou McKinnon, decided this summer to conduct personal interviews with some of the town's longtime residents. The oral history team met with a dozen people in July and August, many of them 90 or more years old, recording their memories of the town and asking for copies of their treasured old photographs, maps, and documents.

Their varied stories offer a glimpse into changes in the town's landscape and culture over many decades, portrayed through the voices of a Great Lakes fisherman, a nurse who visited people's homes before there was a hospital, a long-time city employee who stood up for reforms in city government, a retired school administrator, and others.

The McKinnons plan to compile a booklet from their collection of these personal profiles, and donate the information to the Michilimackinac Historical Society. They encourage others interested in St. Ignace history to begin similar projects to record the town's oral histories.

"With every person we've interviewed, there have been surprises," Ms. McKinnon said Wednesday, September 20. "I think some of these people should write a book themselves! This project has really given me an education about how

"With every person we've interviewed, there have been surprises."

- Mary Lou McKinnon



Dr. Don McKinnon and Mary Lou McKinnon stand next to an old hitching post in front of her McCann Street home, with a vintage photograph donated to their history project. The house next door was once a meat store, she said, from which meat was loaded directly onto nearby railroad cars.

Ignace, at a time when it wasn't customary for people to travel to nearby towns as often.

"There used to be several department stores downtown, and two theaters," she said. "It's a different place now than it was years ago. People used to stay in town more. The market has changed."

She said older residents remember when new home construction was concentrated in neighborhoods inside the city, while today many people choose home sites convenient to town, but not inside the city limits. People mentioned a First Ward Pavilion used for dancing and basketball games, she said, and remembered a time when people from Gros Cap would walk into town to attend events at the pavilion.

Dr. McKinnon recalled Moore's roadhouse, located where the casino is now, which was patronized by soldiers stationed at Sault Ste. Marie during World War II. Others shared memories of the lumbering and fishing industries in the area, and maps.

"There has not been a good map of Indian trails around here," Dr. McKinnon said, but one person interviewed provided such a map for the project. "I think they should be marked out again. People would like to walk them," he said of the trails.

Another man told them his parents, Swedish immigrants who settled at Hessel, were provided food by the local Native Americans to survive their first winter there. Another showed them prehistoric stone implements found on his St. Ignace property.

Dr. McKinnon and Ms.

McKinnon began their project by sending letters to people they were interested in talking with.

"We chose people who grew up here and would have memories of the area," Ms. McKinnon said, "and conducted our interviews informally, over coffee. They're not necessarily in-depth interviews. You just can't tell everything." A photograph was taken of each willing subject.

Most people they contacted were willing to help with the project, and Dr. McKinnon attributes that to the fact that all information collected will be donated to the Michilimackinac Historical Society.

"Most people are very accepting of that idea," he said.

Once produced, the compilation can be added to, and will be of interest to present and future generations of the community, Ms. McKinnon said. She invites anyone interested in starting a similar project to call her at (435) 689-1606 if they need advice on how to begin. She said she would also encourage people to attend the upcoming class about recording life stories at the St. Ignace Public Library, and consider membership in the Michilimackinac Historical Society.

"Every person has a story," she said. "We want to talk to everybody."

Editor's Note: A Write to Share class will be offered at St. Ignace Public Library every Tuesday in October and November, at 3:30 p.m. There is a \$5 registration fee. Registration may be made at the library or by calling 643-8318.

For more information about membership in the Michilimackinac Historical Society, call Keith Massaway at 643-6981 or Jennifer McGraw at 643-9613. Membership dues are \$25 per year.

Pumpkin Roll, Autumn Apple Day Is Oct. 7

Several events will highlight St. Ignace Chamber of Commerce's annual Autumn Apple Days celebration Saturday, October 7, including a new event, Bark in the Park, which includes contests and a parade for dogs.

"This is for our community members," said Janet Peterson, executive director of St. Ignace Chamber of Commerce. "Visitors are certainly welcome, of course, but Autumn Apple Days is something that we like to do to bring the community and the businesses who support St. Ignace together."

Free admission will be offered at both Fort de Buade and the city's Museum of Ojibwa Culture throughout the day. Door prizes will be given.

A pooch parade is one of the many events to be held during Mackinac Animal Aid Association's Bark in the Park. The parade will begin at 12:30 p.m. from the Chamber of Commerce building, across the street from Star Line's main dock downtown. Afterward, the dogs will be blessed, followed by contests and activities for both the dogs and their owners behind the Chamber of Commerce building.

Registration will be held between noon and 12:30 p.m. Cost is \$10 for each dog. All proceeds will go toward the Mackinac County Animal Shelter. All dogs must be on a leash during the event. Cider and doughnuts will be provided. In case of inclement weather, Bark in the Park will be held the following Saturday, October 14.

At 4 p.m., families can participate in the annual Pumpkin Roll at Goudreau Hill, next to City Hall. Pumpkins will be available at City Hall.

St. Ignace Saints varsity football players will be holding an all-you-can-eat pancake dinner at McDonald's Restaurant from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Cost is \$4 per person. Proceeds will benefit the LaSalle High School football program.