

Arctic Blast Hits EUP With Low Temps, High Winds

By Karen Gould

Arctic air marched into the region over the weekend, bringing strong northwest winds, below zero double-digit wind chill readings, and single digit temperatures, although little snowfall. With the onslaught of the bitter cold temperatures, the Lake Huron ice pack thickened, bringing a halt to freight and ferry boat service to Mackinac Island. A wind escort for high profile vehicles was put in place Sunday

day on the Mackinac Bridge, lasting for more than 14 hours.

Sunday morning, January 4, the air temperature on Mackinac Island dropped to a negative four degrees, according to Michael Cellitti, a meteorologist with the National

Weather Service (NWS) in Gaylord. Sault Ste. Marie bottomed out at nine degrees below zero. From Friday, February 2, to Sunday, February 4, Sault Ste. Marie received approximately 10 inches of snow, he said.

St. Ignace weather data is not tracked by the NWS, primarily because of a lack of trained weather observers who would consistently report information to the agency, said Mr. Cellitti.

Bob Sweeney, executive secre-

tary with the Mackinac Bridge Authority, said bridge staff recorded a low temperature of 3.5 degrees below zero Sunday, February 4, at center span on the bridge with wind speeds reaching 50 miles per hour. A wind escort for high profile vehicles was put in place at 4:36 p.m.

Sunday and remained in effect until 7:15 a.m. Monday, February 5.

For the coming weekend, most of the snowfall will continue to be north of St. Ignace in the Whitefish Point region, said Mr. Cellitti. The

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City Denies Request for Condo PUD

Asks Developer To Consider Other Spots in St. Ignace

By Karen Gould

The St. Ignace City Council put to rest a proposed Planned Unit Development (PUD) zone that included a waterfront condominium development by denying it Monday night, February 5. Council members continued to wrestle with the revised sign ordinance and now have sent the controversial regulation that spurred weeks of debate by city officials to the Downtown Development Authority for language recommendations. Council also agreed to move forward on the grant from Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians to fund the purchase of the Fort de Buade Museum.

Council supported the Planning Commission's recommendation to deny Todd Hargraves a 10-unit condominium on the waterfront near the veterans park, but asked him to consider other spots in the city.

"I like the project," said Mayor Paul Grondin. "I'd like to see you

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Village Wants To Install New Floating Docks

Low water levels on the Straits of Mackinac have led the Mackinaw City Village Council to pursue a project to replace standing docks with floating docks at the Village Marina. At its meeting Thursday, February 1, Council approved \$17,000 for an engineering study to determine costs and procedures for installing the new docks. The expense will be matched by the state and the study will be conducted by the Department of Natural Resources.

Water levels have decreased dramatically, said trustee Sandra Planisek, and floating docks will work better with changing water levels. Low water has put some boats at eye level with the docks, she noted, so floating docks will make it easier for people to get on and off their boats.

Council also approved a site plan for a new B.C. Pizza restaurant in the village. Rob and Heather Aukeman, who own the B.C. Pizza in St. Ignace, will build a new facility on Central Avenue in Mackinaw City.

The Village will receive \$173,614.20 for sidewalks, light poles, and sod for landscaping along Louvigny Street. The federal government is providing \$735,317 for road construction projects in Mackinaw City, Tuscola County, Vassar, and Mayville. The Michigan Department of Transportation will administer the transportation enhancement grants, which can also be used for landscapes, streetscapes, and bicycle path development. The funds can fund up to 80 percent of a project.



Bruce LaPine of Mackinac Island, as well as other passengers, watches as Arnold Transit's steel-hulled ferry, *Huron*, breaks through the ice on its way to Mackinac Island Wednesday, January 31. Ferry service to the island ended for the season three days later as ice thickened on Lake Huron.

Clark Twp. Seeks Road Board Representation

By Amy Polk

A disgruntled group of senior citizens protested moving into a smaller room for weekly lunches three times a week, but ultimately accepted the Clark Township board's January 18 decision to close the main hall for lunches at the township's community center in Cedarville during the winter to save on heating costs. Meals will be served in the smaller room on the west side of the building, where the township once maintained the public library. Trustees said the township and seniors can return to the previous arrangement if it doesn't work out.

Trustees also approved two special events, hired a secretary to record board meeting, agreed to order a new ambulance chassis, voted to support Mackinac Island's progress on the Edison Sault electricity rate increase legal case, authorized the township's attorney to proceed with the next step of the Metzger sewer back-up case,

appointed an airport advisory committee, approved Zoning Board of Appeals training, and discussed township concerns about Mackinac County Road Commission projects.

Swede Road Improvements

Supervisor Linda Hudson, Trustee Dana Leach, and some Swede Road residents said they planned to attend the Mackinac County Road Commission's January 22 hearing to determine why there are no Clark Township road

projects slated for the next two years in the agency's proposed six-year plan, and to find out why a proposed Swede Road project was removed from the plan. The project was subsequently reinstated.

Swede Road, which connects M-129 in Cedarville and M-48 in Goetzville, was originally slated last summer for work, that included 4.3 miles of subgrade strengthening, drainage correction, and

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Gourdie-Fraser Recommended To Update Clark Twp. Plans

By Amy Polk

Clark Township Planning Commission will recommend the professional planning firm Gourdie-Fraser of Traverse City to tackle the township's comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance updates. All six commissioners at a special meeting

Tuesday, January 30, voted in favor of recommending the firm.

The Clark Township board planned to call a special meeting to officially hire a planning consultant early this month, before the February 15 regular meeting.

The planning commission interviewed three applicants for the position Tuesday, January 23. They met Mark Eidelson of Landplan in Okemos, Bradley Kaye and Brent Gourdie of Gourdie-Fraser, and Don Hamilton of Lapham in West Branch.

Commissioners leaned more toward Landplan, with half ranking the company as their first choice, but the cost of Landplan's proposal was prohibitive, as it was at least \$10,000 more than Gourdie-Fraser's highest estimate of \$35,520. Gourdie-Fraser said it may complete the project for as little as \$23,370 if Clark Township completes a number of suggested in-house tasks.

Landplan's two-part proposal was \$22,150 to write a new zoning ordinance based on the updated comprehensive plan, which Mr. Eidelson said he could complete for \$20,700. The entire project would have cost at least \$42,850, not including maps for the comprehensive plan or printing the new documents. Maps would be an additional expense, contracted through Landplan to another firm.

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3-Month School Calendar Set by St. Ignace Education Board

Negotiations Stalled Between Teachers, Board

By Paul Gingras

At a special meeting Tuesday, January 30, the St. Ignace school board approved a three-month school calendar for February through April which details vacation days, the end of the third marking period, and teacher training days. The dates could change if the board and the teachers' union come to an agreement on the teacher contract. The school's calendar still is being negotiated, as are wages and benefits.

The board decision to implement its second, tentative, three-month calendar followed unsuccessful negotiations Monday, January 29, between the school board and the St. Ignace Education Association (SEA). If the board and SEA do not come to an agreement by May, another calendar will be created for the final weeks of the school year, board members said. The school district will send a

copy of the new calendar to parents, but the date to send the calendar has not been established.

The school's calendar details activities for May and June, but these reflect an older agreement between SEA and the board; nothing past April is approved by the school board, said Superintendent Mike Springsteen.

No date has been set for further negotiations on the teachers contracts, said Mr. Springsteen. Negotiations have stalled, in part, because the administration does not know how much it can offer teachers financially, owing to the possibility that the state will take back money it promised the school system earlier this year. How much money the state takes back, if any, will not be released until early March, Mr. Springsteen added. Teachers are working for

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Fort de Buade Vote Looms; City Pursues Tribe's Offer

By Karen Gould

An ad hoc committee has recommended that the City of St. Ignace pursue a \$700,000 offer from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians to purchase the Fort de Buade Museum building and contents, amidst protests from some tribal members that the money go elsewhere.

Meeting Wednesday, January 31, a city council committee comprised of Don Gustafson, Paul Fullerton, and Willie LaLonde discussed the museum with members of the Michilimackinac Historical Association before making the recommendation to the full council, which accepted it at its meeting Monday, February 5.

Meanwhile, the tribe is reviewing a petition to hold a tribal referendum on the grant, with a decision of the board expected as early as Tuesday, February 6. The referendum, if approved, would be held within 60 days and require 30 percent of registered voters to vote, with a simple majority needed to overturn the tribal board's decision in January.

Tribal officials were not sure at press time how many members are registered to vote. The tribe has about 33,000 members, including children.

At the January 31 city committee meeting, members were concerned the city would incur additional costs to operate the museum, but were told by historical society representatives that the society could continue to operate the facility, as it did this summer under an agreement with owner Marylan Benson, whose husband, the late Dr. Donald Benson, assembled the collection.

Tribal board member Keith Massaway said the tribal board supported the project because it wants to keep the rare artifacts relating to Native culture in this area. The artifacts range from lumber and Civil War-era pieces to rare beaded deerskin dresses, baskets, and quill boxes made by American Indians. Paintings, rifles and pistols, and an extensive spear and arrowhead collection are also included in an appraised inventory list 45 pages long.

Tom Pfeiffelmann of St. Ignace, who is a member of the Michilimackinac Historical Society said, "I'm not a French or Native American, but if I were a Native American teacher in the Soo or in Pickford or in Cedarville, what I would do every spring is bring my classes down to this museum to show them their heritage, pre-colonial, pre-Columbus, and all the way through to today. It's in there," he said. "It is

not all authentic, but there is a lot of it."

"It's the most precious stuff that you could have from your past," he added.

Council members also questioned the soundness of the building and were told the city building inspector and the fire chief had inspected the structure and the roof had been replaced in the last few years. City Manager Eric Dodson said the museum would fall under the city's insurance umbrella.

About three-quarters of the two-hour meeting was spent listening to the complaints of Tony Grondin, a tribal member who helped circulate petitions calling



Part of the Fort de Buade Museum collection is this shoulder bag beadwork panel from this region in the 1890s.

for the referendum to vote on the grant.

Mr. Grondin said he opposed the \$700,000 grant to St. Ignace because he doesn't think that much of the Benson collection is related to local Indian heritage, because he believes the board did not adhere to an application process in making the grant, and because he believes the money would be better spent elsewhere.

Mrs. Benson is asking \$500,000 for the 9,500-square-foot building and collection.

Mr. Massaway said the tribe added \$200,000 to cover legal fees, taxes, and other financing costs associated with the purchase, bringing its total grant to \$700,000, to be distributed over six years at \$118,398 a year. A stipulation is that the artifacts be turned over to the tribe in the event the city is not longer able or willing to display them.

Up until last year, the tribe had been contributing \$220,000 a year toward the construction of Little Bear East Arena and Conference Center. With that commitment satisfied, Mr. Massaway said he sought another long-term project

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The Fort de Buade Museum on State Street in St. Ignace.