

# Hockey Association Board Shares Perspective on Bullying Policy

To the Editor:

We are writing this letter to you in response to your article concerning the April recreation board meeting. Much of the article seemed to have a negative focus on the St. Ignace Hockey Association, its coaches, parents, and players. As the recreation board ponders its "bullying policy," we would endeavor to bring a few facts forward in support of our organization.

1. The St. Ignace Hockey Association is a group primarily made up of parents and coaches who are interested in promoting hockey and helping the children of our community through the sport.
2. Local hockey is run strictly by people who volunteer their time, and who are supported by parents, sponsors, and fundraising to have the game of hockey available as a viable and organized activity.
3. We are the organization that purchases the majority of ice time from the City of St. Ignace and as such would be considered the primary customer and supporter of Little Bear East Arena.
4. We have attempted over the years to work closely with the city to promote Little Bear East, as we know it not only benefits our association, but the entire community.
5. Hockey is responsible for bringing more outside visitors to our community during the winter months on a regular basis to use local hotels, restaurants, gas stations, and shops than any other individual winter event sponsored by any organization.
6. The Chamber of Commerce and the Tourist Association [sic] recognize this and have been a great help to our organization.

All these points and more support the fact that we are good citizens, we do our part and more to support the community, and last but not least, we provide a fun, organized activity for the youth of the community.

The casual observer and readers of *The St. Ignace News* need to know that youth hockey is international. It is highly organized. It is well governed, nationally by USA Hockey and on the state level by the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA). Readers also need to know that USA Hockey certifies all coaches and referees. This certification is not a one-shot deal. Re-certification, testing, and advancement are, if not required in certain cases, highly recommended. People who work in hockey, simply as volunteers, are more organized, better trained, and more monitored than any other organized sport, and that statement applies to all organized sports, including those offered by public schools.

USA Hockey and MAHA do not condone or allow bullying. We function on an ethics code referred to as S.T.A.R., which stands for Shared Tolerance Appreciation and Respect. S.T.A.R. applies to everyone involved – players, coaches, and parents. Hockey does not condone the activities and atmosphere that parts of the article seem to imply. In fact, people who violate the S.T.A.R. pact must go before a committee, be judged, and if necessary, punished through degrees ranging from probation to outright dismissal from organized hockey. A S.T.A.R. banner is prominently displayed at Little Bear East, along with a code of conduct. It is very evident that we do not condone, promote, or tolerate bullying or any other improper activity.

It is very unfortunate that the recreation board chose to even discuss the issue that should have been directed to the hockey association, and even more unfortunate that *The St. Ignace News* chose to report on it, and in fact use it as the "grabber" in the headline. While we recognize it was a public meeting, of which news can and should be reported, we also feel that after many years of asking for positive coverage of things done by the hockey association (i.e. tournaments, State Championships, etc.) the *News* chose to follow up on, use negative headlines, and report on a single parent's negative complaint.

While it is discouraging to work so hard for the good of our children and the community and receive so little unsolicited support along with this ridiculous negative coverage, we will continue to move forward. We do so because we love the game and care about our children and the community.

Submitted by the following St. Ignace Hockey Association board members:  
Scott Winkelman, president  
Eric Danielson, vice-president  
Doug Goudreau, treasurer  
Rick Eberts, secretary

**Editor's Note:** In the April 26 story, "City Recreation Board Ponders Bullying Policy," the Recreation Advisory Committee's discussion was about a policy for city recreation programs in general and for all events held at city facilities. Policies were not directed specifically at your hockey program, nor did our story or headline imply that they were. Personal references about a committee member were removed from this letter.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Arguments Don't Hold Up in Support of Fort de Buade Purchase

To the Editor:

In a recent article in *The St. Ignace News*, Judi A. Engle, president of the Michilimackinac Historical Society (MHS) and manager of the Fort de Buade museum, criticized my objections to the Sault Tribe funding of the Fort purchase. She declares that she "will not try to judge how you have come to your conclusions about the manner in which you have chosen to fight for what you believe is right," and then offers the observations that my intentions are "to promote false information and...as a means of political gain." Moreover, she asserts that many, if not all, of my arguments supporting those objections are falsehoods. I'm sincerely grateful that Ms. Engle was able to remain objective and nonjudgmental while indulging in some wild speculation.

Most of what Ms. Engle has said about my motives vis a vis the Fort de Buade museum is incorrect. Clearly, her understanding of my position is based, in large part, on out-of-context snippets taken from a brief phone conversation I had with a reporter from the Sault Ste. Marie *Evening News*. I have no intention of trying to correct all of her misinterpretations and mis-statements. To those who might believe that they are true, the exercise would be meaningless and a waste of time. To those who know me, and to those who may not know me personally but are supportive of the goal I espouse, it is unnecessary. What I will do instead is to highlight some statements in the Engle letter that demonstrate that her understanding is limited or incorrect of the state-mandated 2% monies distribution program and my position.

To begin with, let me make it perfectly clear that my objections are not with the City of St. Ignace, or MHS, or both, buying the dilapidated building known as Fort de Buade. I do not object to either of those entities operating it as a nonprofit private enterprise. In fact, I would offer my encouragement to them to do just that if they think it is in their best interests to do so. With a salable product, a well-thought out business plan, a sound marketing strategy, and a team of dynamic managers and volunteers having the demonstrated experience and competency to set up and manage a small museum, the organization could appeal to an array of individual donors and philanthropic organizations, the traditional sources of funding for viable museums everywhere. One wonders why such an organization is not already in place and functioning smoothly.

And if those elements, just noted, that are so essential to the success of any business enterprise were in place and functioning, there would be no need for the Sault Tribe to contribute more than \$700,000 of 2% monies to elevate the Fort from the obscurity that it presently enjoys in a dilapidated, environmentally suspect building in downtown St. Ignace to a position of prominence. And I would not now be obligated to justify, once again, my strong objections to the giveaway of a large sum of money that could be used more efficiently and effectively to provide meaningful and necessary benefits and services to deserving Tribal members in the area.

At the heart of my thesis is the understanding that the use of 2% monies in the manner proposed by Keith Massaway, i.e., to purchase a moribund museum (the Fort) from a private owner (the Bensons) for the use of a non-governmental, nonprofit, closely held business enterprise (MHS), using a governmental entity (the City) as merely a pass-through for the funds, is improper and potentially illegal. For at least the fifth, and hopefully the last, time, the Consent Judgment between the Sault Tribe and the State of Michigan states explicitly that the guidelines governing the tribes in making determinations as to which local unit or units of government shall receive payments for governmental services provided to the tribes and for impacts associated with the existence and location of the tribal casino in its vicinity. The controlling language of this very important agreement is emphasized by me.

Ms. Engle offers a number of arguments for her belief that the Fort purchase does not violate the Consent Judgment. First, she implies that there is a clear equivalency between Little Bear East Arena and the Fort. Her opinion is based, apparently, on the knowledge that the arena was built with 2% monies and on the belief that it is not a governmental service like the Fort is not a governmental service. The knowledge is correct, the belief is not. In fact, Little Bear East is a classic example of a governmental service. The service consists of a recreational venue that is accessible to Tribal members of all ages as well as non-tribal residents who live in the St. Ignace area. Review of records dealing with the negotiations between the City and the Tribe with regard to the arena funding would surely show that service to Tribal members was an essential aspect of the agreement. Thus, on the question of governmental service, the equivalency argument fails.

It is important to note that Ms. Engle and I are in complete agreement that the Fort is not a governmental service in any sense of the word.

Ms. Engle carries the equivalency argument one step further by noting that the State of Michigan did not object to Little Bear and thus, apparently, would not object to the Fort. This argument fails on two points: (1) the legality of the Little Bear allocation was never brought to the state for a determination, and (2) since the arena was indeed a governmental service in the meaning of the Consent Judgment, the state surely would have approved it in the face of an objection. In the case of the Fort: (1) the question of the legality of the allocation has not been presented to the state – yet, and (2) because the Fort is not a governmental service, it might be presumed that if and when the state hears the arguments, it would find the Fort purchase a violation of the Consent Judgment on that basis alone. A test has yet to be made, and this may be it. But once again, the equivalency argument

fails.

Ms. Engle further states that since Little Bear was not illegal, neither is the Fort. The above discussion that contradicts the equivalency claim shows that statement to be a non sequitur; it requires no further discussion.

I am compelled to state that I am more than a little troubled by Ms. Engle's patronizing attitude toward Native Americans who have views different than her own. However, it seems to parallel the attitude of at least one other MHS member, a non-native, who found it necessary to lecture a tribal elder on the right way to educate Native American youngsters.

I am especially troubled by her readiness to label as liars and self-serving political opportunists, any Native Americans who choose to express publicly their contrasting viewpoints. This effort is not about personal political gain, at least not from my point of view. It is rather about principle, the principle of rightness in particular. Rightness is a manifestation of the good way of the Anishinaabe. And if the real truth were to be known, it would be obvious that the falsehoods claimed by Ms. Engle were nothing more than bits and pieces of her own inflammatory rhetoric. That is definitely not the good way.

It would be tempting to respond to Ms. Engle with questions regarding her motives for so strongly advocating for the Fort purchase. She is, after all, president of MHS, the organization that will be responsible for the Fort and the one that will receive \$700,000 of 2% money. She also is the manager of the Fort, itself, and will, in that position, enjoy significant personal financial gain from the transaction for at least the next six years.

Finally, it is recognized that valuable and authentic Anishinaabe artifacts, some with strong cultural and spiritual significance, represent a small percentage of the Fort de Buade collection. Ms. Engle declares that the Fort collection contains few "sacred" items that fit with the Repatriation Act. The nature of the Anishinaabe artifacts and the number of those that are amenable to repatriation is a matter for qualified specialists to determine. In the near future, we expect to engage qualified Native American archivists who will make those critical identifications. Whether there are only a few or there are many, all have great cultural value and deserve to be in the home of their true owners, the Sault Tribe or other Indian nations. And that is our goal.

Charles Adams Jr.  
Laughlin, Nevada

## Michigan Politics

By George Weeks



### Drawn Republican, 1st District Has Turned Democratic

When the GOP-ruled Legislature remapped the sprawling district of U.S. Representative Bart Stupak (D-Menominee) to create a Republican tilt after the 2000 Census, it knew there was little chance of defeating the popular Stupak, who had just won a fifth term with 58 percent of the vote.

Although the revamped district, including all 15 Upper Peninsula counties (as it did previously) and 16 below the bridge, was calculated to have a 53.6 percent Republican base, Democrat Stupak won with 68 percent in 2002 and has continued to coast.

But the GOP figured it would have a good shot at the seat when vacated by Stupak, who subsequently was mentioned as a potential 2002 running mate for Governor Jennifer Granholm and gets cited by Lansing crystal ball gazers as maybe a gubernatorial candidate himself in 2010.

Now, the latest *Inside Michigan Politics* (IMP) newsletter said in a surprising report, "the 1st is marginally Democratic at 50.7%, meaning that if Stupak should vacate the territory between now and 2010, the likelihood that the GOP could take advantage of the vacancy in an open seat race has been dramatically reduced."

In fact, according to IMP, the composite partisan vote over the past three elections has grown in 13 of Michigan's 15 U.S. House districts during the last six years and "reveals a gradually rising tide of Democratic hegemony in the state, just as it did for the state Senate and House of Representatives."

As for Up North's two

Republican congressmen: 2nd District Representative Peter Hoekstra of Holland at 38.6% has the least Democratic base in Michigan, and 4th District Representative Dave Camp of Midland has a 45.7% Democratic base. Five of Michigan's nine Republican U.S. representatives have larger district Democratic bases than Camp.

Nine-term Camp and eight-term Hoekstra in the past have flirted with running for the U.S. Senate, but are not about to give up safe seats and their Capitol Hill seniority for a 2008 challenge of Senator Carl Levin, Michigan's longest-serving senator.

Party "base" figures in each district are calculated by IMP from data collected by East Lansing-based Practical Political Consulting, Inc., and the Secretary of State's Elections Division following the last four general election votes for the State Board of Education, and governing boards of Wayne State University, University of Michigan, and Michigan State University.

IMP says election analysts consider the four education boards elected on a statewide ballot "to be the most nearly foolproof yardstick for calculating a political party's base strength in a given election, because they're so far down the bedsheets that a voter is likely to fall back on his or her fundamental partisan leanings in deciding whom to support."

The newsletter acknowledges that results of education board elections can be swayed by other

\*Please turn to page 8

## 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 do often 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 \$35.00.

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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.

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### POLICIES

- News of public meetings and events is printed without charge. Submissions a week in advance are advisable.

- Letters to the editor must be signed and include address and phone number. Names are withheld only in exceptional circumstances. Thank you letters are required to be placed as paid personal notes.

- Wedding photos will be printed only within 45 days after ceremony.