

Local Businesses Rated Best in State by Readers

The Detroit News Polls 105,000 for Top Picks

Local businesses are among those named best in the state by readers of *The Detroit News*. Results of the newspaper's "Michigan's Best 2007" readership poll, to which 105,000 people responded by mail, were announced Wednesday, May 23. The newspaper calls the multi-category list "a compilation of readers' recommendations for the best the state has to offer."

St. Ignace

The Mackinac Bridge was named the state's best landmark.

The Driftwood Restaurant and Sports Bar garnered first place in both "Best Up North Restaurant" and first place in "Best Sports Bar" categories.

Gateway Lanes scored second place in "Best Bowling Alley." In first place was Merri-Bowl Lanes in Livonia.

Mackinac Island

"Best Summer Resort" is Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island.

Mackinac Island Marina earned first place as the state's best marina.

The Pink Pony Bar and Grill is in first place for "Best Outdoor Deck."

Mackinac Breeze Charters was named in first place as "Best Charter Service for a Day on the Lake."

The Gate House on Mackinac Island earned second place as the state's "Best Jazz Venue." In first place was Bohemian National Home in Detroit.

Wawashkamo Golf Club earned second place as "Best Public Golf Course." In first place was Milham Park Golf Course in Kalamazoo.

Welcome Center Contest Offers Bridge Tower Tour

Area visitors and residents can register to win a Mackinac Bridge tower tour this summer and fall. The contest is in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Mackinac Bridge and is sponsored by the St. Ignace Welcome Center, St. Ignace Area Visitors Bureau, and the St. Ignace Chamber of Commerce.

The winner and a guest will get a rare and spectacular view from 552 feet above the Straits of Mackinac.

The Mackinac Island Lilac Festival was named in second place as the "Best Summer Festival." In first place was the Downtown Hoedown in Detroit's Hart Plaza.

Mustang Lounge on Mackinac Island earned second place as "Best Place To Grab a Drink After Work." In first place was Taco Loco Mexican Restaurant of Shelby Township in Rochester Hills.

Cloghaun Bed and Breakfast was named in third place in the "Best Bed and Breakfast Category," behind Serenity of Petoskey and Wrens Nest of West Bloomfield.

Best fudge shops were Jo Ann's Fudge of Mackinac Island in first place, Ryba's Fudge of Mackinac Island in second place, and Murdick's Fudge Kitchen in third place.

In the "Best Ferry to Mackinac Island" category, Arnold Transit finished first, Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry second, and Star Line Mackinac Island Ferry third.

Cheboygan

Air Bear Travel earned first place as "Best Independent Travel Agency" and third place as "Best Travel Agency."

Chamber of Commerce, St. Ignace Visitors Bureau, and the St. Ignace Welcome Center. The Welcome Center is on the east side of I-75, just beyond the bridge toll booths.

The 50th anniversary of the Mackinac Bridge will be celebrated throughout 2007 with a variety of Straits-area events.

The last day to register is October 31, and the drawing will be held November 1, with the tower tour to be scheduled in 2008.



Michigan's superstructure, the Mackinac Bridge, celebrating its 50th anniversary, was named Michigan's best landmark by *The Detroit News*' "Michigan's Best 2007" readership poll. The view is from the top of the south tower facing St. Ignace.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Information Should Be Part of Training

To the Editor:

As is our usual Sunday afternoon custom, we try out the local restaurants for dinner. This past week, we visited one of the great eating establishments on the main street and enjoyed a fine dinner in a pleasant atmosphere.

At one of the adjoining tables, the waitress was being questioned about something in the area and she was very enthused and cordial about providing answers in detail. In contrast, at the next table, visitors wanted to know when the next big celebration was due in St. Ignace. A different waitress looked at the ceiling, rolled her eyes, and admitted she didn't know. Of course, we could not let this go unanswered, and butted in with information on the Car Show in late June and the 50th anniversary of the bridge coming up in July.

The business persons in our area are missing a great opportunity to enhance the economic welfare of the city when they fail to educate their employees about the value of imparting tourist information to those whom they are serving. It seems to me that no training of an employee is complete until they can enthusiastically be a help to the Chamber of Commerce and St. Ignace's livelihood.

Jean Kalbfleisch
St. Ignace

Tough Choices To Be Made June 6

To the Editor:

My thank you letter to the Les Cheneaux voters in the May 24 edition contained an error in spelling. I want to encourage the community "to present [not prevent] creative and alternative ideas" to help our district meet the challenges it faces. Our last board meeting reflected those difficult decisions we face. Whether you run a business or manage a family, you know how difficult some budget decisions are, especially when our income doesn't meet our expenses. As a school district, we cannot increase revenues. The state may be cutting our income even more by the time this is printed. And our budget cuts could affect our neighbors' wages, they may affect your child's ride to school, they may effect your

child's participation in sports. This is not about cutting "fat." We are closely approaching cutting protein. We could hold fundraisers, but our "garage sale and bake sale" efforts would need to raise almost \$200,000.

At an organizational school board meeting June 6, we will make some of those choices. Although not necessarily etched in stone, they could serve as a direction from which it may be hard to draw back.

Please join us June 6.

Dave Murray

Cedarville

Les Cheneaux Community Schools
Board of Education

Proud To Be Part of This Community

To the Editor:

When our family started vacationing at the Brevort Lake State Forest Campground more than 20 years ago, we remarked how the town of St. Ignace was so much like the farm community Mrs. Ford and I grew up in the 1950s and 1960s, like walking into the grocery store and having your groceries taken to your car, going to the bank and people talking to you on a first name basis, and restaurant owners knowing your name and giving you free soft drinks. The old farm community we grew up in no longer exists. It is a commuter sleepover community. The new people get up in the morning and migrate to their jobs and come back home in the evening. We are so glad not to be a part of that anymore, and we are happy to be here in the St. Ignace area for the rest of our lives. We are proud to be a part of a community where the spirit is about giving and sharing with others.

It was mistakenly reported in *The St. Ignace News* that I am president of the Mackinac County Animal Shelter. In fact, I do not have anything to do with its day-to-day operations. The shelter operations are managed by Ginger Valentine, a contract Mackinac County employee. I am the president of Mackinac Animal Aid Association (MCAA), a nonprofit group formed to raise money for the animals in the MCAS. Our group provides a service for the county's adoptable pets where the county's budget does not have sufficient funds.

Michigan law requires every county shelter animal adopted must be spayed or neutered. MAAA, by donations and adoption fees, makes sure this is done. Not only do we follow the law, it is the only way we can win the war of unwanted animals. One hundred percent of the animals adopted from our shelter are spayed and neutered. We also pay for rabies vaccination and all other medical attention. Our adoption fees, \$40 for cats and \$60 for dogs, are in line with what folks in this area can afford. MAAA loses about \$150 for every animal that we adopt out, but that is why we do what we do. When we started our program three years ago, the Mackinac County Animal Shelter was at the state average of 26% adoption and the rest reclaimed (a small percentage), or euthanized. MAAA has changed that to a 100% adoption rate of adoptable pets. We spend 100% of the money raised on the care and adoption promotions for the homeless pets waiting at the shelter.

George Ford

St. Ignace

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.

Peters' Bridge Book To Benefit Mackinaw Area Historical Society

Mary Lou Peters of Mackinaw City has published "Mackinaw Loves Its Bridge," 17 stories of the construction of the Mackinac Bridge as told by Mackinaw City residents. The publication marks the 50th anniversary of the bridge's construction. In addition to 17 personal stories, the book contains photographs of the story-

tellers along with historical photographs of construction of the bridge.

"Mackinaw Loves Its Bridge" will be sold at a cost of \$7. All proceeds will be donated to the Mackinaw Area Historical Society.

The book is available at area bookstores and shops.

Michigan Politics

By George Weeks



Casperson Conquered One Stupak, May Take on Another

There are stirrings in the northland about another Stupak-Casperson election face-off, a match touted by Republican State Chairman Saul Anuzis and discounted by Democratic State Chairman Mark Brewer.

In 2002, Republican Tom Casperson, owner of a log trucking business in the Upper Peninsula, defeated Menominee Mayor Laurie Stupak, wife of U.S. Representative Bart Stupak (D-Menominee), for the three-county open 108th District state House seat long held by Democrats.

On Friday, the now-term-limited state representative said he is "headed toward making the run" for Stupak's congressional seat next year.

I called Casperson after reading a blog by Republican State Chairman Saul Anuzis declaring: "I'm hearing good things from Washington and their excitement about Tom." When I asked Anuzis for sources of those glad tidings, he cited the National Republican Congressional Committee and White House political guru Karl Rove.

Anuzis also said, "Right now [Casperson] is the only one that has expressed interest and is out talking to people. If he runs, he makes it a race. It will be the logger against a lawyer."

As Anuzis, who calls it "probably one of the most swing districts in the state," seeks to fire up GOP troops about the race, he suggests Stupak might not seek a ninth term and may be tiring of traveling his sprawling district that covers all 15 counties in the Upper Peninsula and 15 of the 68 counties below the bridge.

Stupak, who had about a dozen district appearances scheduled over the Memorial Day holiday, discounts any fatigue factor, and said:

"Do I plan on running? Yes. But we're not ready to make any formal announcement."

Said Casperson: "Is it an uphill race? Sure." He and Anuzis contend much of Stupak's past success was that he ran somewhat independent of party leadership. But, they insist, now that he has a subcommittee leadership position in the Democratic-ruled House, he veers to the left and kowtows to wishes of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Stupak bristled: "I do my own thing. I always have."

In response to the above GOP spins on Stupak, here are spins of long-time Democratic state boss Mark Brewer:

"I have never known Bart Stupak to kowtow to anybody - the real congressional swing seats in 2008 will be for those now held by Republican Representatives Joe Knollenberg of Bloomfield Hills, who had a surprisingly tough battle to win his eighth term, and freshman Tim Walberg of Tipton. The real objective of the Michigan GOP is to build up Casperson for a 2010 run for the seat of term-limited Senator Michael Prusi (D-Ishpeming)."

My spin: Stupak will seek, and most likely again win, reelection - and then be in the speculative mix for a spot on the 2010 statewide ticket - governor, lieutenant governor, or attorney general.

Meanwhile, Stupak, an ex-state cop who relishes conducting investigations, has a high visibility role in chairing an oversight subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. He was author of a bill passed last week overwhelmingly (284-141) by the House to authorize the Federal Trade Commission to investigate and penalize those found to be gouging at the gas pump.

The reality is that Stupak is not likely to succeed in getting relief at the pump any more than other politicians, including Senator Carl Levin in an oversight role years ago.

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