

Lions Club Members From Les Cheneaux, Pickford Gather To Mark Milestone

By Amy Polk

A 1947 photograph of more than 60 people crowded into a banquet room at the former Northland Manor of Cedarville marks the birth of the Les Cheneaux Lions Club. It shows people from Pickford, Cedarville, and Hessel who gathered to talk about starting a Lions Club chapter in the Les Cheneaux area. They wear dresses and suits to mark the importance of the occasion, and a large American flag hangs prominently in the background. Outside the hotel was a community recovering from World War II. People were poor and had problems, but these first Lions Club members "had the guts to think they could fix the problems in their community," said Lion R.B. Smith of Hessel Monday, May 14.



Pickford Lions Club President Marlene Kennedy and her husband, Stan, attended the May 14 Les Cheneaux Lions Club 60th anniversary dinner with approximately two-thirds of the Pickford club membership. The Pickford Lions Club sponsored the Les Cheneaux club 60 years ago.

Nobody can recall whether one of the club's traditional dinners was served inside the Northland that night.

"But what we do know is that something good happened there," Mr. Smith said. "Because a second meeting happened at what is now called the Old Gymnasium at Les Cheneaux Schools, and they did have a dinner of baked ham and creamed potatoes, and we know that it was probably one of the best meals those people had at the time."

Many people couldn't afford a meal that grand in 1947, he said. Speaking to a crowd of present and former Lions Club members at the Les Cheneaux Lions Club's 60th anniversary party Monday, May 14, Mr. Smith described the community's condition when some of the first members of the club returned from World War II. Times were lean and hard in the late 1940s, and it seemed everyone was struggling. Driven by a sense of duty and the fellowship the club offered, veterans of World War II and civilians alike embraced the Lions Club's mission to "brighten their corner of the world."

Those who served in the war returned to a place where every

house needed a new roof, Mr. Smith said.

"No households had new cars. Everyone had a wood stove, and no one had a chainsaw," Mr. Smith said. "These people wanted to make a difference. The members of this Lions Club has tried to brighten their corner of the world, and that's what this club has done."

In the spring of 1947 when the club was started, Mr. Smith was enrolled in kindergarten at Les Cheneaux Elementary School. He spoke of the impression a simple gesture like giving candy to all of the schoolchildren made on him. He went on to become a Lion, and served for 20 years.

"You should have seen the faces on the kids when the Les Cheneaux Lions Club came through the school at Christmas time with a big bag of candy for each kid," Mr. Smith said. "When I was inducted into the Lions Club, I remembered all the good things this club has done for me, and I promised I would help the

club as much as I could."

Since it was formed, the Les Cheneaux Lions Club has completed hundreds of charitable activities, from beautifying community roadsides to giving local students financial assistance for college. The club most recently adopted the Clark Township Recreation Park as a project, raising money, pledging volunteers, and donating equipment to the venture.

Beyond its community borders, Les Cheneaux Lions Club has contributed to state, national, and international programs like Baycliff Health Camp in Big Bay, "Welcome Home for the Blind," Northwoods Air Link that transports emergency patients to hospitals, and the Lions of Michigan All-State Band, which was created to bridge international communication gaps through music. The group is also part of Lions International's commitment to ridding the world of preventable blindness.

Following Mr. Smith's address,



Longtime Lions Club member Junior Wilson (from left) and his wife, Juanita, sit with St. Ignace News Les Cheneaux area correspondent Helen Shoberg (foreground), whose husband, Conrad, was also a longtime member in the Les Cheneaux Lions Club. Richard and Sadie Nye are also seated at the table, while other Lions, spouses, and guests can be spotted in the background, including (from left) Bruce and Jessica Maze talking with Don Birkmeier, Rose Miller, Margie and Chuck Denoyer, and Mike Miller. The rustic decor of Northwoods Christian Camp's dining hall recalls the log furnishings of the former Northland Manor in Cedarville, where the club met with Pickford's Lions Club 60 years ago.

Lion Phil Milan recalled two of the members who had perfect attendance in the club, including the late Leonard Rye, who never missed a dinner meeting in 25 years. Another member with 25 years of perfect

attendance was Tony Autore, who was at Monday night's celebration with his wife, Ethel, and recognized for longtime service.

As they did 60 years ago, Pickford Lions Club hosted the Les

Cheneaux members May 14. The anniversary celebration was at Northwoods Christian Camp in Pickford, a halfway point between the two communities. Les Cheneaux Lions Club President Judy Izzard read the May 19, 1947, program from the first meeting, its note of gratitude to the Pickford club, and the club's creed printed inside the gilded and tasseled program. The creed states that Lions strive to leave the world better than they

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Movies 'Under the Stars' To Be Shown at St. Ignace

By Ryan Schlehuber

There is nothing like going to the movies, under the stars. That is what St. Ignace City Manager Eric Dodson wants in St. Ignace, and he is proposing an outdoor movie theater at Little Bear East Community Center and Arena July 2 and 3.

Mr. Dodson, at a regular City Council meeting Monday, June 4, said he saw a similar feature in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

The July dates are between the St. Ignace Antique Auto Show and Fourth of July, "so it will be one more reason for folks to stay in town," he noted.

Great Outdoor Movies of Rochester Hills will provide an inflatable, 26-foot-wide digital screen that will project a 7,000-lumen image. A Dolby surround sound system will be used. Those who watch from their vehicles can tune listen to the movie over their car radio.

Family movies selected to be shown are the Disney films, "Cars" and "Night at the Museum." An documentary about the construction of the Mackinac Bridge will be shown each night, as well, as part of the 50th anniversary celebration this year.

Mr. Dodson will solicit sponsors for the outdoor theater.

"It's going to be a free movie," he said. "Any profits we make from this will be put in the city's special events line items to go towards other events like this."

He said there are make-up dates if the event is rained out.

Mayor Paul Grondin and other city officials will attend a regular meeting of the Mackinaw City Village Council Tuesday, June 19, and, the following day, village officials from Mackinaw City will attend a meeting of the St. Ignace City Council.

"This is a great opportunity to learn from one another while working to shorten 'the bridge' between our communities," said Mr. Dodson. "I've been to a few of these when I was working downstate and I always came back with new ideas and ideas on how to improve what we have."

Each visiting group will be given a tour of the host's facilities and exchange ideas.

Mayor Grondin said he was approached by Bay City earlier this year to "exchange mayors," however, he said, because of financial constraints of the city, he declined the offer but decided to see if Mackinaw City would be interested. He said he will arrange a mayoral exchange with Bay City, possibly next year.

Department of Public Works Director Les Therrian, updating Council on the water tower repair, said Bill Dixon of Dixon Engineering in Lansing has directed Pittsburgh Tank and Tower to redo a failure analysis study.

"Bill wants to be sure the repairs they do are going to be right," said Mr. Therrian, "and he wasn't satisfied with Pittsburgh Tanks' first failure analysis."

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Asbestos Will Be Removed at Gros Cap School Halonen Is Named Employee of the Year

By Paul Gingras

Plans for Gros Cap School's building and site fund were made by the school board at its Monday, May 21 meeting, at which time members declared Jonas Halonen the district's employee of the year and approved the hiring of an aide next year.

Mr. Halonen, the school's part-time special education teacher, holds one-on-one and small group learning sessions for students having trouble mastering basic skills.

Owing to the death of a relative, Mr. Halonen was not available for comment by press time.

Recently re-elected to their seats, board trustee Mike Cope and treasurer Nancy Dandona took oaths of office at the meeting. Their positions have been renewed for four years. Ms. Dandona has been on the board for 12 years and Mr. Cope for four years.

Funding for school operations is secure for the next three years, following a vote Tuesday, May 8, to renew the district's 16.8743 non-homestead millage, which is a tax on second homes and businesses. A mill is an assessment equal to \$1 for each \$1,000 in taxable property value.

With school operation funding taken care of, the board has turned its attention to improving the building. The district will remove all asbestos this summer, Superintendent Bill Peltier said.

Asbestos is a flame retardant that was once a common building material. Airborne particles of asbestos can cause cancer, and remodeling projects will expose the building's remaining asbestos, which is currently sealed off in classrooms, near furnaces, in the basement work room, the kitchen, and bathrooms.

By next fall, students will walk on new carpet and commercial flooring, and the asbestos will be gone. Tile is being removed because it requires too much maintenance, Mr. Peltier said. It is wearing out quickly and needs to be waxed frequently, owing to dirt and mud tracked into the building.

The new commercial flooring

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Young Volunteers Work To Improve Legacy House



Youth and adult volunteers worked at refurbishing Legacy House in St. Ignace Saturday, May 19, in celebration of a national day of service called "Join Hands Day." A former rental house is being converted to a sanctuary for women, to be called Legacy House, on the corner of Marley and Goudreau streets. Volunteers grouped in front of the house are (front row, from left) Andy Mullins, James Halberg, Chad VanDam, Patric Schlehuber; (second row) Meghan Woodard, Carol Elmlad, Andrea Wheaton, Gloria Marshall, Shannon Martin, Mike McNeely; (back row) Kirt Stage-Harvey, Kendra Stevenson, Sabe

Luhowy, Peter Michalski, Bob Marshall, and Matt Barbour. At left, Mike McNeely (from left), Patric Schlehuber, James Halberg, Bob Marshall, and Mandy Fenlon work on part of the project. The focus of Join Hands Day is to bring youth and adults together to improve communities through neighborhood volunteering. (Photographs courtesy of Pastor Tari Stage-Harvey)

Historical Log Books Donated for Iroquois Point Lighthouse

Historical log books relating information about the 1870 Iroquois Point Lighthouse were given to the Bay Mills/Brimley Historical Research Society in fall 2006.

Suspecting the books had significant historical value, Frank Atkinson of Sault Ste. Marie turned over the records to the society after discovering them in the attic of an old house that was scheduled for demolition.

The records contain official reports of weather conditions, including temperature, wind, barometric pres-

sure, fog, snow, and fires, as well as the amount of wood, coal, oil, and tallow consumed at the lighthouse.

The three journals were maintained for the United States Treasury Department, Light House Establishment, in Washington, D.C. They are dated April 1903 to July 1904, August 1904 to August 1905, and September 1905 to October 1906. The Historical Society plans to display them at the Iroquois Point Light House and Museum this summer.

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\$1.4 Million Improvement Projects Now Underway at Mackinaw City

By Paul Gingras

"It's a busy year," said Mackinaw City Village Manager Jeff Lawson, regarding \$1.4 million in infrastructure projects taking place in the village, several of which are complete or in progress, with others to be completed before the snow flies.

The village is working on improvements to Louigny Street, in part, to get it in shape by the time the 32nd Annual St. Ignace Car Show floods the village with traffic. There are sewer projects planned on South Huron Avenue and Wenniway Street, also, and the village's state-backed affordable housing project is also contributing to the flurry of activity.

At its Thursday, May 17 meeting, the Village Council authorized issuance of \$600,000 in capital improvement bonds to fund some of the projects.

On Louigny Street, where new curbs have been installed, \$275,000 will be spent. The village has addressed parking concerns voiced by business owners, Mr. Lawson said.

Gravel went in Wednesday, May 30, and paving is to begin this week, unless bad weather or problems hinder the project, he added. Louigny has been alternately opened and closed to accommodate traffic. On Memorial Day weekend, the village opened it to handle an influx of visitors.

The first exit off of southbound I-75 in Mackinaw City, exit 339, leads directly to Louigny Street, so completing improvements there before Car Show is important, Mr. Lawson explained. The show is Thursday, June 28, through Saturday, June 30.

Louigny Street has been low-

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