

## Golf Outing To Raise Hospital Funds

A golf tournament to support the Mackinac Island Medical Center and the Moses Dialysis Unit at Mackinac Straits Hospital in St. Ignace is planned for Thursday, August 23, on Mackinac Island.

Eighteen holes of golf will be played at the Woods Nine, Grand Nine, or the Wawashkamo Golf Course. The \$300 entry fee includes golf, round-trip boat tickets on either Arnold Transit or Star Line ferries from St. Ignace or Mackinaw City, taxi service to and from the boat docks, tournament registration, a box lunch, refreshments during the tournament, and a cocktail reception and awards dinner.

For more information, contact Shannon Doran at Mackinac Straits Hospital at 643-0456.

## Woman Jumps From Bridge Thursday

A 36-year-old Kingsley woman jumped to her death from mid-span of the Mackinac Bridge just before 4 p.m. Thursday, August 9, and an Ohio woman was deterred from jumping Sunday, August 12, about 5:30 p.m.

The body of the Kingsley woman, Lori Clairmont, was recovered about two miles west of the bridge by a helicopter crew from U.S. Coast Guard Station Traverse City about one hour after she jumped.

Police were successful in convincing the Ohio woman not to jump, said Detective Sergeant Robin Sexton from the St. Ignace Michigan State Police Post. She was taken into custody and initially transported by ambulance to Mackinac Straits Hospital, then transferred to another hospital.

Mackinac Bridge administrators say they won't release information about suicide on the bridge, fearing the publicity will inspire others to attempt it.

## McDowell Announces Office Hours

State Representative Gary McDowell will not host local office hours in August due to a scheduling conflict, but will hold office hours Monday, September 10.

The schedule for the office hours is from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. in the Chippewa County Courthouse Annex Meeting Room in Sault Ste. Marie; from noon to 1 p.m. at the Mackinac County Annex in St. Ignace, and from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Petoskey City Hall Community Room in Petoskey.

## Road Repairs Underway Near Pickford

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is crack sealing and installing permanent pavement markings on nearly five miles of M-129 between the M-48 west intersection and M-80, near Pickford. Work started Tuesday, August 14, and is estimated to be complete Monday, August 27.

This project will require temporary lane closures with alternating traffic.

This project will extend the pavement life and promote safety, MDOT reported.

## Nature Association Purchases Sanctuary

The Michigan Nature Association has purchased the Lennagene Rossman Stratton Memorial Nature Sanctuary off M-123 southeast of Moran. The Mackinac County land offers habitat for the only federally endangered dragonfly in the country, the Hine's emerald dragonfly.

Funds were used to purchase the 31-acre sanctuary and will help protect the species.

The association has completed its three-year, statewide Land Protection Campaign by raising more than \$3 million to protect natural land throughout the state.

## For the Record...

On the front page of the August 9 issue of *The St. Ignace News*, "All Clear: Area Bridges Deemed Safe," it was mistakenly printed that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) inspects the Mackinac Bridge. The Mackinac Bridge Authority completes an FHWA sufficiency rating form based on an annual inspection of the Mackinac Bridge.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Why Are City Police Patrolling US-2?

To the Editor:

Police patrol is welcome and necessary on West US-2, but I can't help but wonder why the St. Ignace city police, who I assume are needed in the city and paid by the city, are being seen five to six miles out of the city limits and parked, watching, I assume, for speeders and patrolling on West US-2.

Don't the Mackinac County Sheriff's Department and the State Police handle this well enough?

Carmon Green  
St. Ignace

**Editor's Note:** *The St. Ignace city police are part of Operation Sabre, a federally funded, cooperative effort with other area law enforcement to keep US-2 safe and keep vehicles from speeding and aggressive driving. City police, for example, receive a grant each year from the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) as members of the program. The St. Ignace Police Department shared a \$24,989 grant with the Mackinac County Sheriff's Department that funds Operation Sabre, which focuses on curbing speeding on US-2, and includes funding for seatbelt enforcement and drunk driving enforcement, said City Police Chief Tim Matelski. Under Operation Sabre, city police patrol US-2 outside the city limits as far west as Cheeseman Road, which is about five miles. The city police department received another OHSP grant for extra patrols to curb drunk driving in St. Ignace, from August 17 to September 3.*

### Group Shared Message: Build Bridges, Not Bombs

To the Editor:

I want to commend all those involved in the wonderful celebratory events held for the 50th anniversary of the Mackinac Bridge. You provided a memorable day for all, and it will be a day long remembered.

I also want to thank the scores and scores of parade attendees who applauded a group of seven peace marchers that day. It was impossible to count just how many persons supported us via spontaneous applause. The group consisted of persons from Mackinaw City, Cheboygan, Indian River, and Wolverine. All are members of the Straits Area Concerned Citizens for Peace and Justice.

We were not able to walk the entire route, so for those who did not see us, let me share the message we carried that day. Our signs or T-shirts read: "Build Bridges, Not Bombs; I Am a Veteran for Peace, Support the Troops by Bringing them Home; No More Money for War; Get out of Iraq and Don't Bomb Iran."

The group ranged in age from 50 to 73, so some of the negative comments were almost amusing. One person told one of the oldest marchers to "get a job." Someone else called out that the group was un-Christian. Hmm... it has become "un-Christian" to seek peace and to spare lives.

As we all watch the news of the collapsed bridge [in Minnesota], and wonder how it could happen, think about the money being spent every week in Iraq, for a war of choice, rather than here in our own country. Let me share some statistics from the National Priorities Web site: The Iraq War is costing Michigan taxpayers almost \$12 billion. For \$12 billion, we could have hired 205,733 teachers instead; or we could have built 106,919 housing units (northern Michigan is in desperate need of more housing); or we could have sent 1,572,795 young children to Head Start for one year, or we could have provided 575,502 students four-year scholarships at public universities.

One must also wonder, how many Michigan bridges could be refurbished or rebuilt for \$12 billion?

Our new Web site is [www.straitspacelife.org](http://www.straitspacelife.org).

Mary K. Martin  
Cheboygan

### Telephone Charge Is a Stealth Tax

To the Editor:

Get out the lipstick. Some of the elected folks in Lansing have yet another "pig" which needs extreme cosmetic makeover!

The most recent example of porcine fundraising is known as HB 4852, a proposed "public safety" surcharge on all telephone services in Michigan. It is a "stealth tax" which will generate about \$16.3 million per month to be collected by AT&T, Charter, Cellular One, Sprint, and all other service providers from business, small and large, families, including those of low and fixed incomes, and all governmental and non-governmental or nonprofit agencies.

This regressive tax will be charged to users of a basic necessity, whether your communication access is landline, cellphone, fax line, or Internet phone.

Precious little, if any, of this huge stack of your dollars will return to our zip codes in the guise of resources to law enforcement or emergency first responder agencies, despite the label legislators have used to make this scheme more appealing. In fact, significant doubt exists

### 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.

#### Internet:

The complete edition of The St. Ignace News is available online at [stignacenews.com](http://stignacenews.com).

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whether even one additional safety professional will be uniformed or equipped from the nearly \$200 million generated by Lansing's latest pile-on tax.

So great is the opposition to HB 4852 that groups such as the Michigan Police Officers' Association, Michigan Sheriffs' Association, and the Michigan Deputy Sheriffs' Association have joined local governments like the City of Saint Ignace, City of Detroit, City of Ferndale, Ontonagon Village Council, Oakland County Commission, Hillsdale County Commission, Emmet County Commission, and others. Consumers' advocates or special interests like Michigan AARP, National Taxpayers' Union, Citizens Against Government Waste, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, and more are actively campaigning for the defeat of this "dedicated spending."

Personally, I think that the idea that the text of this bill bankrolls undefined "non-emergency diversions" rivals the humor found on Comedy Central! Today, state law requires organizations that operate 2-1-1 systems for non-emergency calls provide their own funding without tax dollars.

Further, I am certain that once lawmakers identify a lucrative revenue source, it is rarely abandoned.

Although I don't remember the Spanish-American War, I do remember paying for it.

That military action under the McKinley administration (1898) lasted less than four months; yet, it was only last year (2006) that the federal telephone excise tax was finally rescinded!

Here are a few easy and inexpensive ways for you to participate today in the old-fashioned, yet revolutionary, idea of objecting to "taxation without representation:"

1) Call your Mackinac County commissioner. A resolution in opposition to this proposed "public safety surcharge" on all Michigan telephone subscribers will be considered at their next regularly scheduled meeting August 23 at 3:30 p.m. Let your elected Mackinac County commissioner know your feelings about this additional taxation.

2) Allow State Representative Gary McDowell the opportunity to represent your concerns in both the House Appropriations Committee and on the House floor. He can be contacted at (888) 737-4379 (toll-free, within the 107th District) or e-mail him at [garymcdowell@house.mi.gov](mailto:garymcdowell@house.mi.gov). This ridiculous ripoff will die or advance depending on Gary's vote, and his ability to communicate effectively your willingness to spend your dollars on such a dubious investment.

3) Pass this letter on to every Michigan telephone user.

Regardless of the color or amount of lipstick applied, this "piggy" of a legislative proposal will remain a costly barnyard creature.

Statewide public safety efforts have been funded through property, income, sales taxes, and citation revenue. HB 4852 is Lansing's gimmick to shift this burden to Michigan's already overwhelmed taxpayers, and, it remains a covert invasion of telephone users' wallets.

Mary Elizabeth Nichols  
St. Ignace

## Michigan Politics

By  
George Weeks



### Biggest PAC in State History

In politics, money talks. For Michigan Democrats of late, there's no voice quite like Stryker-speak.

Last year, the Coalition for Progress political action committee, creation of the founding family of Kalamazoo's Stryker Corporation medical supply company that has annual revenues of about \$3 billion, "became the biggest PAC in Michigan history," according to the bipartisan Michigan Campaign Finance Network (MCFN).

The PAC raised \$5,460,000 for the 2006 election cycle and made more than \$3 million in independent expenditures for Michigan Democratic candidates. Among them: Dan Scripps of Leelanau County, a bright political comer who came close to upsetting term-limited state Representative Dave Palsrok (R-Manistee) in what is viewed by *Inside Michigan Politics* newsletter as a toss-up district in 2008.

The PAC spent \$1.6 million in support of Governor Jennifer Granholm — pitted against the formidable family fortunes of Republican challenger Dick DeVos, who with his wife, Betsy, put \$35.5 million into the losing effort. (MCFN dubbed it "more than any Republican candidate in the nation has ever spent from his personal fortune in pursuit of a governorship.")

Last week, Granholm announced Ronda E. Stryker of Portage, "director of the Stryker Corporation," among six appointees to the Michigan Women's Commission.

(Also among them: Donna L. Budnick of Harbor Springs, legislative services attorney of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, and Estelle P. Smyth of Escanaba, owner of Ideas Unlimited.)

Stryker, according to *Forbes* magazine, is one of the richest women in the world and a major contributor to public interest endeavors. Her siblings, also

grandchildren of the founder of the Stryker Corporation, were the major 2006 contributors to Coalition for Progress. Brother Jon Stryker of Kalamazoo gave \$4,836,000 and sister Pat Stryker of Colorado Springs (a \$20 million contributor to Colorado State University in 2003) chipped in \$500,000.

There's nothing evil about folks with deep pockets dipping into them for political campaigns. But the watchdog MCFN correctly says that Michigan law should, as does the federal campaign finance law, establish limits on contributions to PACs and political party committees, and establish an aggregate individual contribution limit.

The federal system of limits provides a boundary on the influence a contributor can exercise through campaign contributions, says MCFN Executive Director Rich Robinson, who wisely laments Michigan's "pathetic" disclosure laws.

Robinson revealed Friday that he has been talking with legal, environmental, and League of Women Voters representatives in the Grand Traverse region about convening an October meeting in Traverse City to stoke the burner on campaign finance reform issues.

Senator Michelle McManus (R-Lake Leelanau), chair of the Senate Campaign and Election Oversight Committee, has been holding hearings around the state on election and campaign reforms.

Don't look for quick action. The Legislature's agenda has been dominated by budget issues. An immediate issue for McManus' committee is how to craft Michigan's 2008 presidential primary process.

*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.*

## The St. Ignace News

and Les Cheneaux Islands Weekly Wave

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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.