

News From St. Ignace Area Schools

By Mike Springsteen, Superintendent

The 2007-2008 school year begins Tuesday, September 4. The first day of the school year will be a full day. LaSalle High School students will begin at 8:05 a.m. and dismiss at 3 p.m., while middle school and elementary students begin at 8:10 a.m. and dismiss at 2:55 p.m. Some changes will be noted in both the parking lot and bus transportation policies.

Parking lot changes have been made in response to congestion and confusion that occurs as students are dropped off or picked up; traffic routing and entrance/exit changes have occurred in the school parking lot. The western entrance is reserved for bus traffic only between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The center drive will be the entrance to the school from Portage Street. The west drive will be the exit from the school. Signage will designate all three lanes as one way, either in or out, and traffic arrows will be painted on the blacktop to delineate traffic flow in the lot.

To alleviate traffic congestion on Portage Street, the back entrance at the corner of Spring and Fourth streets will be open to both incoming and outgoing traffic. Cars may use the exit only when buses are not in the loading or drop zone.

Bus transportation changes are in response to budget concerns. Revenue projections are not keeping pace with expense increases.

Based on our best information, we are not counting on any increases in funding for the next school year. That leaves us projecting a deficit in spending, over revenues, of \$163,000. Our goal is to provide the same level of academic programming, facility maintenance, and ancillary services that we have done in the past.

Last year, St. Ignace Area School's buses covered an area of 299.44 square miles, while driving 122,189 miles. At an average cost of \$2.74 per mile, the cost to do this was \$344,785.

In transportation, we believe that by instituting some very basic changes, we can save 5% and shorten bus rides. Instead of stopping at each house in town, whenever possible, buses will only be making one stop per block. On country runs, at times, students may be asked to walk up to 0.3 of a mile.

Safety will always be a main concern and may, at times, overrule the policy. In general, however, we believe that these minor changes will result in shorter trips and fewer stops. This will save on gas, school bus maintenance, and personnel costs. The school asks for the understanding and cooperation of all who use the bus system. Letters are being sent home to help determine routes and drop sites.

Bus routes will not be finalized until drivers actually run the routes for the first week.

Red Hat Society To Meet Aug. 25

The Jewels of the Straits Red Hat Society will meet Saturday, August 25, at 1 p.m. at the Scenic Rest Area on the west side of I-75 between exit 345 (Portage Street) and exit 348 (Evergreen Shores/Castle Rock). The rest area is only accessible going south-

bound on I-75.

In case of inclement weather, the meeting will be held at Rosalie Robinson's house on South State Street. Members are asked to bring a dish to pass and a beverage.

For more information, call 643-9676.

Gros Cap School To Be Among Those Required To Pay Refunds

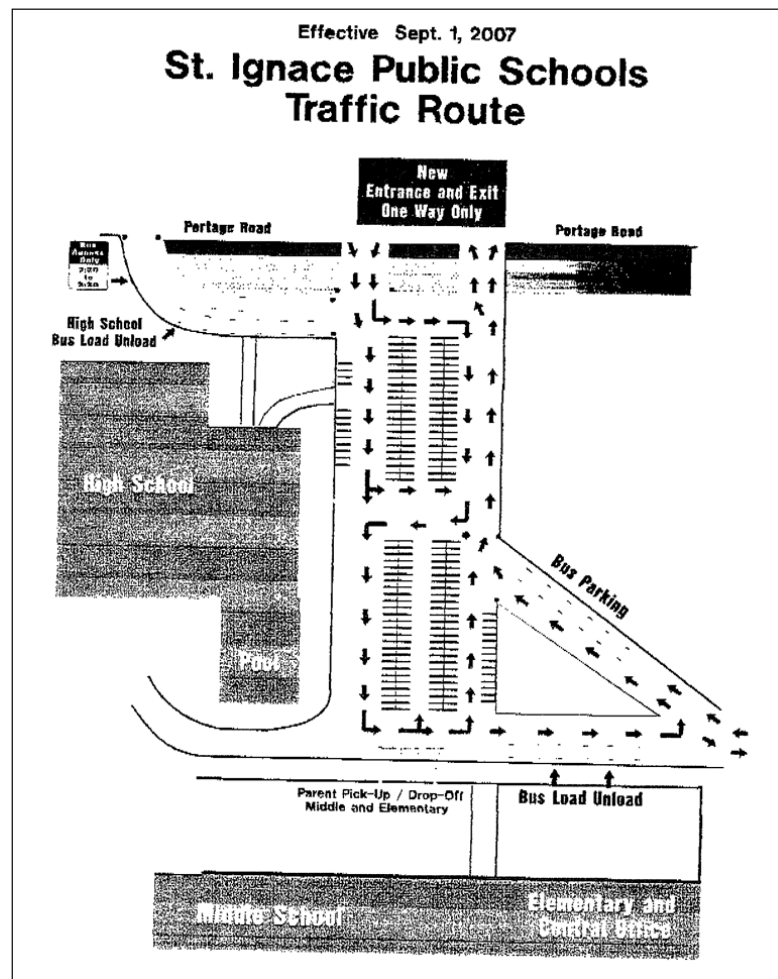
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energy company. The company is sending each affected township a computed settlement, based on the test case, and paperwork for a consent judgment, should the townships accept the settlement.

While Enbridge will only receive about one-third of the refund it originally asked for, the

taxing units already are operating on tight budgets. Ms. Dionne said, and the settlement "is going to hurt all of them."

In a similar case, the Tax Tribunal required full payment, with interest, in under 30 days, so the county made the initial repayment while townships gathered funds. This case will probably pro-



This year's school traffic routes. (Map supplied by St. Ignace Area Schools)

Grief Recovery Meetings Planned

A series of meetings entitled "Grief and the Healing Process: Understanding Your Loss" will be presented by Hospice of the Straits in St. Ignace on Wednesdays from September 5 through October 3. This is a series of five meetings, designed to provide a deeper understanding of

any loss and the means of reconciling the loss into normal, everyday activities. This series is open to anyone in the community who has experienced the loss of a loved one.

For more information, or to register, call (231) 627-4774 or (800) 342-7711.

EUP Students Earn Scholarships

Mandy Hesselink of Rudyard and Jessica Church of Brimley were recipients of \$500 scholarships at Lake Superior State University, awarded by National Office Products and Printing, Inc., of Sault Ste. Marie. Four other students who received this scholarship were previously reported in the May 8, May 31, and June 7 issues of *The St. Ignace News*.

ceed the same way, she added.

Each township has a different portion of the pipeline within its jurisdiction. In taxes on its pipeline, the company paid a ballpark average per year of \$90,000 to Newton, \$80,000 to Moran, \$50,000 to Hudson, \$20,000 to Garfield, \$11,000 in Hendricks, and \$1,500 to Brevort.

In all of these township's, the bulk of the repayment will be shouldered by the school system for which each municipality generates tax revenue.

Engadine Consolidated Schools will take a big hit, Ms. Dionne said. Hendricks, Hudson, and Newton, collect money for Engadine Schools. Brevort collects for St. Ignace Area Schools, and Moran collects for Gros Cap.

Although initial repayment will be burdensome, Engadine and St. Ignace schools will eventually get this money back from the state,

when the county treasurer's office makes adjustments regarding the amount of tax revenue the schools received. In these two systems, tax money is turned over to the state, which in turn pays the schools a per-pupil allowance. The reimbursement will be included in this reimbursement, although it will take time, she added.

Gros Cap will not receive a refund because it does not receive a per-pupil allowance from the state, however. It relies exclusively on local taxes. The district received roughly \$40,000 per year from taxes generated from the pipeline.

Responding to inquiries by Superintendent Bill Peltier, Ms. Dionne advised Gros Cap to set aside \$50,000 for repayment. Gros Cap recently paid back approximately the same amount to American Transmission, which won a similar lawsuit.

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 stignaceneews.com.

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Michigan Politics

By
George Weeks



Tilting at Windmills and Water Withdrawals

Don Quixote, Cervantes' Man of la Mancha, tilted with windmills in a classic of the 16th century literary world about vision and fantasy.

Terry Swier, conservation's Woman of Mecosta, now faces harsh reality as she tilts with windmills in the 21st century legal world.

The idealist Swier is president of Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation. Last week, it filed a motion for reconsideration of the Michigan Supreme Court's 4-3 ruling in July that limited citizens' ability to file lawsuits under the 1970 Michigan Environmental Protection Act (MEPA).

Swier's group had won some lower court victories in its groundwater pumping case regarding Nestle's Ice Mountain bottled water operation in Mecosta County. And the Supreme Court held that families affected by pumping near Thompson Lake and the Dead Stream could sue.

But the high court said the residents were not directly affected by pumping near Osprey Lake and three nearby wetlands, and therefore could not sue. No matter that MEAP says "any person" can file suit "for the protection of the air, water and other natural resources...from pollution, impairment or destruction."

In announcing the request for rehearing, Swier said:

"It makes no sense to us. The court says we have standing to prevent the damage to the stream and one lake within the affected area of Nestle's pumping, but then says we don't have the right to protect the lake and wetlands on Nestle's property, even though these water resources are also harmed and within the affected area."

But the reality is that her bid to get this court's Majority of Four to change its judicial philosophy is as quixotic as those quests of the novelist's knight-errand who traveled the roads of Spain (where Swier and her husband once lived) with his faithful squire, Sancho Panza.

Swier's Sancho Panza is Traverse City attorney-author Jim Olson, longtime lawyer for assorted environmental groups. Olson's 30-page filing last week was a strong one - arguing that there is no conflict between MEPA and the Michigan Constitution regarding standing, and that the Supreme Court's ruling violates the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution "in depriving Plaintiffs of their right to petition the government to redress wrongs."

But I suspect that the Woman of Mecosta and her faithful squire are building the case for the court of public opinion, as Supreme Court Justice Cliff Taylor is the only member of the bench up for reelection.

Defeating incumbent justices also has proved quixotic.

Northern poll leanings

A statewide Detroit News/WXYZ-TV poll last week indicated that Michigan voters favored unannounced prospects for presidential nominations over those currently in the field. Not quite so Up North.

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton is the overwhelming favorite in the current field of Democrats statewide and in the north. But when former Vice President Al Gore is added to the field, he has a 36-32 lead statewide, and a 50-17 lead in the Upper Peninsula (Clinton still leads Gore in the northern Lower Peninsula, 47% to 28%).

On the Republican side, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani leads by about 10% in the statewide poll over Senator John McCain of Arizona and ex-Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney. Giuliani trails unannounced ex-Senator Fred Thompson of Tennessee statewide, 19-22, when Thompson is added to the mix.

But Giuliani has substantial leads over Thompson in the Upper Peninsula and the northern Lower.

The statewide samples of 400 in each primary have an error margin of plus or minus five percentage points, and the rate is larger in the regional samples.

One thing that stands out in this very early poll is that Clinton makes her second strongest showing in the Democratic field, beyond the Flint-Saginaw area, in the Traverse City media market, which includes the eastern U.P.

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*.

Surplus Food Distribution Announced

Community Action Agency's Commodity Supplemental Surplus Food Program will change its schedule for August distribution. The new schedule follows:

Distributions will be made Wednesday, August 22, at the Mackinac County Community Action building in St. Ignace from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; Clark Township Hall in Cedarville from 1:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.; DeTour Township Hall in DeTour Village from 2:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.; Raber Township Hall in Goetzville from 3:45 p.m. to 4:15 p.m., and Pickford Township Hall in Pickford from 4:45 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.

Thursday, August 23, distributions will be made in Sault Ste. Marie across the street from St. Mary's Church/High Rise Back Lot from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.; Kinross Township Hall in Kinross

from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; Rudyard Township Hall in Rudyard from 12:45 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.; Trout Lake Community Center in Trout Lake from 1:45 p.m. to 2:15 p.m., and Hudson Township Hall in Rexton from 2:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Distributions will be made Friday, August 24, at Portage Township Hall in Curtis from 9 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.; Garfield Township Hall in Engadine from 9:45 a.m. to 10 a.m.; Newberry Community Building in Newberry from 10:30 a.m. to noon; Hulbert Township Hall in Hulbert from 1 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.; Eckerman Rest Stop in Eckerman from 1:45 p.m. to 2 p.m., and Superior Township Hall in Brimley from 2:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

For more information about the program and eligibility requirements, call (906) 632-3363.

Energy Saving Workshops Offered

The Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency will present free energy saving workshops in August. During these workshops, participants can learn measures to conserve home energy.

Workshops will be held at several locations. All workshops will begin at 6 p.m. The dates are Wednesday, August 22, at the Mackinac County Community Action Agency Fenlon Center at 368 Reagon Street in St. Ignace; Monday, August 27, at the Kinross Township Hall at 4884 West Curtis in Kincheloe; and Wednesday, August 29, at the McMillan

Township Hall/ Newberry Community Building at 405 Newberry Avenue in Newberry.

Participants are asked to bring a copy of the most recent fuel bill to the workshop, as well as documentation of income for the household to determine eligibility for an energy voucher. The first 25 people to sign up for each location will receive a free energy savings kit and could be eligible for an energy voucher for up to \$150.

For more information, or to confirm attendance, contact the Community Action Agency at 643-8595 or (800) 562-4963.

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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.