

# St. Ignace Community Invited To Celebrate French Heritage at Feast in Support of Museum

## Genealogists Want To Highlight Satigo Project

By Ryan Schlehuber

The French Frog Feast Friday, October 19, will allow community members to enjoy an evening of local history and dishes inspired by early settlers in the Great Lakes region. They can also learn more about a new effort to establish a genealogy research center in St. Ignace.

The event, to be held at the Fort de Buade Museum and the Galley Restaurant, will include a tour of the museum, which was purchased this summer by the city, and raise funds for museum operations.

Dinner will include a choice of frog legs, whitefish, whitefish livers, and chicken and glissants, or dumplings.

Tickets are \$20 a person. Seating is limited, so reservations are required by calling 643-7960.

The free tour of Fort de Buade Museum will be held before dinner, from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Dinner will begin at 7 p.m.

There are more than 5,000 historical artifacts in the Fort de Buade Museum, collected by the late Donald Benson, and the Michilimackinac Historical Society, under an agreement with the city, will catalogue and display the collection and operate the museum gift shops. The money to purchase the museum from the Benson family came from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

The tour, said Historical Society President Judi Engle, will allow patrons to see the extent of the collection.

The Fort de Buade Museum was reopened Friday, August 31, after the City of St. Ignace, with a pledge of financial support from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, purchased the museum from private ownership.

Aside from the museum, a small group of genealogy enthusiasts, including members of the Mackinac



Among artifacts at the Fort de Buade Museum are tintypes of Chief Satigo and his family. Local genealogists have listed 88 names linked to the Satigo settlement and are attempting to identify the people depicted.

Band of Chippewa and Ottawa Indians and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, are creating a nonprofit organization called the Mackinac Native Heritage and Genealogy Association to begin gathering information that will allow families to research their histories.

One room within the museum is being cleared to create a genealogy research center.

St. Ignace may hold clues for many people seeking to know more about their family history, said Ms. Engle.

The genealogy group is hoping to establish a local center and a Web

site where local residents can visit to find and store their family history and those living elsewhere can trace their families back to St. Ignace through the Internet.

"Mackinac is one of the oldest settlements in the United States and people will come through here to locate their history," said Ms. Engle. "Right now, there is no one central place for a person, especially someone living far away, to go to find out about family history in St. Ignace."

"Our concern is that we're losing Mackinac history with each elder that dies," she continued. "We need to get people to talk to their elders

and gather information of their family before it is lost forever." "The idea is to collect what we can and save it here at the center for everyone to use," said Ms. Engle.



Judi Engle, president of the Michilimackinac Historical Society, displays an album from the Satigo collection. Other artifacts at the museum include handmade rugs, sugar camp tools, and a confessional door from the settlement's Catholic church.



The museum closed for the season September 31, however, Ms. Engle is attempting to keep at least the genealogy center open year-around and is seeking funding to help pay anticipated utility expenses of \$2,000 to \$3,000.

Members of the Mackinac

## St. Ignace Principals Update School Board on Class Sizes, Test Results

By Paul Gingras

In a month of testing and student conferences, principals Bonnie Ledy and Don Gustafson updated the public and the school board on testing, student progress, class sizes, and activities in the district at St. Ignace Area Schools Board of Education meeting Monday, October 8.

To raise their scores and increase their odds of receiving a Michigan Promise Scholarship, some seniors will retake the Michigan Merit Exam Saturday, October 27, and Tuesday, October 30, said Mr. Gustafson, principal of LaSalle High School. The students took the test for the first time as juniors in March.

Merit exam results reveal that, compared to their peers throughout the state and across the Eastern Upper Peninsula, more LaSalle students achieved the state's highest recommended levels of mastery in science and social studies, and fewer achieved them in mathematics and English language arts, Mr. Gustafson reported.

Now, from grade school to high school, testing has begun anew. Grades eight and nine began the MEAP during the week of October

8, with eighth graders covering language arts, mathematics, and science, and ninth graders covering social studies. Ninth graders also took the EXPLORE test, a prep test for the ACT, and on October 17, juniors will take the PSAT test. MEAP testing for students in grades three through seven began Tuesday, October 9.

Class sizes are growing at LaSalle, owing to staffing reductions since 2004 designed to keep the district financially solvent, said Superintendent Mike Springsteen. "Class sizes are a concern," Mr. Gustafson said, citing the example of a sixth-hour world cultures class of 34 students. It would be difficult to fit any more desks into the room, he said.

Many classes have 30 or more students. Classes at LaSalle range from 49 in band to eight in a calculus course taught through interactive television.

LaSalle has had large class sizes for the past two years, Mr. Gustafson said, primarily a result of teacher retirements that have reduced the number of elective classes available.

Most recently, for example,

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## Brevort Twp. Accepts \$3,000 Donation

By Paul Gingras

The Brevort Township Board of Trustees accepted a \$3,000 contribution from neighboring Moran Township Tuesday, October 2, to augment its fire department, following a presentation by Moran Township Supervisor Jim Durm.

Moran Township does not have its own fire department and relies on the St. Ignace Fire Department as its primary responder. At its western end, the Hendricks Township Fire Department serves as a secondary responder. To help Hendricks' department and ensure that west-end Moran Township residents are well protected, the township recently provided Hendricks with a monetary donation, Mr. Durm said. Since the Brevort Township department is a secondary responder in areas such as Ozark, at the north end of Moran Township, Mr. Durm's board decided to offer a similar contribution to the Brevort Township Fire Department. Fire Chief Mark Peterson said he

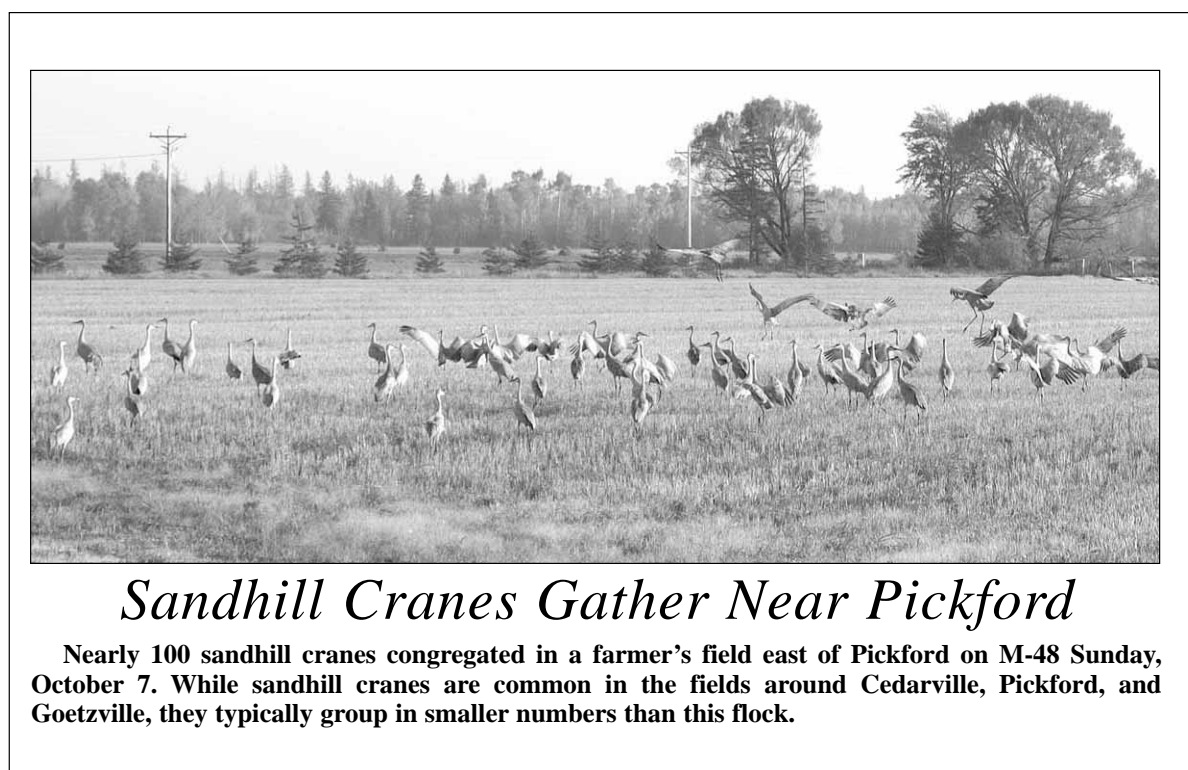
had no problem with the donation, but added that his department does not desire to become the primary responder for the Ozark area. The department will continue to serve as a secondary responder, dispatched when needed by John "Bucky" Robinson, fire chief in St. Ignace.

Mr. Durm explained that he expected nothing more, and added, "We appreciate whatever contribution you can make."

The board announced Ron Peterka's retirement from the township's sewer maintenance crew Saturday, September 1. He received thanks for his service from residents.

The board took no action on a request to approve or disapprove of changes to the Eastern Upper Peninsula Solid Waste Management Plan, but will seek more information. The request was made via a letter to the township by Jeffrey Hagan, interim director of the EUP Regional Planning and

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## Sandhill Cranes Gather Near Pickford

Nearly 100 sandhill cranes congregated in a farmer's field east of Pickford on M-48 Sunday, October 7. While sandhill cranes are common in the fields around Cedarville, Pickford, and Goetzville, they typically group in smaller numbers than this flock.

## Mustang Bar Design Meets Goals of Island Planners

### Project Hailed as Superior Example of Joining Modern Demands With Ambiance Preservation

By Karen Gould

Mackinac Island residents call the proposed remodeling work and addition plans for the Mustang Lounge and Astor Street Cafe a superior design that should serve as an example of what can be done to meet modern demands while maintaining Island ambiance. The Mackinac Island Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) agreed, and granted a zoning variance for the proposed plans Wednesday, October 10.

"This type of project, this rendition in particular, is exactly what we really want to do in terms of integrating housing and ancillary businesses. It makes a lot of sense," said ZBA member Lee Finkel, who motioned to approve the variance. "This has been well thought out."

Board member Jason St. Onge agreed. "I'm glad to see architectural vision that doesn't think it has to have a turret and gingerbread to look historic."

The property on Astor Street is being sold, and a purchase agreement was presented during a public hearing just before the ZBA met. The document was signed by current owners Cathy Arbib, Stephanie Arbib, and Cynthia Pierson, and by buyers Jason Klonowski and Larry Myers of Mustang Property Development, LLC. The new own-

ers say they plan to live in the apartments and the sleeping rooms will house employees.

The main floor of the proposed project includes a remodeled bar and restaurant and the addition of street-side dining. A second and third floor addition, set back from the street, would add two apartments and three sleeping rooms. The lot size allows one apartment and the sleeping rooms. The variance provides for the second apartment.

"The principles are proposing to restore and renovate and continue the operation of a business that is both historic and socially significant to the community," said Planning Commissioner Mary Dufina, who attended the public hearing and urged the ZBA to approve the variance. "They are cleverly blending the housing of owner families with employees, while creating a design that will visually decrease the bulk of the building."

Mrs. Dufina also requested the ZBA instruct the Planning Commission to revisit the city's

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This view of the proposed remodeling and three-story addition to the Mustang Lounge and Astor Street Cafe on Mackinac Island received public support during a variance hearing October 10. (Drawings provided by HopkinsBurns Design Studio of Ann Arbor)

## McCann Field May Be Site for Soccer Program

By Ryan Schlehuber

McCann baseball field in St. Ignace may be the site of city youth soccer programs in the future, as city recreation officials attempt to find a use for the field.

Members of the St. Ignace Recreation Advisory Committee, at a meeting Wednesday, October 10, discussed the possibility of creating soccer fields in place of the weathered baseball field on McCann Street, since bleachers facing the football field stand in the shallow outfield, obstructing baseball play and posing a safety hazard for players.

Installing soccer fields will allow the bleachers to remain where they are, and give residents the opportunity to play soccer whenever they want, as the nets would remain on the field, except in winter.

City workers found it difficult to move the bleachers for baseball games. Baseball games have been played at LaSalle High School's two diamonds for the past few years, while McCann field remained idle. City youth soccer games are played in the outfields of LaSalle High School's baseball diamonds.

The committee will further discuss the idea at its next meeting in November.

Long-term membership rates and business and household group rates at the fitness center will be kept the same for 2008, the committee agreed. The committee raised some fitness center rates last month, including daily, monthly membership, and senior citizen membership rates, although discounts for Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians members and local residents remain unchanged.

The regular long-term membership rate for six months is \$150, and \$300 for 12 months. For seniors, it is \$100 for six months and \$200 for 12 months.

Business and household group membership rates are as follows:

- 2 to 5 members: six months, \$100; 12 months, \$200
- 6 to 10 members: six months, \$90; 12 months, \$180
- 11 to 20 members: six months,

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