

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Skier Concerned About Car Towed From Trailhead

To the Editor,

My purpose for writing this letter is to make everyone aware of what I went through so the same thing doesn't happen to them. On February 27, I cross-country skied on the North Country Trail, east side of Brevort Lake Road. Because of the excellent snow conditions, I decided to ski farther than usual, taking three hours to complete the route.

Upon returning to the starting point, I was shocked to discover my vehicle missing.

I was feeling tired, hungry, and cold from the falling temperatures. I'm 75 years old, and had been out skiing for three hours, and now I faced an additional four-mile hike home in the middle of winter.

Luckily, a friend happened by to give me a ride and call the police to report a stolen vehicle.

Turned out the police had ordered it towed away for obstructing traffic. To the best of my recollection, I parked the truck in the same place as always and as close to the snowbank as usual, without a complaint from anyone.

If in the officer's opinion my truck needed to be moved, he or she should first have made very certain that I wasn't going to be left stranded out there. My ski tracks on the snow heading up the North Country Trail should have been a pretty good clue as to where I was. Honking the horn to get my attention would have worked only if I was near enough to hear it.

If there was any doubt of my whereabouts and if the vehicle didn't pose a serious safety hazard, the officer should have opted to leave a warning ticket on the windshield, instead.

To reduce the likelihood of something like this happening again, I was advised by the police to park as far back from the road as possible next time, and leave a note on the dashboard stating why the vehicle was left there.

Donald Savela
Moran

Say 'No' To Closed Hospital Meetings

To the Editor:

Your paper says it all!

From the March 6 article, Commissioners Question Why Residents May Have No Say in New Hospital Board, "... The change from having public to closed meetings hinges on a transfer of ownership, say hospital officials, which they favor ..."

Duh.

Ought the thinking voter read that headline as: "There's No Question Why Bored Residents Have to Say No to New Hospital"?

No Say = Say No.

Vote Tuesday, May 6, 2008.

Mary Elizabeth Nichols
St. Ignace

FOR THE RECORD...

In a March 6 article about Les Cheneaux Community Schools students participating in a band festival, Alice Landreville was mistakenly referred to as Alice Coyne. Miss Landreville, a middle school student, was a member of a percussion trio that earned a second division rating.

In reference to the Bell's Fishery property on South Huron Avenue in Mackinaw City, a news article on page one of the March 6 issue of *The St. Ignace News* incorrectly quotes Mackinaw City resident Rosada Mann as saying, "I think everybody in town was just sick that the city lost that property." The statement was made by Mackinaw City resident Kay Stemkoski.

A story in the March 6 issue about Clark Township reviewing the assessor's contract mistakenly reports that Mike Miller "was on the original assessor hiring committee." There was not an assessor hiring committee. Mr. Miller participated in board discussions about hiring the assessor three years ago as a public participant at meetings.

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.

Three Minor Citations Reported in Long Term Care Survey

By Ryan Schlehuter

The Long Term Care facility at Mackinac Straits Hospital in St. Ignace received a good rating for its staff work and procedures by the state Department of Community Health (DCH) Thursday, February 28, with only three minor citations reported. None of the three complaints were related to resident care and none were on a harmful level, said Barbara Phillips, a surveyor with the state's Division of Nursing Home Monitoring. She and Bob Bree spent a week at Long Term Care assessing staff responsibilities, residential rooms, and daily care practices and procedures staff

must follow.

The three citations included providing larger privacy curtains for residents, improving standards for a clean and safe environment, and returning resident trust funds to families sooner. Mackinac Straits Hospital was directed to submit a plan of corrections by Sunday, March 9, and must make the corrections by April 18, said Barb Davis, director of nursing for Long Term Care.

Mr. Bree said 11 rooms had privacy curtains that were shorter than the state's requirements. He said residents should be provided curtains that cover them entirely for visual privacy.

In improving safety at the facility, Ms. Phillips observed an end-dwelling catheter privacy bag touching the ground as a resident was wheeled to the dining area on three occasions.

She also said some reclining chairs were missing caps on arm rests that protect people from being cut or jabbed from the sharp metal edges.

Long Term Care residents set up trust funds for personal services, like haircuts, or for afternoon trips with a group. The state requires the trust funds to be returned within 30 days after a resident has been discharged or dies. The hospital was not misusing

funds or missing any funding, Ms. Phillips said, rather, it needs to speed up the process of returning the funds.

She also said staff must better update care plans for residents, saying, "The paperwork was sloppy."

"We've talked with a lot of the staff, residents, and their families, and the majority had positive things to say," said Mr. Bree. "Observations that I have seen was that interactions with all staff were positive."

"I've been coming here for 10 years now, and I've seen a great improvement over the years," Ms. Phillips added.



News From St. Ignace Area Schools

By Mike Springsteen, Superintendent

The technology explosion is revolutionizing our world in the way we communicate, learn, and work. At St. Ignace Area Schools, we have embraced the changes and are moving to integrate their use as a way to provide a better and broader learning environment for our students.

While technology did make changes in the 20th Century, the changes that impacted education the most were the electric typewriter and the Xerox copy machine. Since the late 1990s, digitalized communication and the computer chip have not only changed the way we work and play, but are revolutionizing how we teach and learn.

Today, our classrooms are all wired for the Internet, we have wireless connectivity in most parts of our buildings, every teacher has a computer for his or her classroom, and communication throughout the district is accomplished through e-mail and the school Web site. We have many laptop and desktop computers that are designed only for student use. Some of the computers are in rolling mobile labs that can come to the classroom, while others are in fixed labs.

The Internet has opened the doors to unlimited research possibilities, greatly changing the way we view libraries. We use student record-keeping software called Power School that keeps parents, students, and teachers in constant communication regarding attendance, grades, homework assignments, and lunch charges. We have a technology coordinator to provide order to the many computers that we use and to help us keep current with constant change. New classroom materials make a connection between the text and the Internet.

Many lessons involve student research with resources that are available only on the Internet. Some of our classes have what is called a Smart Board, a sort of computerized blackboard that allows the teacher's notes to be stored on the computer and then later available to students at home via the Internet. Some of our classes are completely paperless. Assignments are given on the computer, done on the computer, e-mailed to the teacher, graded and recorded on the computer, and returned to the student on the computer. Some of our classes come via two-way television connection. Some of our classes come via Michigan Virtual High School. Our classes today are much different than they were 10 years ago. And with the current pace of change, they will be much different in 10 years.

It is our goal to use technology for the purpose of providing better instruction and better learning.

Recently, we formed a technology committee that was given the assignment of developing a technology plan. Their task was to determine what the district should look like in terms of technology right now and then put together a five-year incremental plan to make that happen. The committee was composed of the technology coordinator, teaching staff, and administration. The plan they came up with was reviewed by both the District School Improvement Committee and the Curriculum Committee. The basic premise of the plan recognizes the importance of integrating the use of technology throughout the district so that its use is as a tool to further the curriculum goals of the district.

The plan would have all students in grades six through 12 be provided with access to one-to-one computing capability all day long; would have all teachers in grades six through 12 provided with adequate training for using computers

with their lessons; would have all the needed infrastructure necessary for mass one-to-one computing capability; would have one fixed computer lab in all buildings; would have a smaller fixed number of computers available in kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms, and would increase the number of Smartboards and projectors throughout the district.

Keeping current with emerging technology resources is expensive. Being as economical as possible, this plan will cost approximately \$100,000 a year to implement. Computers don't last forever, and they are constantly changing. The reality is that the workplace is not the same today that it was 10 years ago. The reality is if we want to prepare our students for the future, we have to plan for the future in which they will live.

Please call or write the school to share any thoughts you might have regarding the school's technology planning.

Michigan Politics

By
George Weeks



Past Eloquence vs. Modern Bombast in Consecutive Movement

In a half century of following presidential campaigns, I have never seen anything quite like what is unfolding before us now.

There's the current Clinton/Obama focus on Michigan: Will there be a re-do or deal on the January 15 Democratic primary that Hillary Clinton won but is not accepted by the national party

because it was held before allowed by party rules?

And there's the astounding comeback of GOP nominee-in-waiting John McCain, who won the 2000 Michigan Republican primary but lost it this year to Michigan native Mitt Romney, who subsequently dropped out and is now hyped by some as a possible running mate for McCain.

My campaign focus today, reflecting on the wisdom and wit of William F. Buckley Jr., following his recent death, is on the striking contrast between the civility of the eloquent Buckley, a giant who fashioned the movement, and those bellowing conservatives who now inflame it on the airwaves and in other election discourse.

Cheers to McCain for rebuking Cincinnati talk radio personality Bill Cunningham, said to fancy himself as the Rush Limbaugh of Ohio, after Cunningham made ranting, mocking references to Barack Obama during his warm-up act for a February 26 McCain campaign event.

An angry Cunningham then was featured on nationwide TV vowing to vote for Clinton rather than McCain. It's a tack earlier taken by some more prominent conservative media figures who have a lingering hang-up with conservative McCain, whose straight talk does not veer far enough to the right for them on some issues.

There's a sharp difference between the thoughtful conservative minds of yesterday and some snarling conservative mouths in today's shout fests. They hammer. Buckley scored memorable points with well-timed thrusts of a fencer's epee.

The Man of Mecosta

Consider these comments about the author of "The Conservative Mind": ... "long respected as a seminal figure in the founding of the American conservative movement in the post-world War II years... a great American man of letters. A sage thinker, prolific writer, and eloquent stylist."

Bill Buckley?

No, those were words of the Delaware-based Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) about Michigan's Russell Kirk (1918-94), who was born in Plymouth and settled in Mecosta County, now site of the Russell Kirk Center for Cultural Renewal. ISI in 2007 published "The Essential Russell Kirk," a marvelous collection of selected essays.

Kirk did not have the flash and dash of Buckley, or the national media exposure of Buckley's "Firing Line" TV show and such things as appearing in 1970 on "Laugh-In" (where, when asked why he was always seated when appearing on television, he said: "It's very hard to stand up carrying the weight of what I know.")

Kirk liked lists of 10. Go to www.kirkcenter.org and you can find his 10 Conservative Principles, adapted from his 1993 "The Politics of Prudence" from ISI Books.

One of the 10 is that "conservatives are guided by their principle of prudence. ... Any public measure ought to be judged by its probable long-run consequences, not merely by temporary advantage or popularity."

Another Top 10: "Conservatives are champions of custom, convention, and continuity because they prefer the devil they know to the devil they don't know. ... Necessary change, conservatives argue, ought to be gradual and discriminatory, never unfixing old interests at once."

In one essay, Kirk lists "10 Exemplary Conservatives," including a Roman orator (Cicero), a Roman emperor (Marcus Aurelius), a Scottish romancer (Sir Walter Scott), and a "fighting, writing President" (Teddy Roosevelt).

Rough-rider Roosevelt was McCain's kind of guy. But presumptive GOP nominee McCain is not the kind of guy favored by some elements of the GOP's base. Too much of a Bull Moose.

George Weeks retired in 2006 after 22 years as political columnist for *The Detroit News*. His weekly *Michigan Politics* column is syndicated by *Superior Features*.

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.

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