

Walter North Honored at State Level for Philanthropy

North: From page 1

made side trips to look in on those he knew. As an adult, he has been known for his visits to the state Capitol Building, talking with friends from janitors to senators. He knows everyone, remembers their last conversation, and always asks about families. Now Mr. North, who is gifted with a fantastic memory, has built a reputation for caring for others, showing his regard for everyone, never forgetting a name, and his ongoing volunteerism as he works to make the area a better place to live.

"That's how he's spent his whole life," said his wife, Sally. "He's done it forever. He's so kind to people. He's generous, appreciates them, and goes out of his way to care for people."

She would know. The couple were students together at Battle Creek Central High School and she remembers those dates when he often would stop at a coach's house or visit a shop owner. He is, she said, always connecting with people.

"It's the very heart of his being," she said. "Part of his make-up is to be with people. He just enjoys people and it's an honest enjoyment. He's never had an agenda. It's just him."

Through the years, Mr. North has found community foundation work offered a way for him to contribute to others. He has dedicated his efforts to helping establish these foundations, he said, because of the lasting support they offer to local people.

He champions the benefits that foundations provide for the people of a community. Foundations, he said, offer financial support for communities and individuals, for projects, and scholarships. The money that is granted is earned from investments. The original donation given to a foundation remains intact in an endowment. The concept allows donors to establish a lasting contribution to their community.

"The thing I really enjoy about endowments," said Mr. North, "is they don't touch the principal, they just touch the earnings, and so it goes on in perpetuity."

Mr. North sits on the St. Ignace Area Community Foundation, Mackinac Island Community Foundation, and the Chippewa County Community Foundation.

He has served on the Lake Superior State University (LSSU) Foundation board for about 20 years, chairing it on four occasions.

He co-chairs the Mackinac



Walter North of St. Ignace (center) was presented with Michigan's 2008 Community Foundation Award for Philanthropy Thursday, April 19, in Detroit. Pictured are (from left) Daniel Mulhern, chair of the Michigan Community Service Commission, which organized the event, Governor Jennifer Granholm, Senator North, Russell Mawby, chairman emeritus of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and Rob Collier, president and CEO of the Council of Michigan Foundations. (Photograph by Mike Quillinan)

Straits Healthcare Foundation, which raises funds for the new St. Ignace hospital.

"My interests don't stop at the city limits," he said. "I just want to help improve the quality of life in the whole Eastern U.P. I just think foundations do great things in the communities they are in, and I like being a part of that."

"Walt always puts other people first," said Wesley Maurer, Jr., who chairs the Mackinac Island Community Foundation. "He is a great resource for all of us, and his sharp wit and great sense of humor can always be counted on in any situation."

He has served on the boards of the Community Foundation of the Upper Peninsula and the Battle Creek Community Foundation. His family is the largest benefactor of the Battle Creek foundation in its 35-year history, and the boardroom is named for his parents.

A couple of years ago, as travel to meetings at both foundations became increasingly difficult, he resigned from those two boards.

"When I'm in something," said Mr. North, "I intend to be at the meetings."

Mr. North, who enjoys boating, also serves on the Mackinac Island Medical Center board and the Mackinac Straits Health Systems board.

He leads by example. His son, Jim North, chairs the St. Ignace Area Community Foundation, of which Mr. North also is a board member.

All of the boards he is on are volunteer positions with no compensation given to board members.

Through volunteerism and financial contributions, Mr. North has helped to grow community

foundations, Rob Collier, president and CEO of the Council of Michigan Foundations, told *The St. Ignace News*.

"Michigan is unique in the country," he said, "because we have a network serving 83 counties and we've seen wonderful growth in community philanthropy in the last 15 years. Individuals like Walt have played a leadership role responding to immediate needs. His leadership to start and grow foundations is why he was recommended for this award."

The North family moved to St. Ignace 42 years ago. Here, they reared four sons, Tom, Jim, Mike, and Dave, and now have seven grandchildren.

Mr. North, a graduate of Western Michigan University with a degree in business administration, was an accountant before becoming comptroller, and later executive secretary, of the Mackinac Bridge Authority, where he worked for 27 years.

As a State Senator for eight years, from 1995 until 2003, he maintained a perfect session attendance and helped get funding for the construction of the St. Ignace City Marina, the Mackinac County Airport terminal building, and the Fine Arts Center at LSSU.

He is a member of the Battle Creek Central High School Hall of Fame, and last year received an honorary doctorate of Arts and Letters from LSSU.

The Governor's Service Awards

are an annual statewide recognition event acknowledging the contributions made by Michigan volunteers. Award winners this year include Lois Herbage of Saginaw, who received the Governor George Romney Lifetime Achievement Award for volunteerism; Great Lakes Capital Fund, based in Lansing, which was named the Corporate Community Leader; Cary Levy of Troy, who is Mentor of the Year; the Carson City - Crystal mentoring Program in Montcalm County, which was named Outstanding Mentoring Program; the Medical Care Access Coalition of Marquette, which was named Outstanding Volunteer Program; Sarah Brooks of Grand Rapids, who was named the Senior Volunteer of the Year; Leon Judd of Northville, who was named the Volunteer of the Year; Olivia Thomas of Kalamazoo, who received the Youth Volunteer of the Year award; William Johnston and Ronda Stryker of Portage, who received the Russell G. Mawby Award for Philanthropy, and the Alma College - Pine River Superfund Citizen Task Force, which received the Carter Partnership Award.

"These individuals give of themselves to help make life better for our children, our families, our neighbors, and our friends," said Governor Granholm. "It is an honor to recognize these individuals for their commitment to making a difference in the lives of others."

Outdoor Movies Canceled for July 2

Movies Under the Stars, scheduled for Wednesday, July 2, in St. Ignace, has been canceled, said City Manager Eric Dodson, although an August showing remains a possibility.

A scheduling conflict has delayed the outdoor movie night this year, said Mr. Dodson, who is working with a Rochester Hills company, hoping to establish an August showing.

Projected on an inflatable, 26-foot-wide digital screen last July, the outdoor movie shown at Little Bear East Community Center drew more than 135 vehicles full of movie watchers. The program was sponsored by the city and was free of charge.

Space Offered at Cedarville Craft Show

Those interested in having a booth at the annual Arts and Crafts Show Friday, July 4, and Saturday, July 5, at the Community Center in Cedarville should call the Les Cheneaux Chamber of Commerce at (906) 484-3935 to apply. All artists and craft makers may enter.

The show will take place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day.

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.

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MICHIGAN POLITICS

By George Weeks



MUCC Makes Big Splash on Bottled Water

"It is time for Michigan to step back to the plate."

— MUCC Executive Director Dennis Muchmore

Indeed it is.

Could it be that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) is moving toward regaining its voice as the most politically powerful non-governmental advocate for protecting natural resources for all, not just hunters and fishers?

I was pleasantly surprised last week when the 50,000-member MUCC (membership now down to about half of what it was during its glory days) announced "a major initiative to expand the state's 32-year old Bottle Bill to include water and other non-carbonated beverage containers."

It "seeks to duplicate the 1976 grassroots campaign that made Michigan the national poster child for recycling beer and soda pop containers. Eleven other states have current or pending legislation for container-deposit recycling, and a growing number include bottled water."

The MUCC was the driving force behind the 1976 referendum, approved by a vote of 2,160,398 to 1,227,254 — nearly 2-1. There were bigger margins in many northern counties, including: Antrim, 5,097 to 1,970; Charlevoix, 6,740 to 2,163; Chippewa, 8,467 to 3,523; and Grand Traverse, 14,231 to 5,498. Winning margins generally were narrower in the Upper Peninsula, and several U.P. counties rejected it.

A few months after savvy Dennis Muchmore, a prominent ex-lobbyist more known for dealing with Michigan's ways and means than its woods and waters, took over last year as executive director and embarked on a much-needed reorganization, I asked him whether MUCC would push for the extension. He essentially said the climate wasn't ripe, a view then shared by many.

Adding to the surprise of last week's announcement was that MUCC has been opposed to extending the needed "public trust" concept to Michigan's groundwater, as adopted by the Democratic-ruled House, but opposed by the GOP-ruled Senate.

Groundwater in the current debate centers on bottled water, and Muchmore's wife, Deb, has been an effective voice for Nestle's PR campaign on behalf of its controversial Ice Mountain pumping operation in Mecosta County.

Not surprisingly, the giant bottler opposes putting a 10-cent deposit on its product. It would further fan the bottled water boycott movement.

As for the Muchmores being on opposite sides of a public policy issue, it won't be the first time. In the policy world, a spouse is not an appendage.

ENVIRO-MICH, an Internet list and forum for Michigan environmental and conservation issues and citizen action, has long had lively exchanges on water law issues, and, most recently, on the MUCC move.

Carol Izant, a Michigan Sierra Club leader, wrote in recalling MUCC's backing of the weaker Senate bill on groundwater:

"The timing of MUCC's announcement about 'expanding the bottle bill' is an obvious ploy to gain support for the Senate-backed version of this controversial legislation. Let us not make the mistake of falling for this charade in spite of the temptation to see these efforts as progress."

I fell. Ploy or not, it is progress for Muchmore to highlight, as he did, that Michiganders return 97% of their beer and soft drink containers, but throw away 80% of those produced by the likes of his wife's client.

Reality check: Don't expect the Legislature to produce the required 75% super-majority in each chamber (29 of 38 Senate votes, 83 of 110 House votes) by the July 4 recess — or ever — as sought by Muchmore to change the current law.

But the MUCC, although lacking the clout and resources it had three decades ago, would find many an ally, as it did in 1976 when it launched a successful petition drive to go directly to the people after the Legislature refused to act.

The MUCC supports proposed changes, initiated by a coalition of beer, wine, and grocer interests, to reduce the amount of fraudulent returns to merchants. But merchants sure do not want to add to the burden of handling returns.

"We simply want to amend the pending legislation to include bottled water and other non-carbonated containers," said Muchmore. "Right now Michigan can reduce fraudulent deposit returns, increase recycling, supplement the economy with new jobs, and reduce litter in our lakes streams and other critical wildlife habitats."

It can do much more.

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*.

Clark Twp. Officials Salaries, Budget on Agenda for Annual Meeting Sat.

By Amy Polk

Clark Township salaries, the 2008-2009 budget, and township news and updates are on the agenda for the annual meeting Saturday, June 28. Anyone can attend the meeting, but only people eligible to vote in Clark Township can vote on the salary. A budget hearing will start at 9 a.m., and the annual meeting will start at 10 a.m. at Clark Township Hall on Blind Line Road in Cedarville.

Clark Township trustees unanimously adopted raises in salaries for all elected officials at the May 15 meeting. The raises will become official if confirmed at the annual meeting.

Raises were calculated at the current 3.98% rate of inflation. The supervisor, clerk, and treasurer salaries were increased by \$797.09, from \$20,027.28 in the current fiscal year to \$20,824.37 in the 2008-2009 fiscal year starting July 1. Optional health insurance is offered to all three positions, which are considered full-time positions. The board also elected to increase salary

by \$88.57 a year for the two trustee positions, from \$2,225.28 in 2007-2008, to \$2,313.85 in 2008-2009, plus \$75 per meeting and \$25 for zoning board of appeals or planning commission participation. None of the elected officials received raises last year, owing to a procedural error in establishing the 2007 annual meeting.

Clark Township residents can approve the recommendation or approve a proposal of their own, but they cannot lower existing salaries. According to state law, elected officials' salaries cannot be lowered during the terms of the officials, but they can be lowered in new terms. Michigan law states that if voters at an annual meeting fail to vote on the salary resolutions, the board will receive the salaries set by board resolution.

Other items on the agenda for the annual meeting include a tour of the new Clark Township ambulance, updates on township accomplishments and progress reports, and a master plan and zoning ordinance update.

Music in Mackinaw Planned June 28

Music in Mackinaw will feature Neptune Quartet Saturday, June 28, at 8 p.m. at Conkling Heritage Park in Mackinaw City.

The quartet consists of a cellist, mandolinist, guitarist, and bassist.

The outdoor concerts are free of charge.

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.