

St. Ignace Tree Committee Wants To Apply for Grants To Replace City Ash Trees

By Karen Gould

Facing the loss of the city's ash trees to the destructive emerald ash borer (EAB) from Asia, the St. Ignace Tree Committee will seek two grants through the Department of Natural Resources. The funding would cover the cost to inventory the trees, provide an action plan for management of them, and cover the cost of replacing some ash trees on city property.

The committee met Monday, August 4, at the recommendation of City Council during its July 21 meeting.

The limited time requirements for the grants, said City Manager

Eric Dodson, will mean the city's application will be submitted the next day. The deadline to use the funding was extended this week to September 15.

The cost to the city to match the first grant, he said, is estimated at \$8,700. Money is in the city budget, said Mr. Dodson, for tree upkeep and removal.

The grants offer a maximum of \$20,000 each and require a 50-50 match from the city. The city's match could be up to \$10,000 for each grant. Work performed by city crews, including removing some of the ash trees, would contribute to the city's portion of the

grant match.

The cost of the second grant to the city will not be known until the inventory and management plan from the first grant is received.

The EAB beetle attacks and kills ash trees.

The grant program will help, say committee members, although the funding will not be enough to eliminate and replace all of the ash trees on city property.

"We're not going to eradicate the problem," said committee member Tom Della-Moretta. "It will kill all the [ash] trees."

The grant program was presented to City Council by Bernard

Hubbard of Curtis. Mr. Hubbard is a consulting forester working with Michigan Technological University. At the July 21 council meeting, Mr. Hubbard outlined the EAB grant program. University students would provide the ash tree inventory.

"Over a period of time," said Mr. Dodson, "all ash trees will be affected."

Committee member Paula McNamara agreed.

"We've got the problem," she said. "We've got the opportunity

and it's in our hands, as I see it, to take advantage of it."

The first grant provides an inventory of number of ash trees within the city's jurisdiction. Then a plan is drafted with recommendations on handling the city's ash trees. At that time, the city would determine which trees would be cut down.

The second grant would cover the replacement of ash trees, based on available funding. The plan, said Mr. Dodson, would be to replace the ash trees with other

species.

The Downtown Development Authority also is applying for the second grant, Mr. Dodson said, because some trees along State Street are ash.

The committee agreed to meet again when the ash tree inventory is complete.

Tree Committee members are Mr. Dodson, city council members Susan Tamlyn-Massaway, Tom Della-Moretta, and Merv Wyse, and city resident Paula McNamara.

Motorcyclists Head to St. Ignace Saturday

As the sun rises over the Straits, motorcyclists will roll across the Mackinac Bridge and into St. Ignace Saturday, August 16. The Gold Wing Road Riders Association is making its 22nd annual all-night ride from Rockford, north of Grand Rapids, to St. Ignace, to raise funds for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Last year, the organization raised \$22,000 during the Mid-night Ride. The motorcyclists leave Rockford at midnight.

A day of activities is planned at Kewadin Shores Casino for the

riders. Bikers will arrive for a breakfast, and by afternoon a barbecue and entertainment begins, with all proceeds donated to the Foundation. Also, the riders have collected pledges for their participation in the trip, and proceeds from T-shirts and souvenirs sold during the event are donated to the Foundation.

A People's Choice bike judging contest begins at 4 p.m. at the casino in St. Ignace, with prizes awarded for the top three winners.

At 8:30 p.m., a lighted parade is staged at the casino parking lot and the motorcyclists will parade

through St. Ignace along State Street about 9 p.m.

The event is organized by the Chapter Mi-G of the Gold Wing Riders Association. The group held the first event in 1986, after members thought that traveling at night would offer cooler temperatures than traveling during the day.

Each year, 13,000 children are diagnosed with diabetes, which means about 35 children are diagnosed each day. For more information on donating to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, call (616) 957-1838.

Inmates Create Garden at County Jail

Talents contributed by Mackinac County jail inmates and profits from the jail commissary are being used to create a garden to enhance the 1882 cornerstone removed from the old county building. Maintaining the garden, just north of the jail entrance in St. Ignace, will serve as a project for inmates.

A more extensive garden is planned for next year, said Jail Administrator Deputy Tim Ahlborn, which will be south of the jail. There, inmates will grow vegetables to be used at the jail.

The garden has improved an area that had dying grass, he said, and highlights the cornerstone. It also gives the inmates responsibility for a project.

Profits from the inmate commissary were used to buy plants and materials, and the plants and design were provided by Dan Johnson of Sonshine Nursery of Moran.

The project is part of the community service program supervised by Robert St. Louis. For each day worked, said Mr. St. Louis, a day is removed from an inmate's sentence.

The state program helps to lessen jail time, reduce overcrowding in jails, and provides rehabilitation for inmates. In Mackinac County, inmates care for lawns of senior citizens, help



James Potter is one of the inmates creating a flower garden Thursday, July 31. The garden is designed to complement the 1882 cornerstone that once was part of the original county building in St. Ignace. The garden is near the jail entrance.

at the Community Action Agency, plow snow in the winter, and perform other work around the community.

Bark in the Park Will Benefit Shelter Pets

Will Feature Dog Contests Saturday at St. Ignace

Dogs will lead their owners through downtown St. Ignace Saturday, August 16, during the third annual "Bark in the Park."

The canine creatures will then show off their best in costume, tricks, and tail wagging.

Dogs and owners will gather from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Chief Wawatam Dock.

A blessing will be offered for the animals and their families by Father Norbert Landreville.

Participating dogs will receive a bandana as part of the \$15 registration fee, and each owner will receive a T-shirt.

Twelve contests will give dogs an opportunity to win the attention of three judges; prizes will be awarded for the following categories: prettiest eyes, best smile, shiniest coat, best barker, longest dog, cutest canine, best trick, best costume, smallest dog, largest dog, best tail wag, and best in show.

First place winners will receive a collar tag, and those placing second and third will receive a certificate. Prizes include toys, beds, and treats.

All proceeds will benefit homeless pets in the Mackinac County Animal Shelter.

Those interested in adopting a pet can call the shelter at 643-7646.

For more information about "Bark in the Park," contact Jo Ford at (906) 292-0046.



Saylor Sorenson, 6, of St. Ignace delivered about \$15 she raised for the Mackinac County Animal Shelter from selling lemonade while camping with her family. She visited the animals Friday, August 8, including dogs Lulu (left) and Joe, although kitten Simon also captured Miss Sorenson's attention. Currently, 13 dogs and 16 cats are housed at the shelter in St. Ignace, and will benefit from proceeds raised at the third annual St. Ignace "Bark in the Park," said Ginger Valentine (seated), shelter manager. "Bark in the Park" will be from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, August 16, at the Chief Wawatam Dock in St. Ignace.

Underwater Treasure Hunt Called Off Sunday

High winds and waves forced organizers to call off the Jim Montcalm Memorial Underwater Treasure Hunt in St. Ignace Sunday, August 10, although the family picnic continued as scheduled at American Legion Park.

This is the first time the event has been canceled in 21 years, said Janet Peterson, director of the St. Ignace Chamber of Commerce.

Wind gusts were about 20

miles per hour and waves were estimated between two to four feet, which made it impossible to position diving tokens in Moran Bay. The strong water movement beneath the surface would shift the tokens sought by divers. Each token corresponds to a prize.

As waves pounded the shoreline and whitecaps dotted the bay, organizers placed tarps along the north side of the pavilion to serve as a wind break during the picnic.

Many participants wrapped in blankets and hooded coats for additional protection.

The underwater scuba treasure hunt is sponsored by the St. Ignace Chamber of Commerce and the Straits of Mackinac Underwater Preserve Committee. The event is named for the late diver Jim Montcalm of St. Ignace. Proceeds benefit the maintenance and preservation of the Straits of Mackinac Underwater Preserve.

Moran Twp. Creates New District for Business

Tax Abatement Plan Approved for Griffin Beverage

By Paul Gingras

Griffin Beverage Company's plans to construct a new warehouse facility near US-2 in Moran Township topped the Moran Township Board of Trustees agenda Wednesday, August 6, and the board took two legislative actions to move the project forward, establishing an industrial facilities district and approving a 12-year tax abatement plan for the project.

Owner Bob Griffin, Jr., who attended the meeting, said the company will break ground "very soon." Griffin is awaiting final bids on the project.

Griffin Beverage provides bottle recycling services, warehousing services, and distributes beer, soda, juice, and water throughout Michigan. It has facilities in the lower and upper peninsulas, including a 13,000-square-foot facility in St. Ignace, which is no longer large enough for the expanding business. St. Ignace operations will be moved to the 20,000-square-foot facility in Moran Township once it is ready, he added.

Township trustee Mark Spencer, who serves as zoning administrator, noted Wednesday that the company still requires building permits for the facility. The township must ensure that Griffin's drawings, expected within two

weeks, will fit the approved site plan and meet commercial building standards.

After months of study by the planning commission, approval of the company's site plan last month, a public hearing by the planning commission, and two public hearings by the township board Wednesday, the board unanimously approved the establishment of an industrial facilities district for Griffin's operations and the 12-year tax abatement certificate.

Establishing the district is necessary for the company to gain a tax exemption designed to encourage business development. The company will pay 50% of real and personal property taxes for 12 years. The exemption applies to the buildings and the equipment inside, but not the land.

The new district is required for the tax abatement and applies only to Griffin's 20-acre parcel, Mr. Spencer said in response to citizen questions, and does not create an area for other businesses to locate.

To create a larger district, the township would have to address zoning related to its master plan, Mr. Spencer said.

The term "district" is confusing, said Judy Luoma of the local road committee. Its establishment implies more than the township is approving, she said.

In some communities, governments have created districts to draw several businesses, Mr. Griffin said.

Griffin Beverage does not plan to build on the rest of its parcel. Although not designated as a protected wetland by the Department of Environmental Quality, much of the land is wet and spongy, making building on the northern area of the parcel difficult, Mr. Griffin said.

The property and potential facility are estimated to be worth \$700,000, Mr. Griffin said. The final value, which affects how much tax revenue is generated, will be determined by the local assessor.

Mr. Griffin described the taxing situation as a "plus-plus" for the township and the company.

Even with the abatement, Township Supervisor Jim Durm said, all taxing units involved will receive increased revenue for the next 12 years. Full taxes will be paid after 12 years.

Maintaining Griffin Beverage's presence in the area means local jobs will be retained, trustee Lonnie Heuer said. Griffin employs six full-time and four part-time employees in St. Ignace who will retain their jobs at the new facility, St. Ignace facility manager Mike Kamyszczek reported last year.

Locals on the Bay, and Bayside Live!

Perry, Rockin' Oldies To Be Featured at St. Ignace Marina



Gene Perry



Rich Eddy's Rockin' Oldies Band

Gene Perry of St. Ignace will be featured in a Locals on the Bay concert Wednesday, August 20, at 7 p.m. at the St. Ignace Marina. Mr. Perry's musical style can be described as classic rock with some country, modern rock, blues, oldies, jazz, and show tunes, delivered with an "on vacation" spirit.

Also at the marina, Rich Eddy's Rockin' Oldies Band will perform for Bayside Live! Thursday,

August 21, at 7 p.m. The band features vintage '50s and '60s rock and roll for all ages, including multiple instruments and audience participation with the limbo, the twist, and hula hoop dances. Performers are James Davis and Don Hails.

The outdoor concerts are free of charge. Audience members may bring lawn chairs, and bleacher seating is also available.