

The St. Ignace News

and Les Cheneaux Islands Weekly Wave



"Upbuilder of the Home - Nourisher of the Community Spirit - Arts, Letters and Science of the Common People."

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Hospital Gets Break on City Water System Connection

Council Learns Marina Down by 10%; Ash Tree Grant Awarded

By Karen Gould

Cool and wet weather and high gasoline prices have caused Michigan boaters to curtail excursions and even leave their boats tied up at

home. St. Ignace marina director Gene Elmer told the city council Monday night, August 18. The marina is seeing a drop in revenue and activity, especially among the

smaller pleasure craft, he noted, and he has shortened marina hours to reduce expenses and is planning other cuts in anticipation of a slow season next year.

"I'd like to say that we're holding our own, but we're down 10% [overall] for the year," he told Council.

Revenue from overnight tran-

sient boaters is down by 20%, from \$62,650 in 2007 to \$50,506 this year, even with a 5% increase in rates this year.

Gasoline sales are down 60%, he reported, and sewage pump-out revenue is down 9%, from \$1,170 last year to \$1,050 this year.

Mr. Elmer said other marina managers report fuel sales down 80%, and they consider St. Ignace "lucky."

"Even though it looked like we were filled up in July," he said, "gasoline prices are keeping smaller boats from going anywhere."

He also is noticing an increase in the number of sailboats, although he doesn't keep statistics on the number of boats or the types of boats mooring at the facility.

Even seasonal boaters at the marina are not buying fuel, he said, and some owners have kept boats docked all season.

He considers small boats 36-feet and under, and no small boats were registered at the marina in July.

The drop in small boat activity

Turn to page 11: Council

Les Cheneaux Community Schools

St. Onge Is Lead Teacher; Special Ed Post Is Vacant

By Paul Gingras

New principal Amy Scott has named science teacher Kevin St. Onge to be lead teacher for kindergarten-through-grade 12 at Les Cheneaux Community Schools. It is a leadership and administrative role he will serve in addition to teaching classes, and Mrs. Scott announced her decision at the Monday, August 18, school board meeting.

Also discussed at the meeting was the resignation of one staff member and another faculty member, and final changes to teaching assignments.

The choice to have one lead teacher for all three schools, ver-

sus one for the high-school and another for the middle and elementary schools, is part of Mrs. Scott's vision to streamline the district's administration and create a system in which the school functions as one cohesive unit, she explained.

Her decision was supported by a unanimous school board vote.

The move toward a single administration was initiated by the school board this spring, when it chose to hire one principal to replace former Elementary Principal Eric Cardwell and High School Principal Randy Schaedig, noted trustee and board secretary

Turn to page 10: School

Downtown St. Ignace

16 New Signs Highlight City's Points of Interest

By Karen Gould

Signs designed to help visitors make their way around the St. Ignace shopping area with a map that points out areas of interest, lists businesses and locations, and includes several photographs depicting year-around community activities were installed in 16 locations over the last few days. The signs were displayed at the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) meeting Friday, August 15.

After more than a year of planning, the signs were installed along State Street, the waterfront boardwalk, parks, ferry line locations, the marina, museum, and the boat launch.

The DDA budgeted \$10,000,

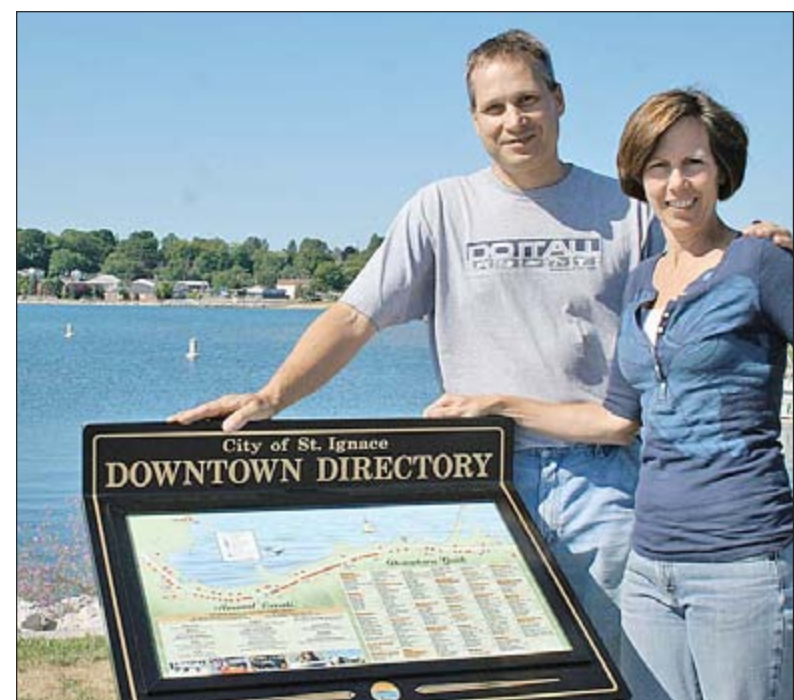
estimating each sign would cost about \$1,000. This spring, when the board met, new locations were added, increasing the project cost to about \$16,000.

The boardwalk has gotten more use this summer, said DDA Director Deb Evashevski, and the signs should help lead visitors to State Street retail stores and restaurants.

The project was originally expected to be finished in 2007.

"There is a lot of hidden hours into a project like this," said Sam Staffan of Mackinaw Art and Sign in Mackinaw City, who produced the signs. "That's why they took so long."

Turn to page 11: Signs



The first of 16 directory signs being installed around St. Ignace was put in place at the boat launch Friday, August 15. The signs are a Downtown Development Authority project led by Director Deb Evashevski (right). Sam Staffan of Mackinaw Art and Sign in Mackinaw City, pictured with Mrs. Evashevski, produced the signs for the city.

Gathering of the Eagles at Hessel

Community Ties Are Focus of Powwow



Dancing at the Gathering of the Eagles Powwow in Hessel Saturday, August 16, are (from left) Hunter Captain of Kincheloe, George Belleau of Bay Mills, and Chase Horsefield of Bay City. Story and photographs, page 3.

Inside...

- Those who determine National Historic Landmark status are keeping a close eye on Mackinac Island's decisions about old and new buildings. ... page 3
- Up to 300 Corvettes Will Be Displayed Saturday at Mackinaw City show. ...page 13
- Four welcomed to USCG Station St. Ignace Crew ... page 13

Rendezvous at the Straits Begins Sat.

The Rendezvous at the Straits French Voyageur Encampment and Powwow is set for Saturday, August 23, and Sunday, August 24, at the Father Marquette Memorial in St. Ignace.

The event is open to the public and begins at 11 a.m. Saturday and Sunday.

The powwow portion of the event is from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$3 for adults and \$2 for elders and students. There will be no charge for children younger than 12.

Visitors will learn about the heritage of the area through Native American celebrations, historical reenactors, and French-style encampments. Cooking and sewing demonstrations and examples of early transportation, from canoes to snowshoes, will be featured.

People who attend also will

Turn to page 11: Rendezvous

Chippewa County Fair Begins Sun.

The Chippewa County fair in Kinross begins Sunday, August 24, and continues through Monday, September 1.

Advance admission for various events, including demolition derbies and other grandstand activities, costs \$10 for adults, and \$5 for children. At the gate, the cost is \$12 for adults and \$8 for children ages four to 12. Admission is free for children younger than three.

This year, magic shows starring Jeff Eaton will be put on by Kandu and Company. They will take place from August 27 through September 1; show times are to be determined.

The kiddie train returns to the fair this year. It will be Wednesday through Sunday.

There will be demonstrations of antique equipment all day Friday through Monday. Pony rides will take place on all days of the fair, also.

There will be bingo in the Dunbar building Wednesday through Sunday from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Monday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Entertainment will be at the pavilion Tuesday and Thursday

Turn to page 10: Fair

College in St. Ignace Is Goal of New Group

Need 10 Students To Offer NCMC Classes Here

By Karen Gould

Freshman level college classes could be offered in St. Ignace as early as January. A local committee working to establish a regional campus for higher education at all ages has an informal agreement with North Central Michigan College of Petoskey for the classes, if the committee can guarantee at least 10 students. The group also has been offered temporary use of LaSalle High School classrooms.

Meeting since June, the committee of local educators and business owners have a goal to offer enrichment classes, vocational training, and college courses. The local planners also see the school eventually becoming a four-year college that focuses on using green energy to power the facility, and they have named their school the Great Waters Center for Lifelong Learning.

"I think it's going to go," said committee member Betsy Turf, "but we want it to go in a way that it is sustainable and it survives, so we're trying to do our homework. It has to have a solid foundation."

Ms. Turf, who spoke to the St. Ignace Area Schools Board of Education Monday, August 11, is a professor of epidemiology at Virginia

Commonwealth University in Richmond and a summer resident here.

Group representatives seek public support and backing from area school districts, service organizations, county leaders, local churches, and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of

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- Betsy Turf, committee member

Chippewa Indians.

"We're talking with them about a dream we have," said committee member George Ford, who has been making presentations to area organizations.

The committee has begun talks with the tribe, he said, in hopes of establishing a partnership similar to that of the new hospital, Mackinac Straits Health Systems. Such a partnership would offer more options

for grant funding.

"This would open a lot of doors to us for possible financial aid," he said.

The committee also has talked with county commissioners and will be presenting more solid plans in hopes of getting seed money to cover organizational costs, printing, postage, and surveys, and to hire an administrator.

"Every place we go," said Mr. Ford, "it's rah, rah, go go. This is the most excited bunch of people. The enthusiasm is unbelievable."

County commissioners also encouraged the committee to consider using the hospital facility on Burdette Street, said Mr. Ford, once the new hospital is built near the airport in 2010.

The group plans to distribute surveys to area high school freshman and seniors, recent graduates, and residents to compile statistics on educational needs. Planners are hoping to find out how many students would be interested in college level classes, earning a builders' license, or getting instruction in culinary arts, computers, and other subjects.

The educational opportunities and ideas need to be prioritized and the committee is hoping the surveys will assist them, said Ms. Turf.

Turn to page 11: College