

# Group Protesting U.P. Sulfide Mining Marches Through St. Ignace, Participates in Bridge Walk

By Paul Gingras

Walkers who crossed the U.P. to bring awareness to mining concerns, ending in St. Ignace last weekend, said they had received positive support from the public, and only one negative comment.

Cynthia Prior, executive director of the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve, was among walkers who spoke at a rally at the Museum of Ojibwa Culture in St. Ignace Sunday, August 31. She and a group of citizens had just finished a 175-mile walk across the Upper Peninsula to promote awareness about the potential effects of sulfide and uranium mines proposed in the U.P. They walked to St. Ignace from the site in Marquette County proposed for the first metallic sulfide mine in the state.

The group represented a variety of organizations who believe these mines, if approved, would threaten the environment, watersheds in particular, and damage the tourist economy of the region. They held rallies along the way to promote their concerns about sulfide and uranium mining.

They set up tables and signs at the museum in St. Ignace Sunday, and then marched through town.

Monday, they crossed the Mackinac Bridge during the Labor Day Bridge Walk, all wearing blue shirts that read "Protect our Water from Uranium and Metallic Sulfide Mining." Signs are prohibited during the Bridge Walk.

The group says it is concerned about a proposal by Kennecott Minerals Corporation to mine for sulfide rock near Big Bay. While standard mines extract raw ore from the ground, metallic sulfide mines extract sulfuric rock filled with dissolved metal. When exposed to oxygen, sulfide rock emits sulfuric acid, like the acid in car batteries, and has the potential to contaminate watersheds. The groups are concerned that discharges could contaminate Lake Superior and Lake Michigan.

Sulfide mining was banned in Wisconsin because of toxic discharges.

As they crossed the U.P., the group learned that awareness of the



**At the Museum of Ojibwa Culture in St. Ignace, members of groups concerned about metallic sulfide and uranium mining take their first steps on a march through town Sunday evening, August 31. The group trekked 175 miles across the U.P. to St. Ignace, held a rally and a march through town Sunday, and crossed the Mackinac Bridge during the Labor Day Bridge Walk Monday.**

issue is mixed, said Margaret Comfort, who developed the idea for the walk. Some residents and tourists had heard about Kennecott's proposal, and some had not.

Concerns range from affects on wildlife, to water, to economics. Some disliked the fact that multinational corporations, rather than American corporations, are planning the mines. Kennecott is a subsidiary of Rio Tinto, an international corporation based in England.

For her, the walk's focus was on

protecting water and human health, said Ms. Comfort.

The walkers received one negative response: a thumbs-down in Munising from a driver who said, "We need jobs."

"I don't disagree with him at all," Ms. Comfort said. "I've been unemployed. I'm seriously in debt. I wanted to stay in Michigan, but I could not find a job here." In response to the driver's sentiment, she presented her favorite poster, which reads, "Temporary Jobs.

Temporary Health Insurance. Permanent Illness."

The poster refers to health damage from mining pollution, she explained.



At left: Margaret Comfort, initiator of a 175-mile trek across the Upper Peninsula to promote awareness about the potential effects of sulfide and uranium mining, displays an image of contamination in Ontario from sulfide mining. The image, which shows dissolved metal flowing in water, is one which first inspired her to take action in Michigan, she said. She is pictured at a rally in St. Ignace at the Museum of Ojibwa Culture Sunday evening, August 31.

here will damage the tourism economy, and some campers and fishermen told them they are concerned about environmental damage.

The group failed to get a meeting with Governor Jennifer Granholm after the Bridge Walk, but hopes to schedule one in Marquette, Ms. Mills said.

Sponsors of the walk included the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve, Keepers of the Water, Northwoods Wilderness Recovery, and Save the Wild U.P.

The country should be making use of its landfills for metal, she said, rather than focusing on new mines.

The group heard concerns that developing a sulfide mining belt

## Post Offices Offer Free eBay Training Classes

Postal employees are offering free classes to help residents learn how to buy, sell, and ship items on eBay.com, an Internet auction and shopping Web site. Classes will be at several sites in the Eastern Upper Peninsula this month. Space may be limited. Anyone interested is asked to pre-register.

Training sessions will include information on options offered by eBay and how to prepare items for delivery through the U.S. mail. Classes will include information on how to prepare for pickups without leaving home.

In Cedarville, a class takes place Tuesday, September 9, at the Les Cheneaux Community Library, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. If participation warrants a second session, it will be from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. To register, call Postmaster Frank King at (906) 484-3911.

In the Pickford area, a class will be offered at the Pickford Town-

ship Hall Wednesday, September 10, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. To register, call (906) 647-5845 or (906) 632-2954. In Rudyard, sessions will be Thursday, September 11, at Central Savings Bank from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. This class is a cooperative effort of post offices in Rudyard, Dafter, Kinross, and Brimley. To register, call (906) 478-4611.

In the Eckerman area, classes

will be Friday, September 12, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., and from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the Chippewa Township Hall. The training sessions are in association with post offices in Eckerman, Hulbert, Paradise, and Trout Lake. To register, call Sue Scott at (906) 274-5539, Cathy Leavitt at (906) 876-2368, Teddie Merchand at (906) 492-3409, or Louise Beaudoin at (906) 569-3213.

## St. Ignace Sewer Funding Restored

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walks, and routine maintenance.

The proposed plan to eliminate the deficit includes levying 0.5 mills in 2010, if needed, reduced plowing, and not filling a heavy equipment operator position.

The building inspector's fund was in the red by \$2,077. To eliminate the debt, a proposed 25% fee increase is needed in 2008 and 5% increase annually is required beginning in 2009. City council would have to approve the fee hikes.

The cemetery fund ended 2007 with a negative balance of \$1,727. An annual contribution from the

general fund will increase 3% and a proposed fee increase of 3% each year will have to be considered by council.

The office equipment pool ended the year with a \$3,198 deficit. General fund contributions are scheduled to increase by 3% each year.

The remaining funds now are in the black and forms were prepared for the state to show the positive balances.

Council adopted the plan during the meeting, but not the fee increases or the millage proposal.

## St. Ignace Musician Lorente Will Charter Fan Bus to Grand Rapids

St. Ignace musician Brian Lorente and the Usual Suspects band will perform as the opening act for Keith Anderson at the Intersection in Grand Rapids Thursday, September 11.

A fan bus will be available to transport people from Lansing to the

performance. The "Get on the Bus" promotion costs \$35 per person and includes round-trip transportation between Lansing and Grand Rapids, and tickets to the show.

Mr. Lorente's itinerary of performances is posted online at [www.brianlorente.com](http://www.brianlorente.com).

## Meet your LMAS Home Health and Hospice Staff



Berta Baker, RN



Katy Wilson, RN



Cynthia Wright, LPN



Linda Davis, RN



Helen Marks, RN



Margaret Burrows, RN

*We strive to provide innovative high quality comprehensive services to our customers in a cost effective manner and in a safe environment. We help the individual to maintain his or her dignity and to achieve the highest possible quality of life.*

The purpose of Home Health and Hospice is to assist our clients and their families to achieve maximum independence and improved quality of life. We do this by offering comprehensive, high quality home health and hospice services to people in their homes.

A registered nurse is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. We are a not-for-profit, governmental agency. Our accreditation through CHAP (Community Health Accreditation Program) is your guarantee that we meet or exceed the highest national standards set for providing home health and hospice services.



Lynda Hartman, RN  
Home Health  
&  
Hospice Nursing  
Supervisor



Sharolyn MacDowell  
&  
Jody Harju  
Customer Service  
Representatives

### Leaders in Hospice and Palliative Care

Hospice of Chippewa County, a not-for-profit partnership with LMAS Home Health Department and Hospice.

**LMAS and Hospice of Chippewa County have joined together in a team effort to enhance the quality of life for dying patients and their families in Mackinac County as they plan and live their last days together.**



906-643-7700

