

Renovations Nearly Complete at Cedar Post Thrift Shop and Food Pantry at Cedarville

By Paul Gingras

Building renovations are underway and will be completed soon at Cedar Post Thrift Shop and Emergency Food Pantry in Cedarville. The improvements, which have made the building more attractive and energy efficient, will save Cedar Post money on utilities this winter, which means it will be better able to help the increasing number of people in need, said Cedar Post Secretary Jane Clover.

Cedar Post, a nonprofit organization, is run entirely by volunteers. They provide food, personal items, and household items to about 30 families a month. This is a substantial increase since June, and volunteers expect the increase to continue, she added.

The group was able to buy the building from Judy Izzard of Cedarville in May, Ms. Clover said, enabling them to apply for grants that they were not eligible for before.

Assisting in the renovation

Ed Serwach Resigns Twp. Assessor Post

By Paul Gingras

The Brevort Township Board of Trustees has asked St. Ignace attorney Charles Brown to check on the status of Frontier Insurance Company once a month to ensure that the township does not miss the opportunity to sue the firm. The New York-based bonding company was hired to insure the municipality's sewer project in 1999 and, when the project ran into trouble, refused to pay more than \$8,000 on a claim valued at more than \$400,000. The claim involves the township, the county, and several private entities that took part in building the sewer.

Frontier has been in rehabilitation since 2001, which protects it from lawsuits.

This June, the board directed Mr. Brown to seek help from law firm Miller, Canfield, Paddock & Stone of Detroit, but at the township's Tuesday, September 2 meeting, he said the firm would charge \$2,000 to \$5,000 for its opinion on the matter, which is more than the board has said it wants to pay.

Mr. Brown recommended the township continue to monitor the company closely.

If Frontier liquidates its assets and goes out of business, the township can seek some compensation from a Michigan insurance fund. If it emerges from rehabilitation as an operating company, the township can sue.

"Either way, we have some options," Mr. Brown said.

In other business, Township Supervisor Ed Serwach has resigned as township assessor. He performed the duties of supervisor and assessor since 2001 and cited the rising work load required of township assessors as excessive, in addition to his other responsibilities.

"In 2001, I was asked by the former board . . . to assume the duties of assessor. I have done so for eight years. In checking, I find that, with the exception of Dale [Nelson] at St. Ignace Township, there are no [other] supervisors doing their own assessing," he said. "The duties of the supervisor have increased to such a degree that it takes an awful lot of time. . . . I feel that [supervisor duties] are where my attention should go, and I would like to resign from the office of township assessor. I think the township would benefit by having someone just doing those duties."

After three weeks of advertising, the board will interview all applicants and hire a new assessor in October. Mr. Serwach said he will work with the new assessor until he or she is ready to take over the position, most likely by December.

Mr. Serwach sought to dispel any rumors that two recent assessing errors prompted his resignation.

After the July Board of Review, Mr. Serwach said he discovered he was out of a county form used by assessors. Instead,

Turn to page 10: Brevort Twp.

project were Taylor Lumber Company and Tim LaForest of River Country Stone. Both businesses significantly reduced supply and construction costs, she said.

River Country Stone replaced the roof with an overhanging roof. An electrical system overhaul was done by Carl Reich Electric of Pickford at a reduced cost.

The building remained open throughout more than two weeks of construction.

The new roof and 16 inches of new insulation inside it will save the group on fuel costs, which reached \$550 to \$600 a month last winter.

The Post takes in \$50 to \$100 a day in sales. The organization also receives donations to keep it running.

The community as a whole has been extremely generous, she

said, noting the donation of a skiff by Great Lakes Boat Building School for an auction in July, and purchased by Janet Carrington.

Volunteers plan to apply for grants through the Les Cheneaux Community Foundation. For their next improvements, they hope to replace windows and doors, repave the parking lot, and improve drainage.

Since it opened in 1993, Cedar Post has seen a steady increase in patronage. It offers a week's worth of free food and vouchers for perishable items like dairy and eggs. This is especially useful for people who cannot afford food, owing to house fires, unemployment, or accidents. The store provides inexpensive clothes and household items, also.

People in need of long-term assistance are referred to agencies that offer financial aid, jobs,



Four of the more than 30 volunteers at the Cedar Post are (from left) Dorothy Currie, Bev Vandergeest, Jo Kurlonko, and Audrey Fisher.

housing, or food stamps.

This summer, between May and August, 1,081 people donated

goods for resale, such as clothes and small appliances; 3,278 people shopped at the store; 56 families applied for food, enabling the Post to provide for 163 people; volunteers logged in 1,387 hours,

and the Post provided \$940 worth of food vouchers.

Cedar Post Thrift Shop and Emergency Food Pantry is open from noon to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Rolls Royce Club Visits St. Ignace



Doug Wolford of Lansing poses next to his 1953 Bentley R-Type Sedan in St. Ignace Tuesday, September 23. Mr. Wolford is one of 91 members of the national Rolls Royce Owners Club who traveled from Glen Arbor, crossed the Mackinac Bridge together, and stayed three days in St. Ignace before driving to Petoskey, where they spent several days.



A wide variety of Rolls Royce vehicles from various years are parked at Mackinac Grille on State Street in St. Ignace Tuesday, September 23. Forty-six of the cars were driven to St. Ignace on a tour by members of the national Rolls Royce Owners Club. They spent three days in town last week.

Gros Cap School Hears Positive Audit Report; Replaces Radecki With Brown

By Paul Gingras

Nicole Brown has been appointed to the Moran Township Board of Education to replace Ed Radecki, who has resigned because his children have left the Gros Cap School. He took part in his last meeting Monday, September 15.

At that meeting, board members approved an audit report showing that the kindergarten-through-eighth-grade school ended the last fiscal year in the black. The board discussed financial matters that will face the school in the future, as well as a new approach to helping struggling students.

Mr. Radecki had served on the board since 2002. Now that his children, Louis and Samantha, attend LaSalle High School, Mr. Radecki said he will focus his attention there. He said he enjoyed working with his colleagues on the

board and said addressing budget problems was the most challenging aspect of the job.

Mr. Radecki was a great help, said school board president Janice O'Boyle, especially in upgrading the school building. He owns Mackinac Environmental Technology and was able to help guide the board during renovations to the school.

The board presented him with a plaque in recognition of his service.

Ms. Brown will be sworn in Monday, October 20, to serve in place of Mr. Radecki until the next school election in May 2009, when she will have to compete against others for the seat. The term expires in 2010.

Sue Bowlby of Anderson, Tackman and Company presented the district's 2007/2008 audit report, which tallied \$1,009,298 in

revenues from local sources, \$19,098 from state sources, and \$93,058 from federal sources.

Gros Cap emerged from the school year with a general fund balance of \$406,601, an increase of \$29,303 over 2006/2007.

Owing to possible revenue reductions through the Michigan Business Tax, Superintendent Bill Peltier does not expect the general fund to continue to increase.

Helping the school's financial picture last year was a contribution from the Sault State Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, which was used to support the schools' Reading Recovery program.

Gros Cap spent more than it took in from the millage supporting its building and site fund last year. To complete renovation projects, the difference was drawn from site funds banked in

2006/2007. The school also spent more than it took in for its food service program. To make up the difference, Gros Cap drew from its general fund.

Anderson Tackman noted minor errors in the way the school handled its finances. Auditors noted a mistake in paperwork dealing with hiring a substitute teacher,

Turn to page 10: Gros Cap

Arson Named as Cause of Mackinac Sales Fire; Police Seek Information

Arson caused the fire that destroyed the Mackinac Sales Ford garage on US-2 near St. Ignace Monday, August 4, investigators have determined, and police are seeking information from the public to solve the case. The business has since reopened and the owners have set up a temporary building to use as a sales office while rebuilding.

Rewards are offered for information in the arson case. Anyone with information is asked to contact any of the following agencies: Michigan State Police, St. Ignace post (906) 643-7582; Arson Control (800) 44-ARSON; or Crime Stoppers (800) 465-7867.



Superintendent Bill Peltier and the Gros Cap School Board of Education pose during presentation of plaque to outgoing school board member Ed Radecki Monday, September 15. Pictured (from left) are treasurer Nancy Dandona, Mr. Peltier, secretary Helen Graichen, president Janice O'Boyle, Mr. Radecki, and trustee Mike Cope. (Photograph courtesy of Gros Cap School)