

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Give True Commuters a Break

To the Editor:

I've been reading in the past weeks about the commuter cards the Mackinac Bridge Authority issues. I'm a commuter. I'm a year-around resident of Mackinac County who crosses the bridge to get to work, and crosses again to get home, as do many others who work or own businesses, or go to school. We are the "true" commuters.

Back when the Mackinac Bridge Authority ended the use of the tokens and implemented the commuter card, we had to go into the office and buy the card. We were told then that we could fill the card at the booths, but only at the \$40 rate. We were also told we could fill our cards with any amount, as long as it was increments of \$1.50, but only in the office.

Now why can't we, the "true" commuters, do that now? Why can't we bring into the office our last pay stub, W-2, even a letter from our employers saying that we are working? Different documentation for business owners, students, or for medical reasons. It seems to me this would help us, the "true" commuters, and save the Mackinac Bridge Authority a lot of grief, as well.

I truly appreciate the lower fare, as do many other commuters. But how can the Bridge Authority call selling cards to people in 30 different states and Canada commuters? See, it's the wording that has everyone upset. These people are in reality getting a "discount fare card" – they are not commuters. We who live in the Straits area, Mackinac, Chippewa, Luce, Emmet, and Cheboygan counties, who work or do business, go to school, or [travel] for medical reasons, are the real commuters. We are not "an elite group," as was said [by Authority Executive Secretary Bob Sweeney] in last week's *The St. Ignace News*. We are the real deal. Raise the "discount fare" rate to \$1.70. Keep the "commuter rate" as is.

The Bridge Authority wouldn't have to change the card, or use a different card, just change the rate difference in their commuter program, if this is possible. Give the year-around local residents who are commuters a break. With summer over, most of us are seeing our hours cut as it is. Please keep it affordable for us to make a living.

Jacki Mulcahy
Moran

Questioning Placement of Election Signs

To the Editor:

By the time you read this letter, everyone will have made their choice of elected officials for federal, state, and county offices. Prior to this election, there has been a barrage of campaign signs scattered all over to include the hill in front of the Mackinac County Airport terminal. Signs have been posted there for more than a month and a half, which I find unusual.

Along with being a registered voter of Mackinac County, I am also a registered voter of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. For the past several tribal election cycles, I have posted campaign signs on the hill in front of the Mackinac Airport terminal in support for the tribal candidate of my choice.

The next day, my signs were removed by county officials and I was told campaign signs were not permitted on county property. I'm sure there was a misunderstanding, as I would surely like to believe the county would not discriminate against Native Americans nor the tribe that subsidizes county government.

I am looking forward to posting a tribal campaign sign on the hill in front of the Mackinac County Airport terminal in support of my tribal candidate in the next election, just as the eight supporters of federal, state, and county electives have for the 2008 election cycle.

Tony Grondin
St. Ignace

Editor's Note: Candidates' signs are not allowed on county property, including the slope in front of the airport, County Clerk Mary Kay Tamlyn told The St. Ignace News Monday, November 3, and her office arranges for their removal if signs in violation are brought to her attention. Those who would like to point out such signs in future elections may call the county clerk at 643-7300.

Trick-or-treat Date Change Causes Concern

To the Editor:

"Mom, why do we need to listen to that man and trick-or-treat tonight, when Halloween is really tomorrow? Can't we just go then? This is the question from a five-year-old the morning of Thursday, October 30. Try to explain the reasoning of moving trick-or-treat to a different night to your child, when as an adult you don't believe it was necessary to begin with. This is how my morning started October 30.

I am amazed how city officials can have such an impact on the community, by acting on a request from one person. Their positions are to represent the whole community, which they obviously did not take into consideration in making this decision. The reasoning for the change was owing to the football game scheduled for that night, and did not want a child to be hurt during the mayor's term in office. The deciding factor was for safety reasons only, he told me.

In my opinion, he is implying Bark River fans must not be able to drive very careful, as they would be the ones to hurt a child. Mayor Paul Grondin has lived in St. Ignace for the past 20 years. During this time, there have been no injuries owing to a car accident, nor has the event ever been changed from the real holiday evening. Mayor Grondin stated he would feel responsible for any injuries that may take place that night, with the increase in traffic. There are more streets in the city limits than the ones located by the football field that people live on, where residents do go trick-or-treating. He must not have faith in the parents being responsible for their own children, or Bark River fans being responsible drivers. Now as I see it, any time there is an accident in the city limits, it is the mayor's responsibility.

To make matters worse, once the decision was made to change the night for the children, why have it on Thursday instead of Saturday. Let us review the events that were scheduled for Thursday night: 7th and 8th grade basketball games, volleyball game, ice skating Halloween party at Little Bear East, and probably more that I am not aware of. Then there were events that were scheduled for Friday for Halloween, which had to be rearranged to Thursday. The only thing scheduled for Saturday was the Catholic chili dinner. Makes perfect sense to me to change the night from a weekend night to a school night, with many events already scheduled for the children, which could not be rescheduled, when Saturday night, a weekend night, did not have near the events scheduled.

When residents contacted City Hall regarding this change, they were told Thursday night's weather was better than Saturday, and that is why it wasn't changed to Saturday. City employees also stated if city residents don't like the decision, Mackinaw City was holding their trick-or-treat Friday, as planned, and maybe we should go there. Nice response from city employees.

An elected official should be looking out for the best interest of the community, not one person. It takes the community to elect one person into office, expecting him/her to listen and represent what they want. When the mayor's term is up for re-election, you can guarantee he will be campaigning for the community to elect him into office again. Remember how easily he was influenced by one person to change a community event. Maybe we could submit our requests to change other holidays, as in having Santa come to town in July, so we don't have to stand outside in the cold during December, having Thanksgiving on Friday every year, so we can have a three-day weekend, the Fourth of July on the third next year, for a three-day weekend. These are some of my requests which will benefit me, as I am sure this was what happened for the one person who requested to change trick-or-treat.

Sandy Huskey
St. Ignace

\$280 Per Mile Fuel Service Charge

To the Editor:

Recently I helped a neighbor clear out material from a house where the husband died and the children were helping their mother. I drove my pickup to the landfill site in Dafer and paid the minimum charge of one ton for 700 pounds of material. I figured my load to be average of others doing similar disposal (mostly small contractors). I figured my load at approximately 160 cubic feet of material, which I placed into a container of approximately 8 feet by 40 feet by 7 feet, or about 2,240 cubic feet in size. I figured it would take about 14 pickup trucks to fill the container.

Upon weighing out, I was also charged more than \$5 as a "fuel service charge." If all 14 pickups paid the same, that's \$70-plus for the Waste Management company to carry the container the 1,000 feet to the top of the hill to empty it. That's charging us approximately \$280 per mile fuel charge.

Even my old pickup gets at least 10 miles per gallon. I drove semi nationwide for years and got seven to eight miles per gallon hauling 80,000 pounds. Wow! How I wished I could have been paid that \$280 per mile.

We get so used to being charged for this and charged for that, that we just get used to it.

Robert Cataline
Hessel

Road to Fort de Buade, Revisited

To the Editor:

About 85 years ago, the Fort Field was our playground. The trenches, hidden beyond the knoll at the far end of the field, we believe were part of Fort de Buade. These trenches were deep and wide with timbers that supported the sidewalls still visible.

At that time, St. Ignace had no street signs. At the top of the hill where High Street turns and follows the crest of the hill, the road also continued straight ahead past Charlie Adam's farm. Eventually it turned right, leading through the woods into the Fort Field. A beautiful birch tree stood on the high knoll like a sentinel guarding this deserted, historical sight.

Standing beneath the birch, you could see Moran Bay in the distance and the tops of wigwams in Indian Village. A path led into the woods and down to the trenches. About half way around the knoll, the trenches veered off toward the forest and a path that led to Cheeseman Road in Gros Cap.

Even then, tourists did come to town looking for Fort de Buade. I met two of them while clerking at the Indian Village. They were retired teachers and history buffs amazed and disappointed to find the location of Fort de Buade unknown and of little interest locally. They were overjoyed to follow me when I volunteered to take them to the site I knew as Fort de Buade.

Several years later, there was a sign posted identifying this location as the site of Fort de Buade. The sign disappeared and was replaced by junk cars, hiding the one-time beauty of this historical site.

Ruth Tuohy
Shelby Township

Island Historic District a Good Thing

To the Editor:

As several-times-a-year visitors to the Island, we were pleased to read about Island support for improving the Island's National Historic Landmark status. We found it interesting to know that the Mackinac Island State Park requires lease holders of the East and West Bluff cottages to adhere to the Secretary of Interior guidelines for rehabilitation and preservation. That requirement has both physically protected the structures and protected the financial value of the structures. Extending that requirement by forming an Island Historic District will extend the physical and financial protection to all. Knowing that neighbors will be required to follow the Secretary of Interior guidelines when they do work on their buildings encourages owners to improve their structures according to the same guidelines.

The history of the Island is tied closely to the buildings on the Island. It is the history of the Island that distinguishes Mackinac Island from many other Great Lakes Islands. Protecting that history by forming an Island historic district will keep visitors coming to the Island for generations to come.

Karen and Bill Nickels
Ypsilanti

Michigan Politics

By
George Weeks



Past Michigan Guvs Had Bigger National Roles

Over the decades, Michigan governors have played pivotal roles in presidential campaigns. Not this year.

Worried about re-election in 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt lured popular ex-Detroit Mayor Frank Murphy to come back from a diplomatic post in the Philippines to run for governor.

As it turned out, FDR ran stronger in Michigan than the successful Murphy, who was governor 1937-38 and later appointed by Roosevelt as attorney general and then to the Supreme Court.

With a press flurry after they huddled in 1960 on Mackinac Island, 1949-1960 Governor G. Mennen Williams endorsed John F. Kennedy for the Democratic nomination and was instrumental in rounding up support among party liberals.

Republican Governor George Romney (1963-69) virtually shunned 1964 GOP presidential nominee Barry Goldwater ("I accept but do not endorse" him) and made his own unsuccessful bid for the 1968 nomination.

Republican Governors William G. Milliken (1969-82) and John Engler (1991-2002) had important roles along the trails that brought George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush to the White House.

Thanks in part to Milliken, Bush I defeated Ronald Reagan in Michigan's 1980 Republican presidential primary. Bush has said he likely would not have been selected as Reagan's running mate at the Republican National Convention in Detroit had it not been for his Michigan showing. During an October 19, 1986, appearance in Traverse City, according to the *Detroit Free Press*, Bush said:

"If I had to single out one or two people in the whole country to whom I owe the deepest debt of gratitude, certainly Governor Bill Milliken would be there. He's been outstanding in every way. I can't believe he's out of public life."

Milliken's chummy relationship with Bush the father later faded and never jelled with the son. In fact, Milliken supported John McCain over Bush in the 2000 Michigan primary won by McCain and the 2008 state primary won by ex-Governor Mitt Romney of Massachusetts, son of George.

During the general election campaign, Milliken became disenchanted with McCain but stopped short of publicly supporting Democrat Barack Obama, as did such prominent moderate Republicans as ex-Secretary of State Colin Powell and ex-Governor William Weld of Massachusetts, as well as former longtime state Senate Republican Floor Leader Phil Arthurhultz of Whitehall, who in October blitzed northern Michigan to promote "Michigan Republicans for Obama."

Engler, an early and stalwart supporter of George W. Bush, got some flak because as incumbent governor he failed in his 1992 vow that Michigan would be Bush's "firewall" against Bill Clinton, who carried the state by about 316,000 votes.

But what Engler did early on in assembling Republican governors behind Bush's 2000 quest for the nomination was as critical a role as a Michigan governor has played in helping an eventual president get nominated.

Governor Jim Blanchard (1983-1990) played an important early role in helping Clinton, a fellow founder of the centrist Democratic Leadership Council, win nomination in 1992. Clinton named Blanchard ambassador to Canada.

Blanchard was an early leader of Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton's successful Michigan primary bid, a victory diminished by the fact that eventual nominee Barack Obama and some other contenders did not compete

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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.

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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