

*A Caroling We Go...*

# Children's Christmas Program Packs St. Ignace School Gym

By Karen Gould

More than 315 students from St. Ignace Elementary presented a holiday music program that drew a standing ovation from parents, relatives, and residents.

The parking lot was jammed with vehicles and the crowd filled all available seats and stood along the edges of the Middle School gymnasium to listen to seasonal music sung by developmental kindergarten to sixth grade students Thursday evening, December 18. The room was filled to capacity and a handful of people were turned away from attending, owing to space constraints.

Preparations for the musical event began early in the school day, when students gathered in the gymnasium to rehearse. In the afternoon, they again met for a complete rehearsal in preparation for the evening event. They took turns singing on stage, practicing their entrances and exits, and learning their seats.

Music instructor Stephanie Terpening directed the students and Leeanne Lane was the piano accompanist.

The concert began with the Children's Chorus singing the "Carol of the Bells" by M. Leontovich, and the Youth Chamber Choir offered "Noel, Noel" by James Pierpont. They were followed by each classroom signing one song, including the St. Ignace Co-op Preschool students.

Custom-made props drew applause from the audience. The props, which included gold rings and hats depicting swans, geese, French hens, and calling birds were used for the grand finale, when all students joined to sing "The Twelve Days of Christmas." The one-of-a-kind accessories



"Way up in the sky, little lamb, Do you see what I see?" sang second grade students, pointing upward. Singing "Do You Hear What I Hear?" are (from left, front row) Ben Coveyou, Colby Harmon, Joseph Scott, Hunter Amacher, Gavin Smith; (back) Riley Allen, A.J. Ellison, Lance Littleton, and Randy Rickley.

were made by seminar students working with sixth grade science and social studies teacher Heather Brady.

Donations were collected at the door to help purchase a new piano for the Middle School.

At right: Waiting for their turn to stand and play are four of the "11 pipers piping." The sixth grade pipers are (from left) Sarah Smith, Gabriel Davis, Angela Donajkowski, and Micaela O'Rourke.



St. Ignace developmental kindergarten students join kindergarten students to sing "Up on the Housetop." The children use hand movements to accompany the words to the popular Christmas carol. Students pictured are (front, from left) Wyatt Ingalls, Madyson Clark, Ayla Kilponen, Ronnie Paquin, Drew Stockero; (back) Addison Cheeseman, Austin Graham, and Zach Erskine.



## Donations on Rise This Year for Hospital Lights of Love Program

By Karen Gould

The annual Lights of Love remembrance is seeing increased participation this year, to the benefit of Long Term Care residents at Mackinac Straits Hospital and of the Hospital Auxiliary, which so far has collected \$1,355 from the program. Collections this year, said organizer Marilee Barthelemy, are about \$400 ahead of last year, and people still have until Wednesday, December 31, to add a name.

"We're very, very happy," said Mrs. Barthelemy. "It's absolutely incredible, the response I got."

For a \$5 donation, the giver can dedicate a paper tree light in honor or in memory of a loved one, whose name is then printed on the bulb. This year, several donors have listed pets, and one pet, Billy-

Bob the cat, honored his human caretaker.

The completed paper lights are strung on a string and dangle from the hallways of Long Term Care.

"The residents absolutely love it," said Mrs. Barthelemy. "They walk down the halls with their heads tilted back, reading. It's nice for them and it kind of brightens up the hallways."

Money raised is used to purchase needed items for the hospital and the Long Term Care Facility.

Mrs. Barthelemy, the Auxiliary treasurer and a hospital employee working in the business office, mailed out letters seeking support in November. Donations have come from all over the county.

Arielle Kammers, a senior at

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First grade student Caden Hughey stood tall and waved the Two Turtle Doves for all of the concert audience to see. To his left are "French Hens" Chelsey Coleman (left) and Brianna McLennan.



With dangling feet and long necks, the "Seven Swans a Swimming" were a popular portion of the concert. Representing the swans are fifth grade students (from left) Ben Freier, Kirsten Twork, Kaitlin O'Rourke, Lucas Gustafson, Leuna St. Andrew, and Gage Kreski.



Marilee Barthelemy (left) and Colleen Horn of the Mackinac Straits Hospital Auxiliary hang paper lights in the hallways at the hospital Wednesday, December 17, as part of the auxiliary's Lights of Love fundraiser.

## Michigan Lawmakers Share Viewpoints on Federal Auto Industry Loans Measure Announced Friday Will Stave Off Collapse for GM, Chrysler

The federal government has come to the aid of car companies Chrysler and General Motors to stave off their financial collapse during a particularly vulnerable economic time for the country. President George W. Bush announced a plan to aid them with \$13.4 billion in federal loans Friday, December 19.

The move comes after weeks of debate among lawmakers and economists about the companies' loan request, made on the heels of an October decision to set aside \$700 billion to financially bail out Wall Street firms and banks. Congress was unable to come together on an auto industry rescue bill before adjourning for the year last week, prompting the President to step in. Some lawmakers argued that the government's intervention in the auto industry would undermine the private enterprise system, and that the car companies were mismanaged, while others pointed to the number of jobs in many related industries that would be jeopardized by the failure of the car companies.

The companies must show "viability" by March 31, 2009, or pay back the loans immediately. The loans are good for three years. General Motors would get \$9.4 billion of the initial funds, while Chrysler would get \$4 billion. Ford Motor Company has announced it may be able to avoid dipping into the federal funds.

The money will come from the first \$350 billion released in the \$700 billion Wall Street bailout package. The companies could then borrow an additional total \$4 billion once the remaining funds are released by Congress.

Allowing the U.S. auto industry to collapse would not be responsible, the President said in announcing the plan Friday.

"If we were to allow the free market to take its course now, it would almost certainly lead to disorderly bankruptcy and liquidation for the automakers," President Bush said. "Under ordinary economic circumstances, I would say this is the price that failed companies must pay - and I would not favor intervening to prevent the automakers from going out of business. But these are not ordinary circumstances. In the midst of a financial crisis and a recession, allowing the U.S. auto industry to collapse is not a responsible course of action."

Among binding terms of the loan, the firms must accept limits on executive pay and eliminate perks such as corporate jets. The debts owed to the government must take first priority. The companies must allow the government to examine their books and records, and the government has the power to block any transactions of more than \$100 million. The companies have to issue warrants for non-voting stock to the federal government.

While Michigan lawmakers welcomed the plan, they pointed out that restructuring targets suggested by the federal government are still open for negotiation within the companies, and by their workers. The targets include reducing debt by two-thirds, eliminating the jobs bank that pays idle workers, and adopting work rules and wages competitive with those of transplant auto manufacturers by the end of next year.

Senator Carl Levin and Representative Sander Levin of Michigan issued a joint statement, pointing out the current crisis faced by the industry is also facing car makers around the world.

"The current crisis facing our domestic auto industry was brought on by factors beyond its control. Automakers around the world are facing similar challenges, and from Asia to Europe to Latin America, foreign governments have stepped up to keep their automakers from failing," their statement said.

The emergency loans will aid not only the companies themselves, but millions of working families in communities across America, they pointed out.

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow said the restructuring targets unfairly single out middle class workers.

"These provisions raise serious concerns regarding unfair, punitive

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## Bill Would Raise Snowmobile Trail Permits To Fund Grooming Next Year

A bipartisan plan that will help maintain and improve grooming operations on the state's snowmobile trails by raising permit fees by \$8 next winter was approved by the state Senate Thursday, December 18, and sent to the governor.

The Michigan Snowmobile Association believes its members will be unable to afford to continue grooming operations unless there is an increase in the trail permit fee, reported Senator Jason Allen, chair of the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee, who sponsored a key

bill in the package.

Effective July 1, 2009, the current snowmobile registration fee would go from \$22 to \$30 and the fine for operating a snowmobile without a registration will rise from \$50 to \$200 if the bill is passed.

Senate Bill 1489 specifies that \$5 from each registration fee may be used to purchase lands, lease lands, and secure easements to expand trails.

Under Senate Bill 1490, \$8 from each registration shall be deposited in a new snowmobile trail easement account.