

Santa Stops in for Pool Fundraiser



Even Santa Claus stopped by the Rudyard pool during a Christmas party and pool renovation fundraiser Saturday, December 20. More than 100 children enjoyed swimming in the pool, crafts, board games, and cookie decorating in the gymnasium. The event raised more than \$1,800 for the Larry G. Davis pool. Another fundraiser will be held Wednesday, January 21, at Pure Country Restaurant in Rudyard. (Gary Davis photograph)

Mackinaw City Seniors Moving Toward Meals on Wheels Delivery

By John S. DeMott

The paint barely dry on their freshly decorated meeting building on Cedar Street, Wawatam Area Senior Citizens have begun moving toward delivering Meals on Wheels to a score of people in and around Mackinaw City's four surrounding townships.

At a meeting Friday, December 19, seniors heard Mackinaw City Village Manager Jeff Lawson explain that "the first year of this will be real conservative, and maybe after that we can go back to the counties and get some more funding."

Appropriations for the program come from Emmet and Cheboygan counties.

Deliveries from the facility, known as the Lion Dan Russell building, which the seniors lease from the Lions Club of Mackinaw

City for \$1 a year, won't start until March, and perhaps even later when new kitchen equipment is installed.

The Mackinaw City seniors are looking to take over the Meals on Wheels preparation and delivery job from Petoskey's Friendship Center, if that turns out to be the "most cost effective way to do it," said Mr. Lawson.

It may turn out to be cheaper, he said, to continue to have the meals prepared in Petoskey, then shipped to the Mackinaw City center for delivery.

"At this point," Mr. Lawson said, "we just don't know. The situation is evolving."

Deliveries would be made to four townships, Wawatam, Carp Lake, and Bliss in Emmet County and Mackinaw in Cheboygan County.

County Learns Road Commission Favors Match Program

Agree Program Must Be Modified To Keep Pace With Rising Costs

By Karen Gould

The three-way county match program that supports road projects in the townships received a \$130,000 commitment from the Mackinac County board of commissioners Monday, 29, during a special meeting to iron out a misunderstanding with the road commission. The county will distribute \$10,000 to each of the 11 townships and two cities in the county, to be matched by the road commission and each municipality.

Road Commission Manager Dirk Heckman and Commission Chairman Frank Luepnitz took part in the hour long discussion, as did representatives from the City of St. Ignace and Portage, Moran, Clark, St. Ignace, and Hudson townships.

The Monday evening meeting was scheduled when county commissioners heard that the road commission no longer supported the match program, which was implemented years ago to provide money to the townships for crushing road gravel. The money is now spent for general road repairs, maintenance, and improvements.

"The Road commission definitely is in favor of the match program," said Mr. Heckman. "I don't think it has ever been opposed to the match program."

He suggested the confusion arose over the road commission's stance on what projects qualify for the funding support. The original spirit of the program was for road preservation, said Mr. Heckman.

"We are opposed to making townships participate in what we might consider routine maintenance," he added.

Routine maintenance, he said, is the responsibility of the road commission and includes repairing pot holes and road wash outs, blading a road, and snowplowing.

Hudson Township Supervisor Al Garavaglia noted that in the last couple of years, the road commission has used most of its funds to

plow snow and has run out of money for routine summer maintenance.

Mr. Heckman replied that along with less funding from the state, the road commission has cut back on plowing this year in hopes of funding year-around work, which would include maintenance.

At one time, he noted, townships could have a blacktop overlay put on about a mile stretch of roadway for \$30,000, which was the combined total of the match program for the municipality. Today, that same project would cost about \$100,000.

All attending Monday's meeting agreed that, while the program is important, it needs to be modified to address the rising cost of road work. Mr. Heckman suggested the county accumulate its annual commitment to allow the funds to grow. "If the townships didn't spend their full match money this year, it would roll over to another year so that they could do a whole mile or a half-mile a little more efficiently," he said. "As the jobs get bigger, you get a little better prices."

"The gravel match program, I think, has evolved into a cumbersome program where there's township gravel, road gravel, road commission gravel. I don't think it is in the best interests of the townships to say we want two inches on this road, we want a half-inch on this road, and six inches on this road."

Doing road work that way does not last, he said.

"I don't see it being an efficient use of public funds," he said of the current use of gravel.

Mr. Luepnitz agreed. "I think what the townships were doing, and the county, too, was saying, We're going to lose the money if we don't use it," he said. "If they know they can take that \$10,000 and it's still there for next year, they could probably do bigger projects. It's a good idea. I hope that can work."

Dawn Nelson, chair of the county commission, will work with Mr. Heckman to survey the township supervisors on their opinion of setting up an accumulating account. Mrs. Nelson also wants to seek legal advice on the legality of the account and how it should be managed. A recommendation is expected to come before the two commissions within the next three months.

"We're trying to figure out what is best for everyone concerned," said Mrs. Nelson, "and for our part, all we're trying to do is help the townships not have to dig into their own coffers, their coffers aren't too deep, and help with these roads."

Moran Township Supervisor Jim Durm said he would like to see the road match program continue and that it has been beneficial for his township. He said billing in the last few years has been a little cumbersome.

Mrs. Nelson said the townships, several years ago, complained they did not want the road commission to receive the money. At that time, the county required townships to present work receipts in order to get county reimbursement.

Eight supervisors she talked to then, she noted, also said they were confused about their inventory of road gravel, and several thought other townships were stealing their gravel.

Mr. Heckman suggested townships hold off on work until they have accumulated enough money to pay for a blacktop project, rather than have money sitting in gravel inventory.

To build a road, it takes about

5,000 yards of gravel per mile at six inches deep.

Pat Abram from Portage Township said his township is in favor of setting up an account where match money could accumulate, and John Townley, also of Portage Township, suggested the townships sign off on road work before the road commission can take money from the account.

Frank Harness of Clark Township said his township keeps close track of its gravel inventory, and Supervisor Gerald Hill said he supports Mr. Heckman's idea of moving away from the use of gravel and, instead, planing for blacktop projects.

St. Ignace City Manager Eric Dodson and Department of Public Works Director Les Therrian attended the meeting. The cities of St. Ignace and Mackinac Island receive \$10,000 from the county commission, but no match from the road commission, which does not operate in cities, because cities have their own road programs.

"We're all in the same boat," said Mr. Dodson; "money is very tight. We're going everywhere to listen and learn. If there are other funding sources where we can partner together, we're open to all things."

County commissioners will also talk with the city about hiring salting services for the court house parking lot on an as-needed basis. The city helped at the building last week when the parking lot was covered with ice and county trucks were too far away to respond.

County commissioners next meet Monday, January 5, at 6 p.m. at the court house, when they hold their organizational meeting.

Driver Safety Program Offered at Sault

AARP Driver Safety Program for senior citizens will be Wednesday, January 21, and Thursday, January 22, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Bayliss Public Library in Sault Ste. Marie. Participants must attend both days to receive a certificate, which may allow for a discount with some insurance companies.

The program is sponsored by Soo Co-op Credit Union. For more information or to register, contact Mary Lynch at 632-5319.

Economic Stimulus Cash Giveaway

Win Your Share of \$68,000 in cash

At all FIVE Kewadin Casinos!

Earn entry tickets by playing slots January 1-28, 2009.

Mondays and Wednesdays during the promotion will be double ticket day.

Random slot draws every

Saturday 6 - 9 p.m. during the promotion ending on the 17th.

Grand Prize Draw Dates:

Saturday, January 24 - Kewadin Christmas and Kewadin St. Ignace.

Sunday, January 25 - Kewadin Sault Ste. Marie and Kewadin Manistique.

Wednesday, January 28 - Kewadin Hessel.

Random cash draws: 6 - 10 p.m.

Grand Prize drawing: 10:15 p.m.

Tournaments

Spin To Win
Sault Ste. Marie
Jan. 30-Feb. 1, 2009

Craps
Sault Ste. Marie
Feb. 20-22, 2009

Spin To Win
St. Ignace
Feb. 20-22, 2009

KEWADIN KLASIFIEDS

1.800.KEWADIN | WWW.KEWADIN.COM



The Man In Black
Johnny Cash Tribute
Thursday, January 29th
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

Musical Comedians Comedy Tour

Saturday, January 17th
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan



Great White & Britny Fox
Saturday, January 10th
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan



There's no place like Kewadin.

Best of Wishes in the New Year!

From your friends at Kewadin Casinos.

Weekly Events

Rapids Lounge Entertainment

Sault Ste. Marie

Jan. 1st - No Comedy

Live Music starts at 9pm Fri. & Sat.

Jan. 2nd & 3rd - Paul Perry

Northern Pines Entertainment

St. Ignace

Dec. 31st - No Comedy

Live Music starts at 9pm Fri. & Sat.

Jan. 2nd & 3rd - Driven

Team Spirits Bar Entertainment

Manistique

Karaoke - January 3rd

Live Music starts at 9pm Sat.

Driver - January 10th

