

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mackinaw City Village President: Site Plan Review Protects Public Trust

To the Editor:

Joe Leighio's Village Council-approved "hot dog" drive through restaurant site plan in Mackinaw City came as no personal surprise (*The St. Ignace News* March 26 edition, page 1).

What did surprise me, however, as well it may have surprised Mr. Leighio, is how lightly dismissive Village Council trustees Hingston, Jaggi, Yoder, Mollen, Alford, and Bancroft were in their oversight role to protect the public's interest, safety, and convenience. Fact is, trustee Jeff Hingston publicly implied, if not accused, that my site plan review questions were an attempt to "design the site for the developer."

Excuse me! Excluding the political pandering in play, even trustee Hingston knows that all council members, himself included, are legally bound to review, analyze, and critique site plans as per such basic issues as public safety, public welfare, aesthetics, traffic flow, pedestrian movement, and other such matters. Failure to do so is a breach of public trust. And implying that such review smacks of mis-guided designing for the developer blows smoke over the pandering.

Thus, not surprisingly, I fundamentally disagree with trustee Hingston. To me, the best interest of Mackinaw is the only interest to be considered. It is why I ran for office, and yes, I will continue to maintain that Mackinaw will never realize her full potential until such time as Mackinaw's elected representatives adhere to those words.

Ron Wallin
Village President, Mackinaw City

Nancy Pfeiffelman Deserves Recognition for Bicycle Livery Work

To the Editor:

Recently, a co-worker, knowing that I had worked at a bike shop on Mackinac Island a lifetime ago, brought in an article in *The St. Ignace News* that she thought I would enjoy. As I read the article, a smile came to me, but as I continued to read, I realized that the history of the bike shop, in operation for 77 years, possibly never would have been had it not been for the woman whom I called "my boss."

Nancy Pfeiffelman May was a part of that bike shop when I worked there from 1980 to 1985 and I know that she had already been there at least 10 years before that. Being the daughter of Herb Pfeiffelman and the sister of Tom, Nancy played a role in the operation early in her life and continued as a manager up until the closing. It really shocked me that she was not mentioned once in the article. Working at The Island Bicycle Livery was my first real job. Having a manager like Nancy kept me coming back for five summers. She taught me a work ethic that I have used throughout my life, and I believe made me a better person today.

Kudos to Tom and Gwen Baker, but recognition should be given to Nancy Pfeiffelman May as well.

Marcene Murphy
Lansing

Oversight In Writing About 'Nancy's Shop'

To the Editor:

I recently read the article about the history of the Island Bicycle Livery on Mackinac Island. It was an interesting but disappointing article, as it was missing an important part of its history. The missing part was Nancy May. She has worked at the shop all her life and managed it for at least 20 years. She was never just an "employee." She put her heart into that bike shop. When you tell people where to go for bikes, it's "Nancy's shop." I worked at the main shop and then at the beach lot for a number of years, and she was always involved.

Suzi Milton Padilla
Grosse Pointe

Northern Michigan News Roundup

The news in brief from communities around the U.P. and northern Michigan

Compiled using information published in various community newspapers.

Low Demand for Steel Slows Shipping on Great Lakes

Shipping on the Great Lakes officially started for the 2009 season with the opening of the Soo Locks Wednesday, March 25, but the season is off to a slow start owing to decreased demand during the global recession. The first ore boat of the season arrived at the ore dock in Marquette's Upper Harbor late Thursday, March 26. The first boat of the season was the *Great Lakes Trader*, picking up a load of iron ore.

"Ships do not create the demand," said Glen Nekvasil, vice president of the Lake Carriers' Association, which represents U.S.-flagged vessels on the Great Lakes. "If the steel mills don't need pellets, there's no point in filling up the boats. The locks always open March 25, and usually there's a line of boats waiting to go up or down."

With few boats present at the locks Wednesday, there were also no U.S.-flagged ships in the lineup, Mr. Nekvasil said.

Shipping out of the Lake Superior & Ishpeming Railroad ore dock in the Upper Harbor is also expected to start slowly, according to Cliffs Natural Resources.

Until the demand for steel picks up, the ore dock will be seeing fewer boats, as in December when only 13 ships arrived, compared to 37 in December 2007. Overall, Cliffs experienced a good production year up until December, shipping 6.35 million tons of ore. Cliffs is operating at a projected 50% capacity for 2009 during the market lag.

Temporary mine shutdowns are planned at the Empire and Tilden mines in Marquette County. The Tilden is scheduled for a 26-day shutdown this summer and the Empire will be idled for seven weeks.

The slowdown is affecting all cargo types, not just iron ore, which is shipped out of Marquette.

Early 2008 gains in shipping were negated by a 40% drop in cargo movement in December, the association reported in February.

Overall, there was a 3% decrease in U.S.-flagged shipping on the lakes last year, with ships transporting 101 million net tons of dry-bulk cargo.

— *The Mining Journal, Marquette*

Floating Orchestra Performance Is Hoped To Draw 1,000 to Manistique

The American Wind Symphony Orchestra, which performs worldwide while traveling by boat, will make the Manistique Harbor one of its docking points this summer. The orchestra will play for the public and will give local music students the chance to join in the performance.

The orchestra will be in Manistique July 12 to July 15.

The main performance will be on its boat, docked in the harbor. The 195-foot-long, 38-foot-wide barge houses an amphitheater becomes a raised floating stage on which the musicians perform. The boat also carries an art gallery. Tours of the boat and art gallery will be offered during the visit.

Musicians in the 45-piece band will partner with local band students to mentor them in music and will allow the students to perform with the orchestra.

The orchestra has a 50-year history of sailing the world's waterways from its home port in Pennsylvania. It has previously played in Marquette and Houghton.

The city, with help of a private donation, is funding the \$25,000 event. More funding is being sought. So far, \$3,000 of the \$5,000 up-front cost has been collected.

Officials estimate the visit will draw 750 to 1,000 people to Manistique.

— *Daily Press, Escanaba*

Free Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Training Available April 8

The Parent Advisory Committee for Special Education is sponsoring a free training session on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Wednesday, April 8, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Sault Tribal Health Center Conference Room in Sault Ste. Marie.

Speakers will include Georgiana Wilton, Ph.D., Associate Scientist at the University of

Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, and Dorie France, SPEAKS Education Executive Director and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Task Force Representative for the EUP. Lunch will be provided.

Reservations are required by Tuesday, April 7, by calling Lucy Dorie at (906) 632-3373, extension 101.

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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Michigan Politics

By
George Weeks



Hoekstra running for Governor

Nine-term U.S. Representative Pete Hoekstra of Holland, a former businessman and long top Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, this week joins the expanding list of those in serious early pursuit of nominations for the 2010 gubernatorial campaign.

His Monday announcement tour was confined to Metro Detroit, Lansing, and other downstate venues.

But he told me Friday, "We think northern Michigan is absolutely critical. We'll get to the Upper Peninsula. We'll get to Traverse City."

His strategy was calculated to hit downstate population centers before attention there is focused on Detroit's hosting of the NCAA basketball Final Four.

In his announcement, Hoekstra said: "Our revitalized Michigan begins with us thinking differently and acting differently. We need to begin the process of rebuilding a strong Michigan: creating good jobs, promoting strong businesses, and driving meaningful and measurable results. We will rebuild and reinvigorate this state, creating an environment for investment and job creation. We will deliver results with a transparent, effective, and accountable government."

Among other active GOP potentials for the seat to be vacated by term-limited Democratic Governor Jennifer Granholm are Attorney General Mike Cox, Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land, and Ann Arbor businessman Rick Snyder.

While others are mentioned, the clear early frontrunner for the Democratic nomination remains Lieutenant Governor John Cherry, who in recent weeks has been announcing those joining his "Whole Lot of People Supporting John Cherry" organization.

On Friday, his campaign announced endorsements of 17 county commissioners from "across Michigan." All were from deep downstate, except Darrel Bengry of Delta County. Earlier this month, Cherry announced endorsements from 14 Democratic county chairs, including Diana Ketola from Grand Traverse.

Public Lands Dispute

Michigan's delegation was sharply divided on congressional approval of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act.

Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow hailed the inclusion of numerous provisions that would help preserve and protect natural resources and improve parks and trails in Michigan.

They said the bill "would benefit" Keweenaw National Historical Park and Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, both in the Upper Peninsula; the River Raisin battlefield in Monroe and Wayne counties; and the North Country National Scenic Trail, which traverses more than a thousand miles in Michigan.

Said Levin: "This bill is critically important to preserving natural resources in Michigan and making our rich history and environment accessible for current and future generations."

Not so fast, said Representative Bart Stupak (D-Menominee), who, along with the other northern congressmen, Republicans Hoekstra and Dave Camp of Midland, voted against the bill. Stupak said the proposed wilderness designation in Pictured Rocks "lacks the support of the local city and county governments."

Among their objections, Hoek-

stra and Camp contended the bill would curtail energy exploration in some areas of the country.

Hoekstra called it a "massive Washington land grab that will prevent American energy exploration in some areas of the country and restricts access to land, including 11,740 acres in Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore."

He said, "The top-down Washington approach to land management prevents enormous opportunities to explore for energy in America and significantly limits opportunities for public recreation. The environment can and should be protected in certain areas, but the public should have a say in where that happens."

The districts of Stupak, Camp, and Hoekstra include all the National Park Service sites in Michigan. (Of the counties of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Camp represents Leelanau; Hoekstra represents Benzie.)

The northern three are not objecting to provision of the bill that would give national park designation to the Battle of the River Raisin along Michigan's southern border. But they have valid objections to the ramrod "omnibus" process that ignores hearing such local concerns as those raised by Stupak at Pictured Rocks.

Sunshine Flickers On

During the recently concluded Sunshine Week, a national effort promoting open government and freedom of information, there was the customary trumpeting on importance of keeping the bright light of public scrutiny on acts of public officials.

This year on some fronts, there seems to be progress. Worthy of note:

- The House last week passed a bill that would, among other things, require certain state officials and candidates for elected office to disclose their personal finances to the Bureau of Elections.

- Freshman Rep. Dan Scripps (D-Leland), a member of the House Ethics and Elections Committee who has made transparency in government one of his causes, said this was among measures that "will give our residents the tools they need to hold us accountable for our actions."

- Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land, long an advocate of openness in government, reaffirmed her commitment to transparency by posting online what she called "the most detailed expenditure report available from any state department."

It includes salary information broken out by job classification and number of people in each classification.

She noted that all such information is typically available to taxpayers only through Freedom of Information Act requests or by wading through complex budget documentation and legislative fiscal agency reports.

Land credited the Mackinac Center for Public Policy in Midland for encouraging state government leaders to go beyond the basic requirements of right-to-know laws through its Show Michigan the Money initiative.

The center is a conservative think tank often at odds with environmental and other interest groups. But it deserves the credit that Land gives it on this issue.

George Weeks retired in 2006 after 22 years as political columnist for The Detroit News. His weekly Michigan Politics column is syndicated by Superior Features.

Matinee Added to Garrison Keillor Benefit Concert

Garrison Keillor, creator of "A Prairie Home Companion," has added a matinee concert to his evening performance Saturday, August 1, at 2 p.m., at the Cheboygan Opera House. The concert is a fundraiser for the Opera House, for which Mr. Keillor has donated his time and talent. When Mr. Keillor heard that the evening performance was sold out, he offered to provide a matinee show.

Tickets are \$100 and Afterglow

tickets are \$25.

Mr. Keillor will perform his material with a piano accompaniment. Tickets are available for the concert and also for "Afterglow" on the Opera House stage following the performance. Mr. Keillor will visit with audience members at "Afterglow," and admission to this event is by ticket only.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call the box office at (231) 627-5841.

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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.