

Sims Steps Down as Clark Township Zoning Inspector

By Jonathan Eppley
Clark Township is looking for a new building inspector and plan reviewer. The man who filled both positions for the township since

1994, Frank Sims, stepped down Thursday, May 14, to take a position with a new Kincheloe business, Gitchie Gumee Pellet Company.

Trailer Overturns on Bridge

A small construction trailer pulled by a pickup, carrying lightweight equipment, overturned as it was traveling northbound over the Mackinac Bridge near the north tower Saturday evening, May 9, at 7:15 p.m. Wind was the apparent cause of the incident, reported the Michigan State Police St. Ignace

Post.

There were no damages or injuries, however, traffic was stopped in the northbound lane for 43 minutes and in the southbound lane for an hour, to allow Mackinac Bridge Authority workers and a tow truck to flip the trailer upright.

Mackinaw City

Planning Commission OKs Shepler's Storage Building

By Jonathan Eppley
A site plan for an 11,891-square-foot storage building on Trails End Road was approved by the Mackinaw City Village Planning Commission Thursday, May 14. David McFarland of the Architect Forum represented Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry at the meeting to build the proposed \$150,000 building on the site that was recently rezoned from municipal to manufacturing. The commission unanimously approved the site plan without any concerned discussion.

wastewater treatment facility and KOA Campground further to the north and Trails End Kennel, which is also a residence, further to the west. Shepler's plans to use the building, which will be adjacent to its existing storage facility, for boat and marine storage.

The 32-foot-tall building with four garage doors meets all zoning requirements, including parking, drainage, and green space. Because the parcel is to be used for storage, no designated parking is required, and the property's run-off drainage will be directed to the center of the lot. Furthermore, the village's zoning ordinance requires a minimum of 47,363 square feet of green space for that size parcel; the requirement will be exceeded in this first phase of development with 162,401 square feet of green space. The ferry company has plans to build two more storage buildings on the site in the future.

Village Manager Jeff Lawson recommended approval of the site plan because it meets all required zoning specifications.

"It's pretty straightforward," he said. "The height is 32 feet, below what we allow in this particular district, which I believe is 40 feet. It's pretty much a large storage building."

Site plans are awaiting review and final approval of the Village Council before construction can begin, he said.

Mr. Sims made his leaving public at the Clark Township Planning Commission meeting Tuesday, May 12, but gave township officials two weeks notice of his departure.

"A friend is opening a new business in Kincheloe and I'm going to work for him making little wood pellets," he said. "A better opportunity came along."

Mr. Sims said he made the decision recently after going on a fishing trip with Lyle Kelley, who is expecting to open the business next month.

While the township looks for a replacement, Mr. Sims' workload will go untouched because no one in the office is qualified to do it. The township has already begun searching for his replacement.

The state requires building inspectors to be a licensed architect or engineer, or have at least four years experience as a residential builder, contractor, or skilled worker. The state further requires building inspectors to complete state certification classes and participate in continuing education to maintain certification.

"You can't just take someone off the street and train them to be building inspector," Mr. Sims said, "the state has qualifications. There's a criteria before you can even become a provisional building inspector."

For plan reviewers, the state requires at least four years as a building contractor, skilled worker, or person responsibly in charge of building construction.

Mr. Sims has worked for the township for the past four administrations, working in construction for local contractors before becoming township building inspector.

"I've gotten to know a lot of people and work with a lot of different people in the office and out in the field. That'll be missed," he said. "Overall, yes, it's been a positive experience."

Mr. Sims is also building inspector for Marquette Township

and said he has no immediate plans to leave his position there.

The Planning Commission thanked Mr. Sims for his years of service and wished him well in his new endeavors.

"You did a nice job, Frank," said Commissioner Mike Frele.

"You will be missed," Commissioner Joe Eger said.

Planning Commission reviews zoning ordinance

The Planning Commission began reviewing suggested changes to articles 1 through 6 of the township zoning ordinances made by the township board of trustees, accepting all suggestions. Most of the board's suggested changes were of a formatting or clerical nature.

Changes recommended by the township board include modifying lot requirements for boathouses, dimensional restrictions for accessory structures, and allowing a manager or proprietor to operate a bed and breakfast.

Under the new zoning article, a waterfront lot must have at least 50 feet in water frontage to build a boathouse; there was no previous frontage minimum.

Size limitations for accessory structures were increased from 1,200 to 1,800 square feet and won't require site plan reviews by a planning commissioner.

Managers will be allowed to operate bed and breakfasts in the township, even though some communities regulate against this, as they believe that absentee ownership of such establishments degrades residential neighborhoods and can lead to situations where developers purchase multiple homes for operation as bed and breakfast units.

The township board is reviewing the individual articles of the zoning ordinance and recommending changes to the Planning Commission for final revision. The ordinance will be approved and enacted once all revisions are complete. The township board has completed six of the 23 zoning articles.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Remember Fallen Soldiers Who Pay for Our Freedoms

To the Editor:

On this Memorial Day, we remember the veteran, not the preacher, who has given us freedom of religion. It is the veteran, not the reporter, who has given us freedom of the press. It is the veteran, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech. It is the veteran, not the campus organizer, who has given us freedom to assemble. It is the veteran, not the lawyer, who has given us the right to a fair trial. It is the veteran who salutes the flag, who serves under the flag, whose coffin is draped by the flag.

Let us never forget on this Memorial Day, the price of freedom is not free.

Louis Bunker St. Ignace

Editor's Note: Mr. Bunker cites a popular veterans salute adopted from a poem for soldiers, commonly credited to Father Denis Edward O'Brien, even in the U.S. Air Force Academy cadet handbook, "Contrails." Father O'Brien, who died in 2002, had served as a sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II. Its true author has not been verified.

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



When a Pen Makes a Point

The institution of political cartooning is a power to reckon with, as Michigan governors learned throughout 172 years of statehood.

It's an American institution pioneered in 1754 by Benjamin Franklin with his classic "Join or Die" drawing of the segments of a snake published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* calling upon New Englanders to unite against French and Indian forces threatening the western border.

Longtime former *Detroit News* cartoonist Draper Hill, who died last week, was steeped in the history of the pen and politics. He observed at a 1986 exhibition of works of 43 political cartoonists: "The pins, needles, stiletos, broadswords, and occasional bludgeons are still finding targets in these homogeneous times."

Hill once called those of his craft "the Peeping Toms at the palace keyhole," and said cartooning "is apt to be at its best when it is irreverent, unpredictable, independent, and as unillustrative as possible of the good, gray editorial matter which frames it on the page."

Said Jeffrey Hadden, *Detroit News* deputy editorial page editor: "He was extremely well-read and knew the power of a pointed cartoon. As an editorial writer, I sometimes envied his ability to more strongly convey a point with a few well-placed pen strokes."

Hadden said, "His cartoons were usually a gentle form of humor, but he could draw blood when he felt it was warranted."

Hill, who retired in 1999, felt it warranted on occasion to needle ex-Governors Bill Milliken, Jim Blanchard, and John Engler, as well as ex-Detroit Mayor Coleman A. Young. But they all on occasion cherished framing a Draper Hill drawing.

Just say no, Governor

When the Associated Press sticks its seasoned neck out and says Governor Jennifer Granholm is on the short list to be President Barack Obama's nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court, it gives more credibility to what assorted TV talking heads have been saying about her prospects.

Other women on the list have the judicial experience that Granholm lacks to be the third woman on the bench in the court's history.

Granholm wouldn't be the first Michigan governor on the court. In 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed 1937-38 Governor Frank Murphy, a former 1920s Detroit Recorder's judge, to the Supreme Court after a brief stint as a FDR's attorney general. Murphy served on the high court until his death in 1949.

While appointment of Granholm, a former prosecutor and state attorney general, seems unlikely, it would be consistent with what Obama Press Secretary Robert Gibbs says about the quest for "somebody who understands how being a judge affects Americans' everyday lives."

As the *Washington Post* put it, she's "a Harvard Law graduate whose background running a large state dealing with severe hardship may qualify as the experience Obama is seeking."

Also in the tea leaves is the fact that last week her office, after emphasizing her determination to serve out her term, as of this writing declined comment on the speculation.

Clearly such a lifetime appointment would be hard to decline. But the state she serves faces hard "horrendous" times that would be further complicated if its governor should be diverted by protracted confirmation hearings.

Hoekstra on Pelosi debacle

U.S. Representative Pete Hoekstra of Holland, the top Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, has ridiculed the contention of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi that the CIA lied to her in 2002 about the use of harsh interrogation techniques, including waterboarding, on suspected terrorists.

He had this zinger last week after Pelosi bumbled her way through a nationally televised press conference: "There are many privileges to being speaker. Rewriting history isn't one of them."

CIA Director Leon Panetta, like Pelosi a California Democrat, was not director at the time but said the CIA briefed truthfully and "it is not the policy of the agency to mislead" Congress.

Hoekstra, who is running for governor, welcomed the fact that Pelosi agrees with him and others that "the responsible course of action for the administration is to release all the available CIA briefing notes to help clear the air. This is about the proper role of Congress in conducting oversight of America's intelligence agencies and these notes will help complete the picture of discussions held during the briefings.

These briefings offered the opportunity to raise questions and objections, and it is Speaker Pelosi's responsibility alone if she did not."

It's Michigan Week

As proclaimed by Granholm, May 16-22 is Michigan Week, which was started in 1954 to inspire people at the local level to tout the state's history, resources, and opportunities. Then-Governor G. Mennen Williams declared: "We have much to be proud of in our state - but let's not keep that fact a secret."

One aspect of the celebration is promotion of the Library of Michigan's 20 annual Notable Books selections. Among this year's books with northern connections are "Historic Cottages of Glen Lake," "Ninety Years Crossing Lake Michigan: The History of the Ann Arbor Car Ferries," "A Picturesque Situation: Mackinac Before Photography, 1615-1860," and "Wreck of the Carl D.: A True Story of Loss, Survival, and Rescue At Sea."

Legislative Watch

Administration and legislative revenue experts reached consensus estimates last week on budget shortfalls of \$1.3 billion for 2009 and \$1.7 billion for 2010.

In reaction, House Republican Leader Kevin Elsenheimer of Kewadin said, "Every day that we wait to act, the budget deficit grows and 1,000 more jobs are lost.

"Our caucus remains committed to solving the budget deficit through savings and government reforms, and through our budget workgroups, each member of our caucus will closely examine every dollar spent. In these tough times, we will look to restrict state spending to expenditures that reinvigorate Michigan's economy, reform government, and reinvest in essential services."

Senator Michelle A. McManus (R-Lake Leelanau) said, "Michigan's economic outlook continues to be grim, and it's likely to get worse before it gets better. Everyone is making sacrifices during these challenging times, and state government can be no different."

The Republican reaction in both chambers is cut, don't tax.

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.

DNR Citizen Council To Meet Thursday

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) for the Department of Natural Resources will meet Thursday, May 21, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the basement of the McMillan Township Hall (Newberry Community Building) at 405 Newberry Avenue in Newberry.

Topics for discussion include offshore wind energy; non-industrial private forest lands plan; supplemental feeding; deer management plan update, and sharp-tailed grouse management.

The councils were formed to give U.P. citizens more input into DNR regional programs and activities. The councils, in both the Eastern U.P. and Western U.P., have a wide array of outdoor recreation interests represented and help the DNR identify ways to be more effective across the region.

Meetings are open to the public. For more information, contact Stacy Welling of the DNR at (906) 228-6561.

The St. Ignace News

and Les Cheneaux Islands Weekly Wave

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www.SaintIgnaceNews.com

USPS Periodical Publication Number - 462-380

ESTABLISHED 1878

Published each Thursday at Saint Ignace, Mackinac County, Michigan

Entered in Saint Ignace, Michigan Post Office as Periodical Mail Matter. Act of March 3, 1879

Periodical Postage Paid at Saint Ignace, MI • Additional Postage Paid at Gaylord, MI

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to St. Ignace News, PO Box 277, St. Ignace, MI 49781

Volume 130, Number 7 Thursday, May 21, 2009

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Subscriptions:

\$42 in Mackinac, Chippewa, Emmet, Luce, and Cheboygan counties.

\$52 elsewhere in the United States and military post offices.

\$35 for the Web edition at www.saintignacenews.com

We take Visa, MasterCard, and Discover

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.