

First Bayside Music Festival Will Feature Four Bands This Saturday

Fireworks Show Will Close Out St. Ignace Event

By Mark Tower

Live music will fill State Street in St. Ignace from 4 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Saturday, August 15, for the first downtown music festival. The Bayside Music Festival will take place in the street and area surrounding the city marina's parking lot, with State Street closed between Spring and Truckey streets.

Four bands will be featured. Chasin' Steel, a country and bluegrass band from Marquette, will open the evening with a twang. Following will be The Pub Runners, who were featured at this summer's Fish Feast in St. Ignace, playing music with an Irish style. Soul Purpose, a funk and soul band with a blues sound, will come from Detroit for the festival and play after The Pub Runners. Wrapping up the sets will be Stone Soup, a band from Grosse Pointe, playing a mixture of jazz and blues.

Food will be offered from area restaurants and include many varieties of barbecued meats, barbecued frog legs, pulled pork sandwiches, a pig roast, chicken dinners, chicken tacos, turkey drum-

sticks, hamburgers, bratwurst, deep fried whitefish, whitefish finger baskets, fries, "redneck fries," cheese sticks, corn, cole slaw, baked beans, and key lime pie.

The festival grew out of a discussion St. Ignace Chamber of Commerce board members had after a meeting about a year and a half ago.

Since then, a group comprised of community members, Chamber board members, St. Ignace Downtown Development Authority staff, and staff from the St. Ignace Visitors Bureau have met to plan the festival, which

organizers said they hope will become an annual event.

After a failed attempt to bring in an event organizer from southeast Michigan, who had scheduling conflicts during the weekend available for the festival, group members decided to go ahead with the planning themselves. Various themes were discussed, including steel drum and Jimmy Buffet music styles, before they settled on four different bands, each with their own style of music.

"It has kind of evolved," Chamber Director Janet Peterson said.

The festival is free for anyone younger than 21, and a \$2 admission fee will buy anyone 21 and older a wristband necessary to purchase alcohol. The money collected through this admission fee will go back into an event fund and be used to help pay for next year's summer events like Fish Feast and the music festival.

Money chipped in by community organizations like the Visitors Bureau and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) will help get the festival off the ground in its first year, DDA Director Deb Evashevski said.

"We need to become more self-sufficient on these things if we are going to continue to do them each year," she noted.

The Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs is partially underwriting the event by providing an \$1,800 grant to fund start-up costs. Together with the other event sponsors, the council helped pay for bands, sound equipment, emcee Mike Ridley, and other costs associated with the festival.

Mrs. Peterson said the goal of the event is to meet the diverse desires of residents and visitors in St. Ignace, and will combine food, music, and the downtown's waterfront setting, hopefully creating something that will bring people into the downtown area.

"Obviously we're trying to attract people to the area," she said, "and events do that. We're trying to appeal to a variety of different people."

Organizers say they don't want to try to duplicate the annual Fish Feast, although Mrs. Peterson said the setting will be similar, but with the focus on music and dancing instead of the fishing heritage of St. Ignace.

Children's games will be offered.

"We're trying to make it a family-friendly event," Mrs. Peterson said.

Dancing lessons will be offered by City Clerk Renee Vonderwerth during the first two band performances, and the dance floor will be opened up for the final two bands. Aspiring dancers will learn a line dance during Chasin' Steel's set and may master an Irish jig during music by The Pub Runners.

Mrs. Peterson is counting on the reputation the city has built for putting on a first-rate event like Fish Feast, combined with the natural beauty of the St. Ignace waterfront, to make people want to come to the Bayside Music Festival this year and come back again next year.

"It's just a really nice, enjoyable event for everybody," she said.

Aug. 22 Meeting To Update Public on East Lake Project

By Michael Ayala

An informational meeting detailing the potential costs of the proposed East Lake dam in Brevort Township will be held at the Mackinac County Courthouse Saturday, August 22, at 1 p.m. The estimated cost of the dam is between \$297,000 and \$350,000.

Those attending will have the opportunity to voice any concerns or questions about the lake or the dam. Statements can also be submitted in writing to the Mackinac County Board of Commissioners at 100 South Marley Street in St. Ignace.

The dam proposal was spurred by the decreasing water level in East Lake. Property owners there, in 2007, asked the commission to set a lake level. If a dam is built, a special assessment on lakefront property owners will pay for it.

According to the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, to establish a lake water level, the commission must receive a two-thirds vote from the affected property owners in favor of it. A preliminary study to assess the best lake level for the protection of the local environment and property owners, the type of water control structure necessary, and the costs of the structure must be performed, as well.

Upon completion of the preliminary study, the act states, the commission then directs the local prosecutor to petition the circuit court for a determination.

The court was petitioned in July 2007 to establish and set a permanent water level for the lake based on information collected from the United States Geological Survey. A request was made to set the water level at five feet and construct a dam to maintain it.

In September 2007, according to the county clerk's office, the case

was adjourned until further information could be obtained from the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Environmental Quality.

An emergency repair to an existing beaver dam to maintain the lake was then considered, East Lake Dam Committee member Kay Kujawa told *The St. Ignace News*. A study was conducted to determine how effective a temporary fix would be, and it was determined that the amount of time necessary to authorize the venture would not be prudent. It would be better to focus on the approval of a man-made dam instead, Mrs. Kujawa said.

The Spicer Group, a land surveying and engineering company, was hired in 2008 to conduct another lake level study. The company, Mrs. Kujawa said, recommended a 4.9-foot water level and a dam to maintain it.

The results of the report will be detailed at the August 22 meeting.

Assistant prosecuting attorney Kayla Nixon told *The St. Ignace News* that a special assessment district would be created to encompass those who own lakefront property or have deeded access to lakefront property. Costs for the dam project would be covered by the special assessment district, should the dam be built.

The assessment has yet to be determined, Mrs. Kujawa said. While Spicer Group estimated the cost, she said, the true cost won't be known until a contractor is hired to build the dam.

A licensed engineer will also need to inspect the dam annually, under the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. The inspection would cost \$500 a year, which also would be covered by the special assessment district, said County Commission Chair Dawn Nelson.

Study Planned To Salvage Parts of Carp River Bridge

By Michael Ayala

The Mackinac County Road Commission will determine what parts of the old Carp River bridge can be salvaged to save costs during its upcoming planned replacement, after costs for the project came in higher than available funding.

Commissioners decided Tuesday, August 4, to authorize the Northwest Design Group to perform an evaluation of the Mackinac Trail Carp River bridge and determine what can be salvaged for the upcoming bridge project. The commission may be able to save up to \$400,000 on the bridge project if the original substructure can be salvaged, Manager Dirk Heckman said.

The bridge, which is about 6.5 miles north of Evergreen Shores, was constructed in 1920 and is in need of replacement, Mr. Heckman said. The bridge is about 21 feet wide, and if two oversized vehicles approached each other on the bridge, he said, one would have to yield and allow the other to pass.

The redesign of the bridge will expand it to at least 34 feet wide.

The road commission began the project in 2007 and entered into a \$40,000 contract with Northwest Design Group, an engineering firm, to create a new design for the bridge. The projected construction costs, which would be bid out to construction companies at a later date, was expected to be about

\$753,000.

The Local Bridge Program of the Michigan Department of Transportation will provide \$903,600 to the commission to complete the project. A new type, size, and length construction estimate by the engineering firm revised the construction cost of the project to about \$1.3 million, Mr. Heckman told the commission.

If the road commission were to request more funding for construction costs from the Local Bridge Program, the money would not be received until 2013. A new estimate would also have to be provided, and the degradation of the bridge over three years would also have to be taken into consideration.

There would be no guarantee that the Local Bridge Program would accept the commission's new request, Mr. Heckman added.

Mr. Heckman suggested to the commission they authorize the Northwest Design Group to perform a field investigation of the bridge and determine if the existing substructure, primarily its abutments and pilings, could be preserved.

The investigation would cost the commission an additional \$5,750, he said. If the entire substructure could be salvaged, a redesign of the bridge accommodating the original substructure would cost an additional \$6,996. If only the pilings could be used,

No One Injured in High Winds Mishap



Dion and Deb Balliet and their grandchildren, Eric and Angelie, of Kalkaska, received a surprise Sunday, August 9, at 6:40 a.m., as one of the tents on the St. Ignace marina dock fell on their 30-foot sailboat after a strong gust of wind traveled through the downtown area. No one was hurt and less than two hours later, marina employees Jeff Davenport, Kevin Campbell, Stephen Massaway, and Brad Silet cleared the tent off the sailboat. Wind speed at the Mackinac Bridge was clocked at 50 miles per hour during the early morning storm that brought strong winds and heavy rain to the area.

Mackinaw City

Icebreaker and Railroad Dock Receive Historical Marker

By Michael Ayala

A marker commemorating the icebreaker *Mackinaw* WAGB-83 and Mackinaw City Railroad Dock was dedicated by the Michigan Historical Commission Saturday, August 8. Former crew members of the icebreaker and people who worked on the railroad dock were present during the dedication, made by Tom Truscott of the commission.

The marker, near the Icebreaker Mackinaw Maritime Museum at 131 South Huron Avenue, presents a brief history of the icebreaker on one side and the railroad dock on the other.

Bill Baumann, who served on the icebreaker before it was decommissioned, expanded on the ship's history for the benefit of all present. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in World War II, he said, the *Mackinaw* was built to clear the ice from waterways and escort ships carrying ore important in the war effort. The ship continued to sail for 62 years, he said, providing safe passage through icy areas and rescuing boats frozen in the lake.

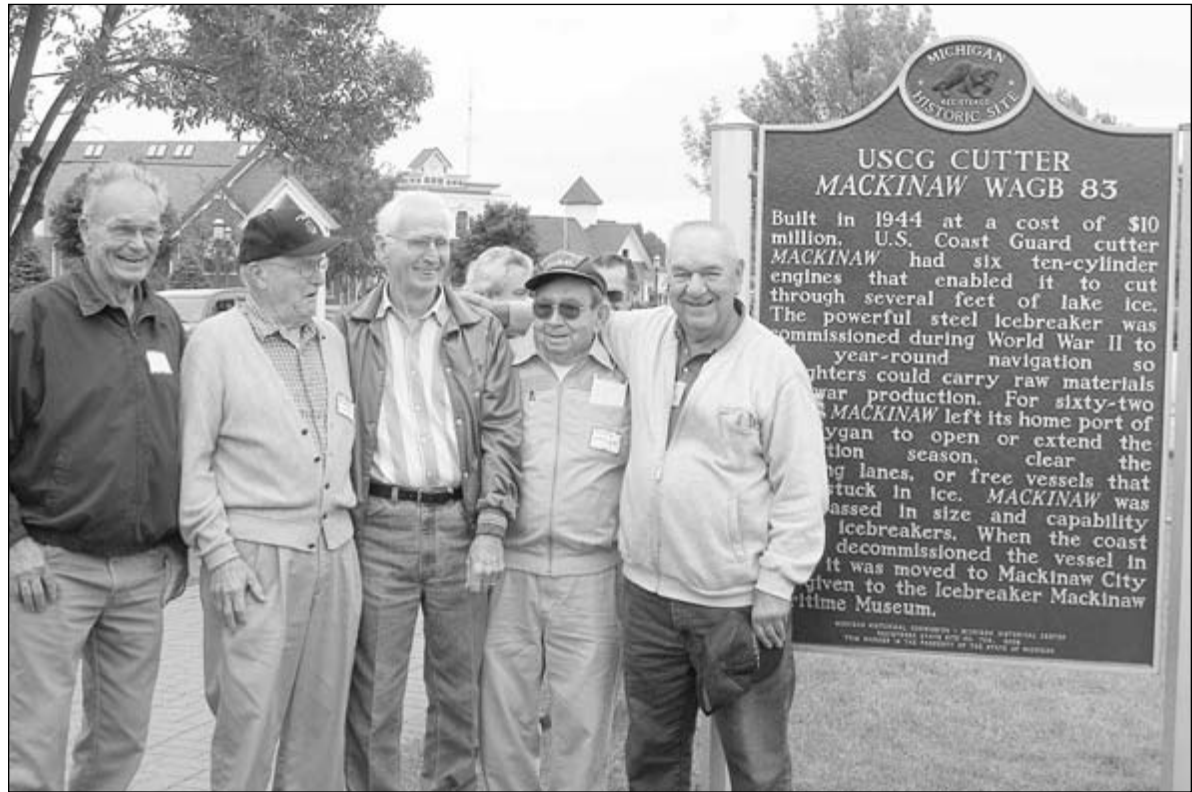
The ship was decommissioned June 10, 2006, and was moored permanently at the railroad dock in Mackinaw City June 21. It currently serves as a museum that is open to public exploration.

Fred Adams of Traverse City served on the *Mackinaw* from 1964 to 1966 as a damage control engineer. He performed maintenance on the ship such as wood-working and welding, assisted with firefighting assistance as necessary.

Mr. Adams recalled a day that a reporter met with the crew and asked to see how the ship smashed ice. The crew agreed, and cruised through the lake, searching for ice to demonstrate the technique.

The *Mackinaw* did not collide head-on with the ice to smash it, Mr. Adams said. Instead, the ship would roll over the ice and crush it under its weight.

When ice was found that day, the crew attempted to clear it as usual. Everyone discovered, however, that the *Mackinaw* was



Former members of the Icebreaker Mackinaw WAGB-83 gather for the dedication of the icebreaker and railroad dock marker. The marker is double-sided and presents a brief history of both attractions. Pictured are (from left) Hank Caulkins, Ruben Kurtti, Bill Tomac, David Kaplan, and Bill Baumann.

unable to destroy it. The ice was not solid enough, Mr. Adams recalled, so it simply sank underwater, unharmed. The crew worked for three hours before the ship was able to shatter the ice.

The railroad dock served as a travel hub between the upper and lower peninsulas before the Mackinac Bridge was built. Rail cars and lumber were loaded on the *Chief Wawatam* at the railroad dock.

Mick Campbell of Mackinaw City, who was also present at the dedication, worked on the *Chief Wawatam* for four years in the late 1970s as a coal shoveler.

"It was a dirty job. You'd come out black as soot," he said.

Clean-up duty was the messiest part, he said. Besides removing slag, burnt coal deposits needed to be removed and ejected from the ship. Those remnants of the *Chief* still exist to careful observers.

"You can walk along the shoreline and still find [the deposits] today," he said.



Richard Campbell (at left) and Mick Campbell (no relation) represented those who worked at the Mackinaw City Railroad Dock at a historical marker dedication August 8 in Mackinaw City. The dock served as a method to connect the two peninsulas before the Mackinac Bridge was constructed.