

# St. Ignace Woman To Display Christmas Collection for All To Enjoy at Open House



Gladys Pope of St. Ignace puts the final touches on her "Snow Village" collection, which will be displayed Friday, December 4, as a part of the St. Ignace Christmas festivities. The pieces of the set, which she has been collecting since the early 1990s, now number more than 200, some of which have never been out of the box. The collection, on display at the Great Waters Center at the intersection of Truckey and State streets, took Mrs. Pope and other volunteers several weeks to get set up to wow crowds this weekend. A tree lighting ceremony and Santa Claus visit are also planned downtown Friday.

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 marina to light the tree and receive a key to the city.  
 The annual parade that has preceded the tree lighting will not take place this year. Owing to a lack of interest, Chamber of Commerce Director Janet Peterson said, organizers decided not to include the parade.  
 After the tree lighting, all are invited to "Santaland" at The Pavilion stores on State Street, where children can pose for photographs with Santa and the children's choir will perform.  
 At the Great Waters building on the corner of Truckey and State Streets, an open house starting at 5 p.m. will show off Gladys Pope's miniature Christmas village, which contains more than 200 pieces.  
 Allied EMS will have an ambulance in the First National Bank

parking lot at 6 p.m. Friday for an open house. The Colonial House Bed and Breakfast, housed in a historic home on State Street, will hold an open house from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Friday, as well.  
 St. Ignace City Hall will host a mailbox accepting letters to Santa until Wednesday, December 16. Letter writers are asked to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if they want a personal reply from Santa Claus.  
 About 25 area businesses are taking part in the annual shopping spree this year, with a twist that asks shoppers to bring in at least one non-perishable food item to donate to those in need. All shoppers bringing in donations will be entered in a drawing to win a \$500 shopping spree, funded through the St. Ignace Business Association. The contest will continue through Monday, December 14.

## Sports Weekends To Be Promoted as 'Winter Fest'

### St. Ignace Businesses Asked To Buy Into Winter Ad Campaign for Tournaments

**By Mark Tower**  
 Four popular winter events will be promoted as one festival this year. The U.P. Winter Fest will be held over four weekends in a row, from February 13 through March 6, and include the U.P. Snow Softball Tournament and Tailgate February 13 and 14, U.P. Pond Hockey February 19 through 21, U.P. Youth Pond Hockey February 27 and 28, and the U.P. Ice Chip Golf Scramble March 6.  
 Combining these events will give potential visitors a choice from a wide range of activities

over a range of dates and is expected to reduce promotional costs, say members of the St. Ignace Special Events Committee.  
 The Special Events Committee meets monthly to come up with new events, add to existing events, and bring more business to St. Ignace.  
 At the group's Thursday, November 5 meeting, members suggested additions to the winter festival, including an outdoor winter tailgate party and Valentine's Day specials to pair with the softball tournament, curling and other games during the hockey tournaments, alternative activities like a hike to the top of Rabbit's Back Peak, and indoor activities like a chili cook-off to offer visitors a warm haven during the outdoor events.  
 "Those are the little things that we need to bring in to these events to make them fun," said Mark Sposito, one of the planners.  
 The key to the past and future success of these winter-theme activities, he said, is that St. Ignace offers an atmosphere and an experience that cannot be gained anywhere else.  
 "This community has great hotels, restaurants, and snowmobile trails, but so do a lot of other communities," he said. "The biggest thing is, we need to set ourselves apart from those other communities."  
 "Twenty years ago, if somebody told me we would have four big winter events, I would have laughed," Chamber of Commerce Director Janet Peterson said. "It's really a great thing."  
 These events focus entirely on drawing participants and spectators over the four weekends, and there are no plans to create activities during the week to keep people in town, Mrs. Peterson said. The reason behind this, she said, is because it's difficult to draw people during the work week at that time of year.  
 "If people aren't available to travel Monday through Thursday, it doesn't matter what kind of event you have, they aren't going to come," Mrs. Peterson said.

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**State Retirees Will Meet December 7**  
 Upper Peninsula Chapter 16 of the State Employee Retirees Association will host its Christmas luncheon Monday, December 7, at noon at the Terrace Bay Inn in Escanaba.  
 All members and their guests may attend. Reservations may be made by calling Arlene Paulson at (906) 786-7199 by Friday, December 4.

**Downtown Hospitality Night**  
 December 10, 2009 ~ 5-8 pm  
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**Hockey Grows, May Support Other Events**  
 The U.P. Pond Hockey tournament, now in its fourth year, is expected to grow again in 2010. Labatt Blue, one of the sponsors, has asked organizers if they can accommodate 160 teams this year, 60 more than the 100 teams in 2009.  
 Last year, the tournament drew about 600 players. If 160 teams play, organizers expect about 1,000 players and crowds of at least 2,000 people.  
 Mr. Sposito said the tournament has reached the point where it can support itself and any growth now will help fund programs that can never fund themselves, like showing free movies in the summer in the downtown area.  
 "The whole goal is to have a few events that make money and help support the other events in