

MARCH/NEWS

**FROM PAGE 14**

Construction is to begin on the 3,600-square-foot bank in April. It is scheduled to open in late July or early August.

**MARCH 6**

**Tribe says no casino yet**  
 PESHAWBESTOWN — The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians will take a few years before opening a casino at the Grand Traverse Resort & Spa, tribal officials said Wednesday in announcing the purchase later this month of the multimillion-dollar Acme property.

Instead, the tribe will concentrate on improving the public areas of the resort and developing a joint marketing program for the resort and the tribe's nearby Turtle Creek Casino, tribal officials said. A water park, similar to the one opening next week at the Great Wolf Lodge south of Traverse City, is one of many possibilities to be considered.

Longer term plans include closing the Turtle Creek Casino and opening a casino at the resort, tribal officials said.

The tribe's Leelanau Sands Casino in Peshawbestown would be unaffected.

**MARCH 6**

**Perjury charges dropped**  
 CHEBOYGAN — Perjury charges against Cheboygan Memorial Hospital President Michael Mihora relating to when he headed a Greenville hospital have been dismissed after witnesses changed their testimony, an assistant U.S. attorney said.

Mihora had been charged with three counts of giving false testimony to two federal grand juries in 2001.

The charges were dropped a day after Mihora's trial began in Lansing. Several witnesses changed their testimony on Tuesday, First Assistant U.S. Attorney Phillip Green said.

**MARCH 7**

**Accused man strikes deal**  
 PETOSKEY — An Emmet

County man, who along with his wife is charged in a crime spree that left a northern Michigan hotel in ashes, has struck a plea agreement with the county prosecutor's office.

Blair Collins Welham, 23, pleaded guilty to one count of arson of real property and three counts of breaking and entering with intent. All are 10-year felonies but the maximum penalty could be increased to 15 years because the charges include being a habitual offender.

Emmet County Prosecutor Robert J. Engel agreed to drop charges of forgery and safebreaking in exchange for Welham's pleas, his cooperation with police and truthful testimony.

**MARCH 7**

**Nurse guilty of sex assault**

PETOSKEY — A former psychiatric nurse faces up to life in prison after a jury found him guilty Thursday of sexually assaulting a female patient he cared for in a mental health unit at an area hospital.

A jury of five women and nine men found 49-year-old Thomas A. Schram, formerly of Hayes Township in Charlevoix County, guilty of one count of first-degree criminal sexual conduct and one count of second-degree criminal sexual conduct.

Schram was accused of sexually assaulting a Petoskey woman and two other female patients in separate incidents in 1998 and 1999 when he worked as a nurse in the mental health unit of Lockwood-MacDonald Hospital in Petoskey.

**MARCH 8**

**Woman solicited 'hitman'**

TRAVERSE CITY — A nurse accused of trying to hire a hit man to kill her husband pleaded guilty Friday in what her attorney calls a "sad case" brought on by sleep deprivation and mental illness.

Diann L. Kubik, 49, of Traverse City, faces up to five years in prison when she is

sentenced on a charge of solicitation of assault with intent to do great bodily harm.

**MARCH 8**

**Students reach plea deal**

TRAVERSE CITY — Attorneys for two students facing felonious assault charges after a brawl last fall between Traverse City St. Francis and Traverse City Central high schoolers have reached a plea agreement with prosecutors.

John R. Bourdon, 18, of Elk Rapids, and Richard "Mac" Schilling, 18, of Traverse City, will plead guilty to assault and battery, a 93-day misdemeanor, in about two weeks, their attorneys said in court Friday. The felonious assault charges carried maximum penalties of four years in prison.

**MARCH 9**

**Anglers rescued from ice**

SUTTONS BAY — Dozens

of area firefighters took part in a search for five lost ice fishermen on West Grand Traverse Bay Saturday, who were found cold but safe in the late afternoon.

Authorities received a cell phone call shortly after 2 p.m. from a group of ice fishermen who became disoriented in the blowing snow and couldn't find their way back to shore, according to Suttons Bay-Bingham fire chief Bill Calhoun.

**MARCH 10**

**Director has image in mind**

TRAVERSE CITY — The city's new public housing director hopes to improve the agency's public image tarnished in recent months by a series of personnel troubles and financial questions.

Members of the Traverse City Housing Commission completed contract negotia-

tions last week with Karl F. Fulmer of Elk Rapids, who left his position as director of development for Wells Mansfield Inc., a Traverse City development company. He is a former public housing director in Idaho and also has worked in real estate and land development.

Fulmer was a unanimous choice among six finalists interviewed by the commission last month for the \$65,000 per-year position.

He is taking over a public housing agency rocked by a series of events that began late last summer, including questions about its financial operations and staffing levels, allegations of anti-Native American comments made by staff and housing commissioners and ultimately the dismissal of former director Lorri Burt.

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